

TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

¡Por fin en Español!

Pase la voz!! Siguiendo con el compromiso que la MPO de la región de Boston tiene al informar al mayor número posible de personas, acerca de asuntos relacionados con el transporte que pudieran afectarle y dar a conocer las oportunidades en todo lo relacionado con la toma de decisiones, *TRANSREPORT* está también disponible en Español. Si estuviera interesado en pedir una suscripción a nuestro boletín, contacte Daniel Peralta empleado de la MPO llamando al (671) 973-7116 o mandando un e-mail a publicinformation@ctps.org.

Además de poner a su disposición *TRANSREPORT* traducido al Español, la MPO ha empezado recientemente a publicar comunicados en prensa así como anuncios legales en dos periódicos de comunidades Hispánicas, *El Mundo* y *la Semana*, en ellos se informa a los lectores de reuniones públicas y de la disponibilidad de un traductor. Estar pendiente de los siguientes boletines de *TRANSREPORT* ya que la MPO está realizando un esfuerzo para llegar a todas las personas en todos los "rincones" de nuestra región, especialmente los que previamente no han sido incluidos lo suficiente.

PASS THE WORD!

In keeping with the Boston Region MPO's commitment to inform as many people as possible about transportation issues that may affect them, and to let them know about opportunities to be involved in transportation decision-making, *TRANSREPORT* is now available in Spanish. If you are interested in ordering a Spanish subscription to our newsletter,

■ Spanish Subscriptions *cont. on p. 6*

Planning for the DNC: Challenges and Solutions



A World War II "victory poster," prominent at train stations, proclaimed: "Millions of troops are on the move . . . is YOUR trip necessary?"

Sixty years later, planners, pundits, and the public at large are asking the same question as it pertains to the Democratic National Convention (DNC), which will be held at the FleetCenter between July 26 and July 29. Unprecedented security constraints, coupled with the large numbers of delegates, visitors, and members of the press expected for the convention, have created significant challenges for the transit and highway planning communities.

The DNC has been declared a National Special Security Event (NSSE), entitling it to federal assets that include the support of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Secret Service (USSS), The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). These federal security agencies are working alongside state and local law enforcement entities to secure the event. One of the central security requirements, the need to monitor activity within a 40-foot radius of the FleetCenter, will essentially eliminate the use of I-93 from 4:00 P.M. to midnight and will require the shutdown of North Station during the week of the convention. Security needs will also put constraints

on the use of airspace over the site and on water travel within Boston Harbor.

Since early March, security experts have been working with state planners and consultants to schedule detours, restrictions, and closures of air, surface, subsurface, and water travel modes extending from Braintree and Allston to Woburn and Saugus. The restrictions, while temporary, are significant and numerous, and call upon government, business, and individuals to completely rethink their travel choices.

While the 190,000 vehicles that use I-93 north of the FleetCenter each weekday and the 24,000 weekday travelers going to and from North Station are the main focus of mitigation efforts, decreased roadway and transit access, coupled with increased transit demand, will impact all travel within the Route 128 area.

ROAD TRAVEL PROHIBITIONS

Security needs require that only authorized vehicles will have access to the roads and streets adjacent to the FleetCenter while the convention is in progress. The following roads will be closed between the hours of 4:00 P.M. and midnight from July 26 to July 29:

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BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ACTION ITEMS

On June 10, upon the recommendation of the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee and following a 35-day public review period, the Boston

Region MPO voted to approve an amendment to the FY 2004–08 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) involving changes to the fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006 highway and transit elements and the fiscal year 2004 bridge program. The proposal changed the program year for several projects and added other projects not previously programmed. Cost adjustments were also recommended in the proposal for other projects in all three fiscal years. The new projects are:

- I-93/Route 125/Ballardvale Street in Wilmington (\$4 million).
- Route 1A/Route 121 (Wampum Corner) in Wrentham (\$925,000).
- Route 3A (Hancock Street)-Southern Artery in Quincy (\$1.2 million) – This project replaces the original proposal that included the Route 1/Route 97 (High Street) project in Topsfield as it will not be ready this year.
- 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).
- Lawrence Intermodal Center (\$3 million).

To request a copy of the approved TIP Amendment, contact Sean Daly at (617) 973-7140 or seandaly@ctps.org. The amendment is also available on the MPO's Web site at www.bostonmpo.org.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

Mariellen Burns, the Public Information Liaison for the Democratic National Convention (DNC) Planning Group of the Boston Police Department, met with the Council at their June meeting to update members on the transportation and security preparations that are underway for the Democratic National Convention this month at Boston's FleetCenter.

The July Council meeting will include updates on the development of the draft fiscal year 2005 Unified Planning Work Program and fiscal years 2005–09 Transportation Improvement Program. It will also feature a presentation on seaport development policies and activities by Mr. Richard Armstrong, Director of Port Development and Executive Secretary of the Governor's Seaport Advisory Council.

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

On June 4 MBTA officials and AACT members participated in a ceremony that introduced the world's first low-floor, electric trolley bus, which features passenger doors on both sides. Each vehicle has automatic stop announcement equipment and an onboard, front-door ramp on the left side. The right-side door, which will be used at the underground Harvard Square stop, is also accessible via a portable ramp stored in the station.

Members also heard a presentation on the travel impacts of the Democratic National Convention on people with disabilities. Trip times are expected to take much longer than usual. Travel within the Bullfinch Triangle (Causeway, Canal, Friend, Lancaster, Medford, Portland, and Traverse Streets) will require advance notice during the day, and will be restricted due to roadway closures. When the roads are closed, THE RIDE will drop off customers at a security checkpoint on Merrimac Street.

Sixth Annual Water Transportation Awareness Week Celebrated

On June 10 state and local dignitaries joined Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas and MBTA General Manager Michael H. Mulhern to celebrate 28 years of MBTA commuter boat and inner harbor ferry service. For the past six years, the MBTA has organized a coalition of local businesses, state agencies, and private boat operators in a campaign to raise public awareness of the benefits and convenience of water transportation.



Promoting greater access to the waterfront, MBTA officials worked with their contractor, Harbor Express, to provide additional commuter boat service from Quincy to Long Wharf, and to coordinate a summer pilot program that provides water transportation between Long Wharf and Georges Island. In addition, Island Alliance, a collaborative group that supports the Boston Harbor Islands, has erected the Boston Harbor Islands Water Transportation Informational Kiosk to provide visitors with brochures about activities available for people interested in touring the islands.

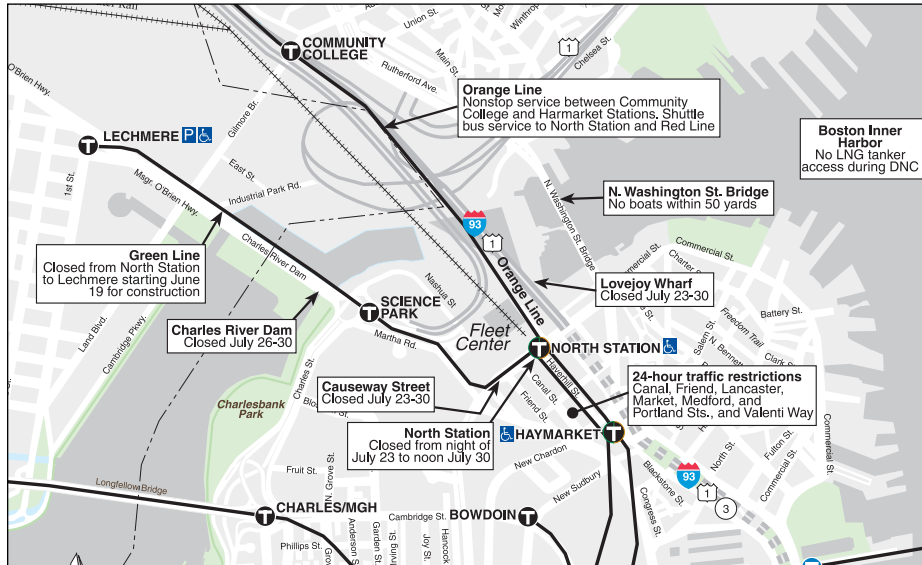
Service to Georges Island includes three round-trips per day, Monday through Friday, and four round-trips per day on Saturday and Sunday. From there a water taxi is available for visiting the other islands. Log onto www.mbta.com for more information on trip times.

Travel Restrictions Set for Convention Week

■ DNC Travel Impacts *cont. from p. 1*

- I-93 from Exit 32 (Route 60) in Medford to Exit 20 (I-90/Massachusetts Turnpike) in Boston. Northbound drivers will be diverted to Frontage Road, the Turnpike, or the Ted Williams Tunnel.

- Memorial Drive eastbound from the BU Bridge to the Leverett Connector.
- Storrow Drive eastbound from Western Avenue to the Leverett Connector.
- Msgr. O'Brien Highway (Route 28) southbound at Land Boulevard.



- I-93 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes north and south will be closed to HOV traffic. The I-93 HOV lanes will accommodate emergency vehicles and pre-designated MBTA buses.
- The ramp from I-90/Massachusetts Turnpike to I-93 northbound.
- Route 1 from the Tobin Bridge to the I-93 merge in Charlestown.
- The Sumner Tunnel will be closed.
- Msgr. O'Brien Highway (Route 28) southbound at Land Boulevard.

During the convention, Bullfinch Triangle, the area between North Washington Street, Causeway Street, and Merrimac Street, will be open only to authorized vehicles, and truck deliveries to the FleetCenter will be curtailed between 2:00 A.M. and noon.

ROAD TRAVEL CONSTRAINTS

Roadways that lead to highways that are closed during the convention will have signs stating that they are restricted to local traffic. Constrained roads include, but are not limited to:

- I-93 northbound from the Route 3 split in Braintree.

TRANSIT TRAVEL PROHIBITIONS

- North Station will be closed from Friday, July 23, at 8:00 P.M., through Friday, July 30. No Amtrak, commuter rail, Orange Line, or Green Line trains will stop at North Station during that time. The MBTA will provide additional service and alternate modes to compensate for the closure of North Station.
- Lovejoy Wharf will be closed to all water traffic. Commuter boats serving Charlestown and East Boston will connect via Long Wharf.

TRANSIT TRAVEL CONSTRAINTS

- Orange Line service will operate throughout the convention; however, no trains will stop at North Station.
- Green Line service will end at Haymarket Station. Shuttle buses will connect Government Center with Science Park and Lechmere Stations.
- North Shore commuter rail service will terminate near an alternate mode of transportation, either at an existing transit station or at a temporary stop providing interim shuttle bus connections.

All service will follow regular weekday schedules. The following is a list of commuter rail lines and the locations where their service will terminate during the convention:

- The Fitchburg/South Acton Line will terminate at the Porter Square Red Line station in Cambridge.
- The Lowell Line will terminate at the Anderson Regional Transportation Center in Woburn. From there, passengers may board shuttle buses that will travel to South Station via a reserved-vehicle lane.
- The Haverhill/Reading Line will terminate at the Oak Grove Station in Malden, where passengers may connect to expanded Orange Line service.
- The Newburyport/Rockport Line will terminate at Lynn Station, where passengers may connect via shuttle bus either to South Station or to the Blue Line's Wonderland Station.

SUGGESTED TRAVEL STRATEGIES

Strategies for avoiding or minimizing the impact of travel during the week of the DNC are as diverse as the location and circumstances of the four million daily trips that will be affected by it. They fall into five categories and can be adapted by a significant percentage of the traveling public.

- *Take Transit*—The MBTA will be the easiest way to get around the city. Using the alternative connections developed by the MBTA to compensate for the closure of North Station is the best way to reduce traffic congestion and ease traffic-related frustration, even though during the convention all large parcels will be inspected and there will be random inspections of briefcases and pocketbooks. The MBTA has published a booklet entitled "Taking the T during the DNC," providing information about stations affected by the convention and about substitute services. In addition, MBTA system maps will be widely available, signage will be improved, and there

■ DNC Travel Impacts *cont. on p. 4*

Recommended Travel Strategies for DNC Week

- **DNC Travel Impacts** *cont. from p. 3*
will be a small army of “MBTA Ambassadors” deployed throughout the system to assist patrons during the week of the convention. They will be wearing yellow shirts and blue caps and will be connected via radio to the MBTA Operations Control Center.
- **Don’t go**—While one need not stock up on supplies and hunker down as if it were the Blizzard of ’78, there are options such as taking time off from work or telecommuting by computer and phone.
- **Don’t go there**—Both drivers and transit users should consider making trips to alternate locations. Shopping and recreational trips are well suited to locations other than downtown Boston during the afternoon and evening hours. Some downtown businesses are already planning to temporarily relocate some of their operations to alternate sites.
- **Don’t go then**—Drivers will feel the most significant impact of roadway closures between 4:00 P.M. and midnight.

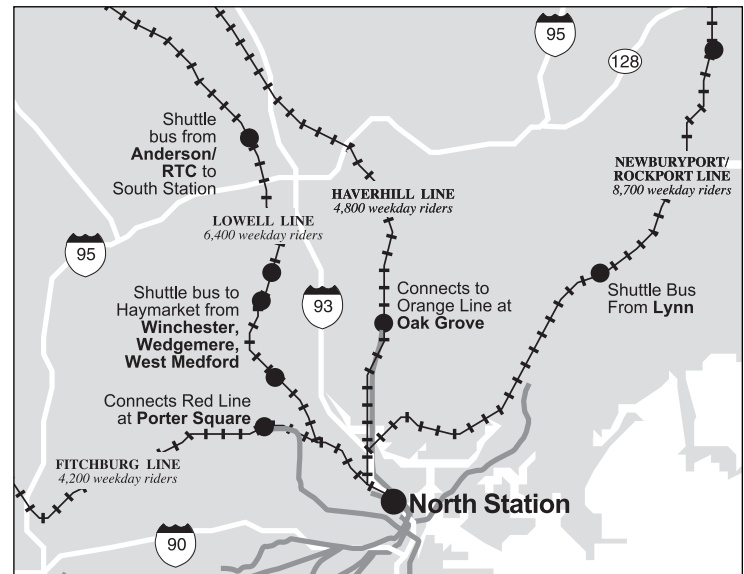
Re-scheduling nonwork trips and using “flex-time” for work trips are two common options for avoiding the worst congestion periods.

- **Don’t go that way**—Drivers should seek alternate routes, especially for longer trips. For trips to and from areas north of Boston, where congestion will be most prevalent, options include using I-95 to bypass the city or to connect with the Massachusetts Turnpike and local roads.

While getting around the region during the last week of July will be challenging for a lot of people, a willingness to explore different options just may lead some people to discover a new mode that that

they will continue to use even after the convention is over. The following links provide up-to-date information on DNC-related closures and travel options:

- www.mbta.com
- www.boston.com/news/politics/conventions/traffic/
- www.boston04.com

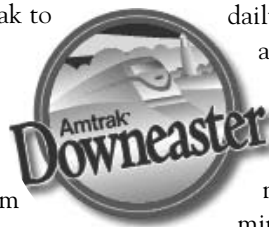


Amtrak Plans Downeaster Service Improvements; Maine Tourism to be Enhanced

On June 2 Maine Governor John Baldacci announced that an agreement had been reached with Guilford Transportation Industries to permit Amtrak to operate Downeaster trains between Boston and Portland at speeds of up to 79 miles per hour.

A \$6 million two-phase program of track improvements will support faster and additional Downeaster trains between Boston and Portland. In the first phase of the program, the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) will invest up to \$1.5 million to upgrade infrastructure in Kennebunk, Maine, and to perform other track work. As a result of these enhancements, overall travel time between Boston and Portland will be reduced by five to ten minutes beginning on August 1.

Completion of the second phase of the program, scheduled to begin next spring,



will further increase speed allowances and capacity. This \$4.5 million improvement will allow for the addition of a fifth daily round-trip between Boston and Portland by October 2005, and will further reduce the total trip time from the current two hours and forty-five minutes to two hours and thirty minutes. The additional train will provide earlier morning Boston arrivals and additional afternoon rush-hour service from Boston. In addition, Maine-bound passengers will arrive earlier and depart later in the day, providing tourists with more opportunities to participate in activities and to attend events.

“We appreciate the leadership of Governor Baldacci and the support of Guilford Rail, the Maine Department of Transportation, and Amtrak as we take this next step toward the continued growth and development of a thriving passenger

rail system in Maine. The full focus of our efforts will now be on delivering the best service we can to the passengers who enjoy and depend upon the Downeaster,” said John Englert, Executive Director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority.

In related news, Maine’s Governor Baldacci announced a pilot project for the summer of 2004 for operating excursion trains from Portland, Brunswick, and Rockland along Guilford’s lines and the Maine DOT’s Rockland Branch. The excursion trains will be operated by Maine Eastern Railroad and will probably be used for festivals and special events in Rockland. Schedules and details regarding the excursion service are still being developed. Stay tuned to *TRANSREPORT* for further updates.

MBTA Opens New Airport Station and North Station; Interim Shuttle Service to Lechmere Begins

Airport Station

On June 3 Governor Mitt Romney, Senate President Robert Travaglini, Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas, and MBTA General Manager Michael Mulhern officially opened



the MBTA's new Blue Line Airport Station, creating a state-of-the-art gateway for visitors and Massachusetts residents who fly into and out of Logan International Airport.

The MBTA began construction on the \$23 million project in April of 2000. The new station, located approximately 500 feet east of the former station, was built in coordination with the Massachusetts Port Authority and the Central Artery project, both of which have nearby construction projects.

The new facility is decorated with porcelain enamel panels depicting historic local images. New features include monitors with flight information and, to accommodate passengers with luggage and people with disabilities, turnstiles

with adjacent luggage slides, and wider escalators and elevators. It also has longer platforms to accommodate six-car train sets, which will begin service next year.

The opening is another major milestone in the MBTA's \$740 million effort to modernize the entire Blue Line with new stations and a fleet of 94 new subway cars.

North Station

The North Station underground "super station" officially opened on June 19, making the connection between the Green Line and the Orange Line much easier. The shifting of Green Line inbound service from street-level to an underground platform located opposite the Orange Line platform provides passengers with a streamlined transfer between the two lines. In addition, by this fall an underground walkway will open that will allow passengers to cross under Causeway Street to commuter rail trains and Amtrak service without having to contend with traffic and inclement weather.

The next milestone for the project requires the replacement of Green Line service at Lechmere and Science Park Stations with shuttle service for one year. The shuttle service, which began on June 25, will allow work crews to construct a new trestle behind the FleetCenter from the "super station" to Science Park Station. During this one-year period, Green Line service will operate only as far as

North Station. Normal Green Line service to Lechmere and Science Park Stations is expected to resume in the summer of 2005.

Interim Green Line Shuttle Service

In an effort to ensure a smooth transition from the subway to the bus, the MBTA has provided the following information:

- The shuttle bus stops at Lechmere, Science Museum, Charles River Park, North Station, Haymarket, and Government Center.
- Science Park Station is represented by two bus stops—Science Museum and Charles River Park.
- The shuttle has a standard subway fare (\$1.25, one token, or a subway pass) and there is a free transfer to and from the subway. Bus passes are not accepted, since the shuttle is part of subway service.
- Shuttle service will mirror subway service and operate just as often.
- The shuttle will be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Transfers to and from the subway will be available at Government Center, Haymarket, and North Station. Government Center is the best place to transfer to or from the Green Line. Haymarket is the best place to transfer for Green Line riders who are unable to use stairs, and it's the best place for Orange Line riders to transfer. Transfer tickets will be available in stations and from bus operators.

MBTA Board Approves Improvements for Gloucester and Walpole Stations

On June 3 the MBTA Board of Directors approved funding for the rehabilitation of the Walpole and Gloucester commuter rail stations. The \$1.4 million Walpole Station project will increase parking capacity from 326 to 526 vehicles and will provide new lighting, landscaping, and accessibility improvements. Work is slated for completion in nine months.

The \$3.7 million Gloucester Station project will allow for the construction of

approximately 100 new parking spaces adjacent to Railroad Avenue and the upgrade of LED (light emitting diode) signage to indicate when the next train will arrive. Additional amenities will include: new lighting and signage, sidewalk and landscaping improvements, and enhanced vehicular and pedestrian access to the station.



Gloucester commuter rail station

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, July 1

Boston Region MPO 10:00 A.M.

**Transportation Planning and
Programming Committee Meeting**
followed by

**Boston Region MPO Unified Planning
Work Program Committee Meeting**
CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150

Wednesday, July 14

Regional Transportation 3:00 P.M.

Advisory Council
Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Thursday, July 15

Boston Region MPO 10:00 A.M.

**Transportation Planning and
Programming Committee Meeting**
CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150

MBTA Public Hearing: Copley 4:00 P.M.

**Station Light Rail Accessibility
Program**

Conference Room 4

Fully accessible to persons with disabilities. (If assistive listening devices or interpreters are needed, please call to request them at (617) 222-3123 no later than Friday, July 9.

Monday, July 19

MBTA Rider Oversight 6:00 P.M.

Committee
Conference Rooms 1, 2, and 3

Wednesday, July 28

Access Advisory Committee 1:00 P.M.

to the MBTA (AACT)
Conference Room 2 and 3

Call (617) 222-5179 for date

MBTA Board of Directors 1:00 P.M.

Conference Room 2 and 3

AT OTHER BOSTON-AREA LOCATIONS

Tuesday, July 13

Design Meeting: Leverett Circle 4:30 P.M.

Pedestrian Crossing Options

Museum of Science, Skyline Room.

O'Brien Highway, Boston

Check in at a special registration table in the lobby for a visitor badge and parking validation.

Wednesday, July 14

MBTA Public Hearing: 7:00 P.M.

Silver Line Environmental Review

Renaissance School

50 Stuart Street, Boston

Fully accessible to persons with disabilities. (If assistive listening devices or interpreters are needed, please call to request them at (617) 222-3126 no later than Friday, July 9.

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, at www.bostonmpo.org.

■ Spanish Subscriptions *cont. from p. 1*

contact Daniel Peralta of the MPO staff at publicinformation@ctps.org or at (617) 973-7116.

In addition to making *TRANSREPORT* available in Spanish, the MPO has recently begun issuing Spanish press releases and legal notices to two Spanish-community newspapers, *El Mundo* and *La Semana*, informing readers of its public meetings and the availability of an interpreter for them. Watch for further announcements as the MPO expands its efforts to reach persons in all corners of our region, especially those who have been previously underserved.

TRANSREPORT

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