

# TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## The Silver Line Waterfront Line Opens for Service

Silver Line Waterfront, the second phase of the MBTA's Silver Line bus rapid transit service, was officially opened on December 17.

"Today, the barrier between downtown and the South Boston waterfront has been removed," said MBTA General Manager Michael H. Mulhern. "Frequent and reliable rapid transit service is now available to thousands of people who seek quick and easy access to jobs, hotels, restaurants, and other destinations like the city's new convention center."

The \$601 million project has created rapid transit service running from South Station, under Fort Point Channel to the World Trade Center, and then to the Boston Marine Industrial Park and City Point. Later in 2005, service to Logan Airport and to Andrew Station will be added.

Silver Line Waterfront service connects to the Red Line at South Station. In the Waterfront area, the Silver Line serves two new underground stations, Court-



house Station and World Trade Center (WTC) Station. Beyond WTC Station, Silver Line Waterfront crosses D Street at grade, passes under the new Manulife/John Hancock building, and makes a stop on Silver Line Way.



**Silver Line Waterfront's Courthouse Station**

From Silver Line Way the service proceeds in—currently—two branches: Route SL2, Boston Marine Industrial Park, and Route SL3, City Point via Boston Marine Industrial Park. During 2005, two additional surface branches will be implemented: Route SL4, Andrew Station via Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and D Street, and Route SL1, Airport Terminals.

Silver Line Waterfront operates during the same hours as the Red Line, meeting the first and last Red Line trains of the day. Service from South Station to Silver Line Way operates as frequently as every 2 minutes during peak commuting hours. It runs every 5 minutes during off-peak hours, including on

■ [Silver Line Waterfront cont. on p. 3](#)

## New Tunnel under Leverett Circle Opens

The Central Artery/Tunnel Project opened a new, direct connection from Storrow Drive to I-93 North and the Tobin Bridge in December. This connection, via a new two-lane tunnel, allows drivers headed north to bypass Leverett Circle, one of Boston's worst traffic choke points. The left lane of Storrow Drive eastbound separates from the other two travel lanes, takes cars down into a tunnel, and then takes them up onto the I-93 North Connector.

Prior to the opening of the new tunnel, approximately 25,000 vehicles per day passed through Leverett Circle on their way to I-93 northbound and the Tobin Bridge. About 1,300 of those are expected to use the new 600-foot Storrow tunnel each hour during the morning commute, and another 1,500 vehicles per hour during the evening commute.

By allowing so many vehicles to bypass Leverett Circle, the tunnel will also prove to be a boon to motorists headed to Msgr. O'Brien Highway or Nashua Street via the circle. In addition,

■ [Leverett Tunnel cont. on p. 2](#)

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### BOSTON REGION MPO ACTION ITEMS

At its meeting on December 16, the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee approved an administrative adjustment to remove references to transit carryovers in the fiscal years 2005–2009 TIP (see article on right side of page). The Committee also took the following actions:

- Approved the Bus Deployment Needs Study and the Proposed North Andover (Lucent Technologies) Commuter Rail Station Feasibility Study work scopes
- Approved public circulation of the memorandum, “Improvements to Signalized Intersections in the Inner Core”
- Approved the 2004 Congestion Management System report, *Mobility in the Boston Region: Existing Conditions and Next Steps*, for public release
- Tabled action on the schedule for certification document activities, pending revisions

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

At the December Advisory Council meeting, MBTA Federal Program Manager Charles Passanisi gave a briefing on the MBTA’s draft FYs 2005–2010 Capital Investment Program (CIP). The presentation included information on the process for CIP development and on funding constraints and a listing of the projects proposed for inclusion. The majority of funds in the draft CIP are dedicated to state-of-good-repair projects, in keeping with MBTA policy. At this meeting, members also discussed an amendment to the draft FYs 2005–2009 Transportation Improvement Program and voted to recommend its approval to the MPO.

The January Advisory Council meeting will feature a briefing by Deputy Secretary of Transportation Astrid Glynn on the transportation reform legislation passed last summer.

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

In December, AACT, in addition to holding its monthly meeting, held an Executive Board meeting and had its annual holiday party. The party was attended by AACT members, staff of the MBTA and the Central Transportation Planning Staff, and vendors for THE RIDE. A good time was had by all. The regular monthly meeting included reports and updates from RIDE vendors, the MBTA Police, and the MBTA Office of Transportation Access.

The January AACT meeting will feature a discussion of THE RIDE’s new dispatching system.



### ■ Leverett Tunnel *cont. from p. 1*

it will benefit drivers on Storrow Drive who are headed to I-93 South, North Station, or the FleetCenter.

### TIP Adjustment

On December 16 the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization voted unanimously to adjust the fiscal years 2005–2009 Transportation Improvement Program. This adjustment removes MBTA carryover funds for items that were awarded by the Federal Transit Administration before the end of federal fiscal year 2004. The adjustment reduces the total carryover funds from \$307.9 million to \$137.2 million. The Committee suspended its standard public review period of 15 days to make the adjustment effective immediately.

### Longfellow Bridge Bike Count Observations

A bicycle count was conducted at Boston’s Longfellow Bridge on November 30. Bicyclists were counted crossing over the river as well as riding along the path on the Esplanade under the bridge. The peak-hour count of 121 bicyclists was almost 50 percent higher than the 82 peak-hour bicyclist count recorded in a November 28, 1984, count at the same location.

What was very striking was the increased volume of vehicular traffic since then. In 1984, backups on the bridge were extremely rare. When that happened, many motorists impatiently changed the breakdown lane into a third travel lane, making bicycle travel much more difficult. However, when traffic on the bridge this past November was backed up in the inbound direction for over an hour, motorists seemed to take it in stride as part of their regular commute. And bicyclists did not seem to mind as they passed the stalled traffic in the breakdown lane.

### ■ Bike Count *cont. on p. 3*

■ Silver Line Waterfront *cont. from p. 1*

Saturdays and Sundays. Beyond Silver Line Way, Routes SL2 and SL3 provide peak-period service to stops every 6 to 12 minutes.

“This is a historic day. The Silver Line is changing the dynamic of the city of Boston by opening up a whole new area to efficient and reliable transit service and economic development,” said Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas. “This project will be a major impetus for activity and investment on the South Boston waterfront.”

One new development adjacent to Silver Line Waterfront is Waterside Place, which will be built on 10.3 acres of the approximately 50 acres of Massport property being made available for mixed-use development in the Waterfront area. The project is proposed to include residential and retail space, a cinema, and a parking garage. Construction is slated to begin in late 2006.

The opening of Silver Line Waterfront comes two years after Silver Line service began on Washington Street. After one year of service, ridership between Dudley Square in Roxbury and Downtown Crossing doubled. The third phase of the Silver Line is currently in design—a tunnel between South Station and the Green Line’s Boylston Station.

■ Bike Count *cont. from p. 2*

A major consequence of this increased traffic is the quality of air. All the fumes make breathing noticeably unpleasant. That’s the case for bicyclists as well as for pedestrians, a group not even counted in 1984. The peak-hour count of pedestrians was 182 in November.

We all know there is more traffic today than ever before. We have seen the numbers. We are stuck in the jams. Yet few of us ever go to a location we have not seen for twenty years, spend a couple of hours there, and witness the difference so clearly.

## Development on Former Artery Land in Chinatown

The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority issued a request for proposals in December for the development of one of the plots of land made available by the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, Parcel 24 in Chinatown. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) guidelines for the 58,000-square-foot parcel, situated between Hudson,



Parcel 24 in Chinatown

Kneeland, and Albany streets, call for the creation of 275 to 325 residential units, with a significant proportion of those set aside for affordable housing. The development will also contain ground-floor retail space and ancillary parking. In addition it will have 5,000 to 10,000 square feet of community space and a park at the center. Building heights will range from the 155–185-foot level at Kneeland Street, which is about the same height as adjacent buildings, to 55–65 feet at the southern end of the parcel.

The ramp being removed from Parcel 24 by the Central Artery/Tunnel Project was constructed when the Turnpike

Extension was built in 1962. Previously the Hudson and Albany street area south of Kneeland Street was a residential section of the Chinatown neighborhood. The guidelines for the parcel were developed through a community review process conducted over the past 18 months

with BRA’s Chinatown/Leather District Central Artery Advisory Committee. Of the total land being freed up by removal of the old elevated Central Artery and associated roadways, three quarters will become open space. Parcel 24 is part of the one quarter of land set aside for development.

Proposals are due March 15, 2005. Potential developers will present their proposals to the Chinatown/Leather District Central Artery Advisory Committee and the Mayor’s Central Artery Completion Task Force. The Turnpike Authority will select the developer.

## Lovejoy Ferry Service Ends

Effective at the close of business on Friday, January 21, the MBTA will be discontinuing the two Inner Harbor ferry services from Lovejoy Wharf:

- F3 Lovejoy to Charlestown Navy Yard
- F5 Lovejoy to Moakley Courthouse and the World Trade Center

Ferry services from Lovejoy Wharf were introduced in 1997 to mitigate Central Artery construction activity occurring in the area. As various construction projects were completed, ridership on the Lovejoy services has declined. Today, the F3 and F5 services carry about 70 and 63 passengers on an average weekday, respectively. This has resulted in a cost to the MBTA of \$12.44 per passenger trip for F3 service and \$30.84 per passenger trip for F5 service.



Lovejoy Wharf

With the opening of the Silver Line Waterfront service from South Station, commuters now have the option of taking rapid transit to the Moakley U.S. Courthouse and World Trade Center via bus rapid transit. Commuters can also take the #4 bus from North Station that stops at the Moakley U.S. Courthouse and World Trade Center. Charlestown commuters still have the option of taking F4 ferry service from the Charlestown Navy Yard to Long Wharf, as the F4 route will continue.

## 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, January 6  
Boston Region MPO 10:00 A.M.

#### Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Meeting and Work Session

CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150

Wednesday, January 12  
Regional Transportation  
Advisory Council 3:00 P.M.

Conference Room 4

Thursday, January 20  
Boston Region MPO 10:00 A.M.

#### Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Meeting: Amendment to Fiscal Years 2005–2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150

Immediately followed by:

#### Boston Region MPO Meeting: Endorsement of Fiscal Years 2005–2009 TIP Amendment

MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150

Monday, January 24  
MBTA Rider Oversight  
Committee 4:30 P.M.

Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Wednesday, January 26  
Access Advisory Committee  
to the MBTA (AACT) 1:00 P.M.

Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Call (617) 222-5179 for date  
MBTA Board of Directors 1:00 P.M.

Conference Rooms 2 and 3

### AT OTHER BOSTON AREA LOCATIONS

Thursday, January 6  
MBTA Public Meeting: Fate of 7:30 P.M.  
Fairlawn Street Footbridge in Malden

Malden City Hall  
City Council Chambers  
200 Pleasant Street, Malden

Tuesday, January 11 (tentative)  
Charles River Park Basin 4:00 P.M.  
Citizens Advisory Committee

Contact Charlotte Fleetwood at  
[cxfleu@bigdig.com](mailto:cxfleu@bigdig.com) for confirmation  
and location.

Wednesday, January 19  
MassHighway Public Hearing: 6:00 P.M.  
Proposed Howley Street Bridge  
Replacement (over the North River  
in Peabody)

Peabody City Hall  
Wiggin Auditorium  
24 Lowell Street, Peabody

Wednesday, January 26  
Massport Public Hearing: 6:00 P.M.  
Proposed Increase in Parking  
Fines at Logan International  
Airport, Hanscom Field, and  
Other Massport Properties

Black Falcon Cruise Terminal  
Boston Marine Industrial Park  
1 Black Falcon Avenue, South Boston

Thursday, January 27  
Boston College Citizens 8:00 A.M.  
Seminar for MetroFuture:  
Making a Greater Boston Region

Boston Convention and  
Exhibition Center  
415 Summer Street, South Boston  
To register go to [www.bc.edu/schools/  
csom/cga/citizen/invitations](http://www.bc.edu/schools/csom/cga/citizen/invitations), or call Lauren  
at (617) 552-0904.

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

### STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REVISION PROCESS

The deadline for comments on the process for revisiting the Central Artery transit commitments and the associated regulatory framework are due at 5:00 P.M. on **January 14, 2005**. The three remaining Central Artery/Tunnel project air quality mitigation transit commitments are the Arborway Green Line Extension, the Blue Line/Red Line Connector, and the Medford Hills Green Line Extension.

Please address comments to:

Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas  
Executive Office of Transportation  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170  
Boston, MA 02116  
and/or  
Commissioner Robert W. Colledge, Jr.  
Department of Environmental Protection  
One Winter Street  
Boston, MA 02108

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