

# TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Transportation/Land Use Study Gets Underway for Sites in Belmont, Lexington, and Waltham

The Boston Region MPO approved a \$319,500 work program in April for a study that will include the development of “smart growth” land use scenarios and travel demand forecasting. The purpose of the study, which provides an opportunity to institute the governor’s sustainable development principles on a multi-community scale, is to identify the collective impacts from both proposed and potential redevelopment in the study area (see the map on page 3).

Parcels with already identified redevelopment plans include:

- A portion of the McLean Hospital site in Belmont.

- The 340-acre former Metropolitan State Hospital campus in Belmont, Lexington, and Waltham.
- The former Middlesex County Hospital in Waltham and Lexington and six lots of land surrounding it.

Additional parcels that are likely to be available for redevelopment in the near future include the more-than-200-acre Fernald School site and the adjacent Army Corps of Engineers property.

The study will be conducted jointly by the Central Transportation Planning Staff and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), with input and

### MPO AND AACT ELECTIONS REMINDER

The annual Boston Region MPO election will be held on May 25 at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s Spring Meeting. The City of Newton and the Town of Hopkinton, incumbents whose terms are expiring, are the two nominees.

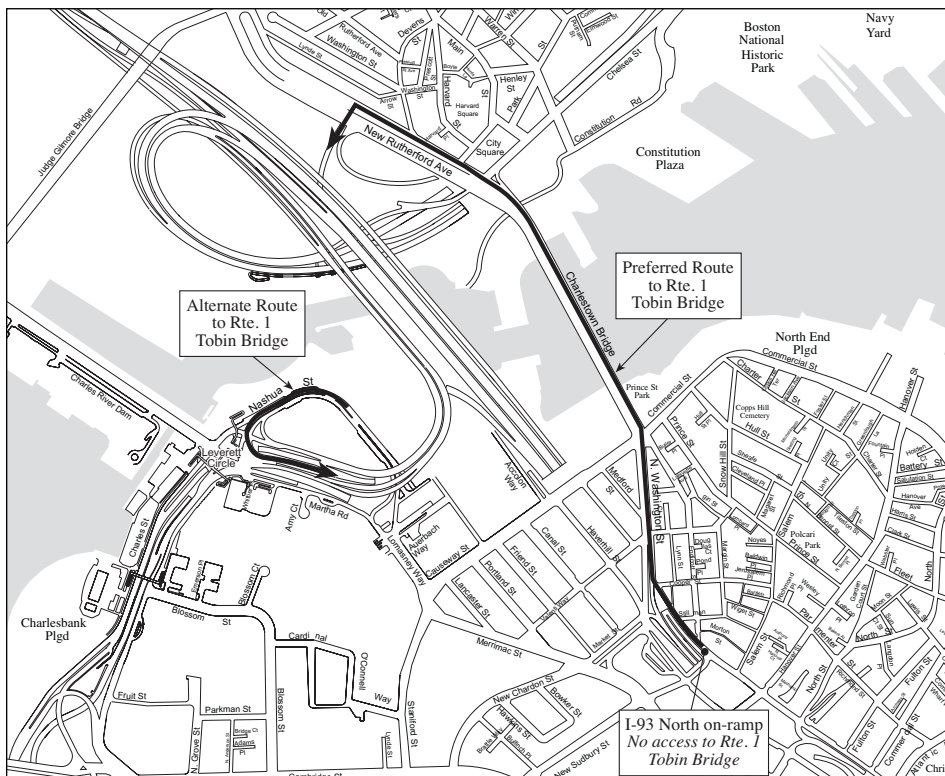
The election of officers for the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA will also take place on May 25 at the AACT monthly meeting.

See page 4 for details on both meetings.

guidance from a task force composed of local officials, the MBTA, the Massachusetts Highway Department, MAPC representatives, and community organizations.

■ Land Use Study *cont. on p. 3*

## Motorists Adapt to Changes as Final I-93 Northbound Lanes Open on Zakim Bridge



The final two lanes of the 10-lane Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge opened on April 7. These cantilevered northbound lanes handle traffic from the Summer Tunnel and Boston surface streets heading to I-93 northbound.

Since the new lanes will merge into I-93 northbound traffic north of Exit 27 (Tobin Bridge/Route 1), motorists in

■ Routes to Tobin Bridge *cont. on p. 4*

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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS**

On April 21 the Boston Region MPO's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee approved the distribution of the Air Quality Conformity Redetermination for the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan and the fiscal years 2005–2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public comment. This redetermination was necessary in order to comply with the federal Environmental Protection Agency's eight-hour ozone standard that will replace its former one-hour standard. It includes preliminary calculations for the volatile organic compound and nitrogen oxide emissions (per summer day) for the eastern Massachusetts ozone nonattainment area and for winter carbon monoxide emissions for nine cities in the Boston area (Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Quincy, Revere, and Somerville). Final emission estimates will be available May 3.

The Air Conformity Redetermination report and final emissions estimates may be downloaded from the MPO's Web site, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org). Copies may also be requested by contacting the Central Transportation Planning Staff at 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116-3968, U.S. mail; (617) 973-7100, telephone; (617) 973-7089, TTY; (617) 973-8855, fax; or [publicinformation@ctps.org](mailto:publicinformation@ctps.org), e-mail. Accessible formats are available upon request. The public comment period will close May 17, 2005. Written comments may be submitted via fax, e-mail, or U.S. mail. At its meeting on May 19, the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee will review written comments on the Conformity Redetermination (see page 4 for details).

The Committee also approved the work program for the Belmont, Lexington, and Waltham Subarea Study (described on page 1).

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE**

In April, Advisory Council members and guests received a briefing from Bill Moore of the Central Transportation Planning Staff on the Agency and Municipal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Input Days that were held on March 31, 2005, and April 7, 2005, respectively. Meeting attendees learned about some of the priority projects being proposed by the state transportation agencies and municipalities for possible inclusion in the FYs 2006–2010 TIP.

The Advisory Council meeting in May will feature additional briefings on transportation-related topics of interest and on the continuing development of the draft certification documents (see page 4 for details). Preceding the above meeting of the full Advisory Council will be meetings of its Freight and Regional Transportation Plan committees at 1:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M., respectively, in the CTPS Conference Room, located in Suite 2150 of the State Transportation Building.

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

At the April AACT meeting, Matthew Whalen, supervisor of the MBTA's Office of Transportation and Access Pass Program, gave an overview of how MBTA Senior/Transportation Access Pass IDs will be incorporated into Easy Way, the MBTA's new automated fare-collection program. Approximately 150,000 IDs will need to be replaced. The MBTA will conduct community outreach and distribute brochures to assist people with the transition to the new equipment.

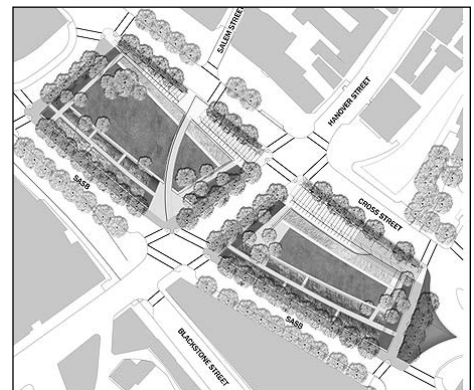
The MBTA's Operations Control Center is asking for feedback from AACT on changes to the Elevator/Escalator/Lift Update Line, which will be tested for two weeks beginning on or around May 18. Call (617) 222-2828 or (800) 392-6100 and press "6" to hear the recording. The MBTA would like to hear your comments on it at the next AACT meeting, which will be held on May 25.

**Construction Begins on North End Parks**

On April 11 the reweaving of the urban fabric that had been torn by the now dismantled elevated Central Artery began in earnest with the groundbreaking for the North End parks section of the Rose Kennedy Greenway. The new parks, which will provide a transition between the civic spaces of downtown Boston and the intimacy of its oldest neighborhood, encompass two parcels of cultural, historic, and topographic significance. The parks, which will be bisected by Hanover Street, were once the site of a land bridge that connected the peninsula of Boston with Sudbury. It was also the low point between Beacon Hill and Copps Hill and subsequently was the logical choice for a mill canal that connected the swampy area known as the Mill Pond (later called the Bulfinch Triangle) with the bay. These topographical factors were significant in the development of the North End.

These parks, which will span 2.8 acres of the 27-acre Rose Kennedy Greenway, were designed by the team of Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge, of Boston, and Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, of Seattle, with input from North End residents and other members of the public. They will feature flexible spaces that will appeal to local residents as well as to the thousands of tourists who visit the North End each year. McCourt Construction is expecting to complete the \$12.3 million contract in May 2006.

When the Central Artery/Tunnel project is complete, it will have created more than 300 acres of parks and open space in and around Boston.



## MBTA Begins Upgrading Fairmount Line

The MBTA officially launched its major overhaul of the Fairmount commuter rail line, which runs between Readville and South Station, at a groundbreaking ceremony held on April 14 at Uphams Corner Station in Dorchester. Rehabilitation of the 9.2-mile line, which lies entirely within the city of Boston, will be completed in two phases. The first phase encompasses the reconstruction of the existing Uphams Corner and Morton Street stations and six bridges, as well as track, switch, and signal upgrades. The reconstructed Uphams Corner and Morton Street stations will feature new designs that include high-level train platforms for easy boarding, canopies, access ramps, electronic message boards, and pedestrian-friendly walkways.



**Architect's rendering of reconstructed Uphams Corner Station**

Public hearings regarding the new station designs for Uphams Corner and Morton Street began in the summer of 2004 and are still taking place; hearings were held on April 14 for Morton Street Station and on April 26 for Uphams Corner Station. Local residents, public officials, and commuters attended the hearings, where they submitted comments regarding each station's design and brainstormed about which mitigation efforts would work best for residents and business owners while the stations are being rebuilt. The reconstruction of the existing stations at Readville and Fairmount has already been completed. Readville Station was completed in 1992 and Fairmount Station in 2004.

With the first phase of the Fairmount Line project now underway, community and environmental advocacy groups will focus their attention on supporting the MBTA's efforts to secure funding for the planned second phase, the construction of new stations at Four Corners, Talbot Avenue, Blue Hill Avenue, and the Newmarket area. The addition of new stations and upgrades of the existing infrastructure are projected to more than triple ridership on the line.

To obtain more information about the Fairmount Line, contact Pablo Calderon,



**Architect's rendering of planned Newmarket Station**

Communication and Coordination Specialist for Design and Construction, at (617) 222-4167, or visit the MBTA's Web site, [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com).

## Downeaster Service Improvements



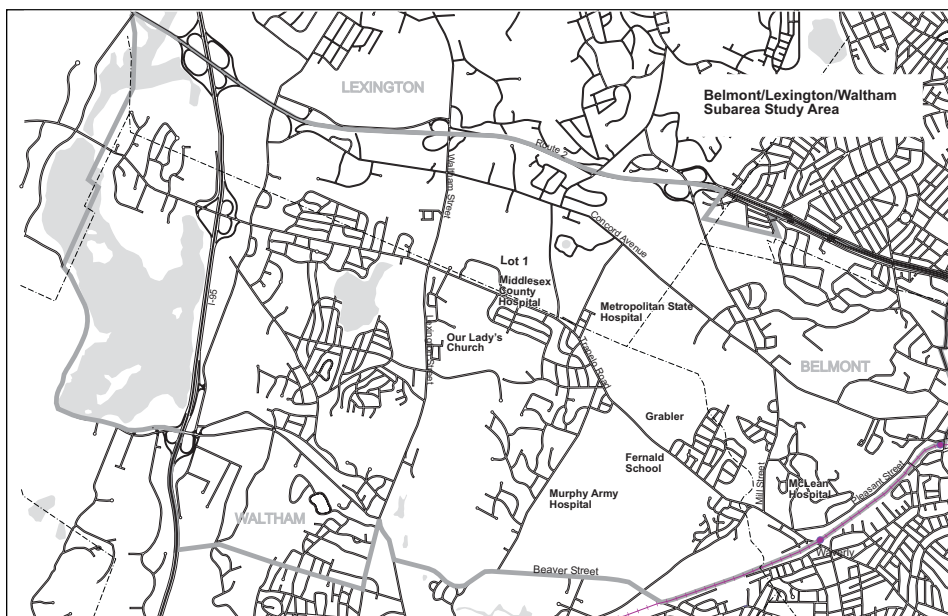
Amtrak's new Downeaster schedule shaves approximately 10 to 15 minutes of travel time off of the previous schedule. The service,

which is administered by the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA), began operating its new schedule on April 25. A one-way trip between Boston and Portland now takes only two and a half hours. The new schedule is possible because of track improvements in Kennebunk and shorter station stops. The NNEPRA worked cooperatively with the Maine Department of Transportation, Guilford Rail (a freight company), and the MBTA to secure funding for track improvements and to adjust schedules for MBTA commuter rail and Guilford freight trains.

Currently the Downeaster makes four round-trips daily between Portland and Boston. By this fall, the NNEPRA hopes to add a fifth round-trip after additional track upgrades have been completed. In addition, seasonal service began at Old Orchard Beach Station on April 25 and will continue through October 31.

For more information or to get the latest schedule, visit [www.thedowneaster.com](http://www.thedowneaster.com).

### ■ Land Use Study cont. from p. 1



## 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, May 5		
<b>Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee</b>	10:00 A.M.	
CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150		
Wednesday, May 11		
<b>Regional Transportation Advisory Council</b>	3:00 P.M.	
Conference Room 4		
Thursday, May 12		
<b>Boston Region MPO Meeting: State Implementation Plan (SIP) Project Reevaluation</b>	10:00 A.M.	
Conference Room 1		
Thursday, May 19		
<b>Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee</b>	10:00 A.M.	
CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150		
Monday, May 23		
<b>MBTA Rider Oversight Committee</b>	4:00 P.M.	
Conference Rooms 1, 2, and 3		
Wednesday, May 25		
<b>Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT)</b>	1:00 P.M.	
Conference Room 1		
Thursday, June 2		
<b>Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Work Session</b>	10:00 A.M.	
CTPS Conference Room, Suite 2150		
Call (617) 222-5179 for date		
<b>MBTA Board of Directors</b>	1:00 P.M.	
Conference Rooms 2 and 3		

### MBTA 2006 SERVICE PLANNING WORKSHOPS

The MBTA is hosting a series of community workshops this month to hear comments on its 2006 Service Plan. Comments may also be sent by mail to the MBTA Service Planning Unit, 45 High Street, Boston, MA 02110, or by e-mail to [service@mbta.com](mailto:service@mbta.com). Written comments will be accepted through June 30, 2005. The workshops have been scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, May 11	6:00 P.M.
Honan-Allston Public Library 300 North Harvard Street, Allston	
Thursday, May 12	Noon & 6:00 P.M.
Dudley Branch Library 65 Warren Street, Roxbury	
Tuesday, May 17	6:00 P.M.
North Shore Community College MBTA Conference Room T102 Market and Broad Streets, Lynn	
Thursday, May 19	6:00 P.M.
Malden City Hall, Rm 421 200 Pleasant Street, Malden	

### AT OTHER BOSTON AREA LOCATIONS

Friday, May 13	
<b>MOVE MASSACHUSETTS: Congestion Pricing of Roadways</b>	8:10 A.M.
Brown Rudnick Berlack Israels Eighteenth Floor One Financial Center, Boston (Across from South Station)	
Wednesday, May 25	
<b>Boston Region MPO Election and Metropolitan Area Planning Council Spring Meeting</b>	9:00 A.M.
Lexington Sheraton Inn Route 2A (Exit 30 off Route 128)	

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](http://www.bostonmpo.org).

## I-93 Northbound Changes

■ Routes to Tobin Bridge *cont. from p. 1*  
downtown Boston who are heading to Route 1 and the Tobin Bridge are no longer able to use the Cross Street on-ramp.

Motorists from downtown Boston may now get onto the Tobin Bridge from:

- City Square in Charlestown via the North Washington Street Bridge.
- Leverett Circle.
- I-93 northbound via the Congress Street on-ramp.

### 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](mailto:publicinformation@bostonmpo.org) (e-mail).*

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