

# TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Pace Picks Up on JOURNEY TO 2030 Public Involvement Activities



Public outreach for JOURNEY TO 2030, the Boston Region MPO's long-

range transportation plan, went into full swing in January, and even more opportunities for public input are planned for February.

On January 10, as part of the MPO's "Invite Us Over" program, MPO staff met with the Medical, Academic, and Scientific Community Organization (MASCO) to discuss JOURNEY TO 2030. MASCO staff provided information about transportation needs in the Longwood Medical Area, which is the second-largest employment center in the Boston region. They also identified several transportation projects that they thought would provide benefits to the area. Some suggestions were: full-time commuter rail service to Yawkey Station and Ruggles Station, a transit tunnel to connect these stations, and roadway improvements in the Urban Ring corridor, including the Sears Rotary.

Nearly 50 people attended the next event, the second in a series of JOURNEY TO 2030 open houses, which was held on January 17. Attendees heard presentations from MBTA and MPO staff on programs that address system preservation and modernization and learned about how the MPO identifies and studies mobility issues within the region. They also reviewed maps of the universe of projects and programs proposed to date, proposed additions to them, and com-

■ Public Outreach for Plan cont. on p. 2

## The Boston Region MPO Municipal-Official Seminars and Forums

Municipal officials who would like to learn about how the MPO will develop its fiscal year (FY) 2007 Unified Planning Work Program and its FYs 2007–2011 Transportation Improvement Program are invited to attend any of the seminars listed below. Municipal officials are also invited to participate in the JOURNEY TO 2030 forums, which will take place following the seminars.

### OTHER JOURNEY TO 2030 FORUMS

The Boston Region MPO will host forums for specific-interest groups and individuals with an interest in specific transportation topics. You and your organization are invited to participate in a session in your area. RSVP by contacting Jared Fijalkowski of the Boston Region MPO staff at (617) 973-7092 or [jfijalkowski@bostonmpo.org](mailto:jfijalkowski@bostonmpo.org). The details for these events are as follows:

#### SOUTH OF BOSTON

Wednesday, February 22  
Weymouth Town Hall  
75 Middle Street, Weymouth

#### INNER CORE

Thursday, February 23  
State Transportation Building  
Conference Rooms 2 and 3  
10 Park Plaza, Boston

#### NORTH OF BOSTON

Monday, February 27  
Salem Town Hall Annex  
120 Washington Street, Salem

#### WEST OF BOSTON

Tuesday, February 28  
Framingham Town Hall  
150 Concord Street, Framingham

#### EVENTS SCHEDULE (for all locations)

<b>Municipal Seminars</b>	9:00 A.M.–10:00 A.M.
<b>Municipal Forums</b>	10:00 A.M.–11:30 A.M.
<b>Other Forums</b>	1:30 P.M.–3:30 P.M.

## Federal Highway Funds Less than Expected

Due to less-than-anticipated federal highway funds in fiscal year (FY) 2006, in February the Boston Region MPO will consider amending its Transportation Improvement Program to be constrained by the final FY 2006 federal allocations.

On November 30 the president signed Public Law 109-115: Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Develop-

■ Funding Allocations cont. on p. 3



See inside for special insert.

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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS**

JOURNEY TO 2030, the Boston Region MPO transportation plan, continues to be a top priority for the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. In January the Committee approved MPO policies for the Plan, discussed project selection criteria, and further developed the universe of projects based on the results of public outreach.

In addition to discussing the need for a major amendment to the current Transportation Improvement Program (see the related article on page 1), the Committee approved the hiring of two new staff members. The Committee also approved a work program for CTPS to conduct an impact analysis of a potential 2007 MBTA fare increase. The objective of the analysis, which was requested by the MBTA, is to forecast the ridership, revenue, and environmental and socioeconomic impacts of a potential MBTA fare increase.

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE**

At the January meeting, Advisory Council members participated in a JOURNEY TO 2030 workshop conducted by MPO staff and received a briefing on the development of the draft document and public outreach activities that had been conducted to date. Members also shared their own recommendations on what they would like the regional transportation system to look like by the year 2030.

In February MassRIDES staff will brief the Council on the Safe Routes to School program. A presentation from a representative of the Providence and Worcester Railroad on regional freight transportation issues is also scheduled (see page 4 for details on this meeting and the Council's Freight Committee and Transportation Plan Committee meetings).

**ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA UPDATE**

At the December and January meetings, MBTA staff briefed members on Woodland Station improvements, plans to upgrade the MBTA's public address system to provide audio and visual announcements about train arrivals and information on train delays, the anticipated arrival schedule for the remaining low-floor Breda cars for the Green Line, and the ongoing program to replace senior IDs and Transportation Access Passes so that they are compatible with the MBTA's new fare-collection equipment.

■ Public Outreach for Plan *cont. from p. 1* mented on the policy topics to be included in the Plan. The Open House concluded with an invitation to submit study ideas for the MPO's 2007 Unified Planning Work Program.

For the Regional Transportation Advisory Council's involvement, see the activities update above.

Opportunities in February for input to JOURNEY TO 2030:

- Other forums (see the box on page 1 for details)
- Continuation of the "Invite Us Over" program (contact Jared Fajalkowski at

(617) 973-7092 or [jfajalkowski@bostonmpo.org](mailto:jfajalkowski@bostonmpo.org))

- The MPO's Web site, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org) (click on the JOURNEY TO 2030 button)
- MPO presentations at Metropolitan Area Planning Council subregion meetings (see the schedule on page 3)

Planning is also underway for the March Open House. Stay tuned to TRANSREPORT for more information and to share your input.

**MPO Agency Notes**

**From the MBTA**

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority took another step last month in its transition to an automated fare-collection system by replacing its monthly passes with the CharlieTicket. The transition, which began with the introduction of the CharlieTicket on the Silver Line in February 2005, will continue throughout 2006. The new fare-collection equipment is expected to be fully up and running systemwide in 2007, at which point tokens will be completely eliminated and the CharlieCard, a permanent, "contactless" smart card, will be introduced.

The MBTA opened a new, 142-space expansion parking lot at the Westborough commuter rail station, bringing the total number of parking spaces at that station to 443. The new \$500,000 lot, which provides overflow parking next to the original lot and platforms, was already filled to 50 percent capacity by mid-January.

Capacity on the MBTA commuter rail service from South Station has increased with the deployment of 19 new bilevel coaches in December; 14 more coaches are expected to be in service by March.

Speeds on a number of MBTA Green Line segments have substantially increased (from 6 miles per hour to 25, for example, on the D branch between Beaconsfield and Reservoir) due to recent track work, tie repair, and the creation of platforms. Green Line service is expected to continue to improve throughout 2006 as 85 additional Breda cars are phased into operation.

**From MassHighway**

MassHighway officials will be able to get the jump on road-clearing efforts this winter with the installation of high-tech roadway sensors at 12 additional sites on state roadways. The equipment detects when temperatures drop below freezing and measures how much salt is still on the road, allowing officials to target where to send salt and sand trucks.

■ Agency Notes *cont. on p. 4*

**SUBREGION MEETINGS  
WITH MPO PRESENTATIONS**

The Boston Region MPO is on the agenda to discuss the latest developments on JOURNEY TO 2030 and the Transportation Improvement Program at the February meetings of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) subregional groups. The meeting schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, February 1

**Inner Core** 9:30 A.M.  
MAPC, 5th Floor  
60 Temple Street, Boston

Wednesday, February 8

**North Suburban Planning Council** 8:30 A.M.  
Winchester Town Hall  
71 Mount Vernon Street  
Winchester

Thursday, February 9

**North Shore Task Force** 8:30 A.M.  
Peabody Institute Library  
15 Sylvan Street, Danvers

**MetroWest Growth Management Committee Transportation Task Force** 2:30 P.M.  
MetroWest Growth Management Committee Offices, Suite 205  
20 Main Street, Natick

Thursday, February 16

**Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP)** 3:00 P.M.  
Millis Town Hall, Room 229  
900 Main Street, Millis

**South Shore Coalition** 7:00 P.M.  
Hingham Town Hall  
210 Central Street, Hingham

Thursday, February 23

**Joint meeting of the MetroWest Growth Management Committee and the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC)** 6:30 P.M.  
Fairbank Community Center  
40 Fairbank Road, Sudbury

Date, time, and location pending  
**Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC)**

Contact TRIC coordinator Bill Clark at (617) 451-2770 or wclark@mapc.org for further information.

**A Smart-Growth Update**

**New Smart-Growth Publication Available**

Smart-growth advocates have two new publications available to them to further inform their discussions and plans for the future.

In December the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance, a coalition of seven housing, environment, development, and equity groups, released its report *Shared Destinies: A Smart Growth Agenda for Massachusetts*. To download a copy, visit [www.ma-smart-growth.org](http://www.ma-smart-growth.org) and click on "News," or contact the Alliance Director, Kristina Egan, at (617) 263-1257 for a print copy.

In January the Office for Commonwealth Development introduced the newsletter, *Smart Growth Newslines*, a publication that is intended to provide the latest information on planning and development in Massachusetts and around the nation. The newsletter may be downloaded from [www.mass.gov/ocd](http://www.mass.gov/ocd).

**Upcoming Conferences**

Registration is open for three smart-growth-related conferences to be held in March.

- The conference Zoning for Affordable Housing: Inclusionary Zoning and Beyond will be held in Lexington on March 3. This all-day session will provide an opportunity to hear from land-use experts about zoning tools and techniques available to increase

housing options. The fee for the session is \$65.00 and lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Gercide Luc of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership at (617) 330-9944, ext. 292, or by e-mail at [gluc@mhp.net](mailto:gluc@mhp.net).

- The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition will hold its annual conference, Conserving Land and Community, on Saturday, March 11, at the Bancroft School in Worcester. The conference will include workshops and discussions on land management, forest conservation, and challenges to urban land protection. The cost is \$35.00 per person. For more information, contact the Trustees of Reservations/PCI at (978) 840-4446, ext. 1900, or visit [www.thetrustees.org/PutnamConservationInstitute.cfm](http://www.thetrustees.org/PutnamConservationInstitute.cfm).
- On Saturday, March 18, the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative will hold its fifth annual conference, Advanced Tools and Techniques for Planning and Zoning, at Holy Cross College in Worcester. The conference will include sessions on topics such as the new smart-growth tool kit, multi-town planning, Chapter 40R, and MassHighway's new design manual. The cost is \$50.00 per person. For more information, contact Diana Krauth at (413) 545-2188 or visit the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative's Web site at [www.umass.edu/masscptc](http://www.umass.edu/masscptc).

■ **Funding Allocations cont. from p. 1**

ment, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006. The appropriations act forms the basis of the fiscal constraint on developing the MPO's TIP. Congress passed a subsequent rescission of funds amounting to 1 percent of all programs in the appropriations bill in order to fund defense programs. After the rescission, Massachusetts will receive \$473 million in federal highway formula funds, which is approximately 20 percent less than the amount expected when the FY: 2006-2010 TIP was developed last summer. The MPO must remove some

funding for projects in the TIP by amendment in order to remain within financial constraint. Municipal officials have been notified of the need for the amendment, which will be posted on the MPO's Web site, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org), following direction from the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee to circulate the draft document for public comment. Notice of its availability will be advertised in the *Boston Globe*, announced in press releases, and sent to the MPO's list serve subscribers.

# JOURNEY TO 2030

Transportation Plan of the  
Boston Region Metropolitan  
Planning Organization

## IN THIS EDITION

Regional Equity  
Communities of Concern  
Air Quality  
Share Your Ideas

**JOURNEY TO 2030**, the Transportation Plan of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, will serve as the guiding document for the MPO through the year 2030. It will provide projects and programs to meet the region's transportation needs.

In developing **JOURNEY TO 2030**, the MPO will consider the wide-ranging effects—natural (air quality, water quality, and wetland), cultural (community, historical), and health—of its projects and programs. This edition focuses on the regional equity and air quality planning activities of the MPO. **JOURNEY TO 2030** outreach will include consultations with appropriate state and local entities and concerned groups and citizens, in which these issues can be discussed. Please refer to *TRANSREPORT* and the MPO Web site, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org), for meeting times and locations.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The MPO's regional equity policy is rooted in its definition of environmental justice:

Environmental justice requires the MPO to examine the allocation of benefits and burdens, historically, currently, and planned in the future; to ensure that minority and low-income communities are treated equitably in the provision of transportation services and projects; and to provide full participation for minority and low-income communities to advise the MPO during its planning and decision-making process.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE REGIONAL EQUITY ISSUES IN THE BOSTON REGION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM?

The regional equity process is an effort by the MPO to ensure the equitable distribution of transportation benefits and burdens in the Boston region, with a particular focus on the needs of low-income and minority populations.

*Common concerns expressed during previous outreach efforts include:*

- **Mobility dependence** – Many residents do not have automobiles and are dependent on transit, carpools, vanpools, or taxis.
- **Language and cultural diversity** – For many residents, English is a second language in which they are not fluent. This presents difficulties for them in using the English-based transportation system.
- **Poor air quality** – High traffic volumes (including trucks and buses) passing through communities add air pollution, as does congestion. Some communities report a higher-than-average asthma rate.
- **Gentrification** – Several communities believe that transportation improvements will result in housing-cost increases that may displace current residents.
- **Proximity of major construction to neighborhoods** – Construction of transportation facilities often involves temporary but significant burdens on communities.

*Common needs include:*

- **Service improvements for existing transit system** – Improvements can be made to various aspects of the system, including stations, provision of schedule and arrival information, adherence to schedules, provision of shelters, overcrowding, and frequency of service. Schedules do not always meet the needs of shift workers for late-night, early-morning, and weekend service.
- **Transportation to decentralized destinations** – The system may not meet all of the destination needs of residents. Access to some destinations (in neighboring communities, along highways, in industrial parks, or where a trip to the central core and a transfer to a radial line are required) can be extremely time consuming. Suburban jobs are often accessible only by highway.
- **Reduction of through traffic** – Heavy through traffic on a roadway can form a barrier dividing the community, create visual impacts, and contribute to air pollution.

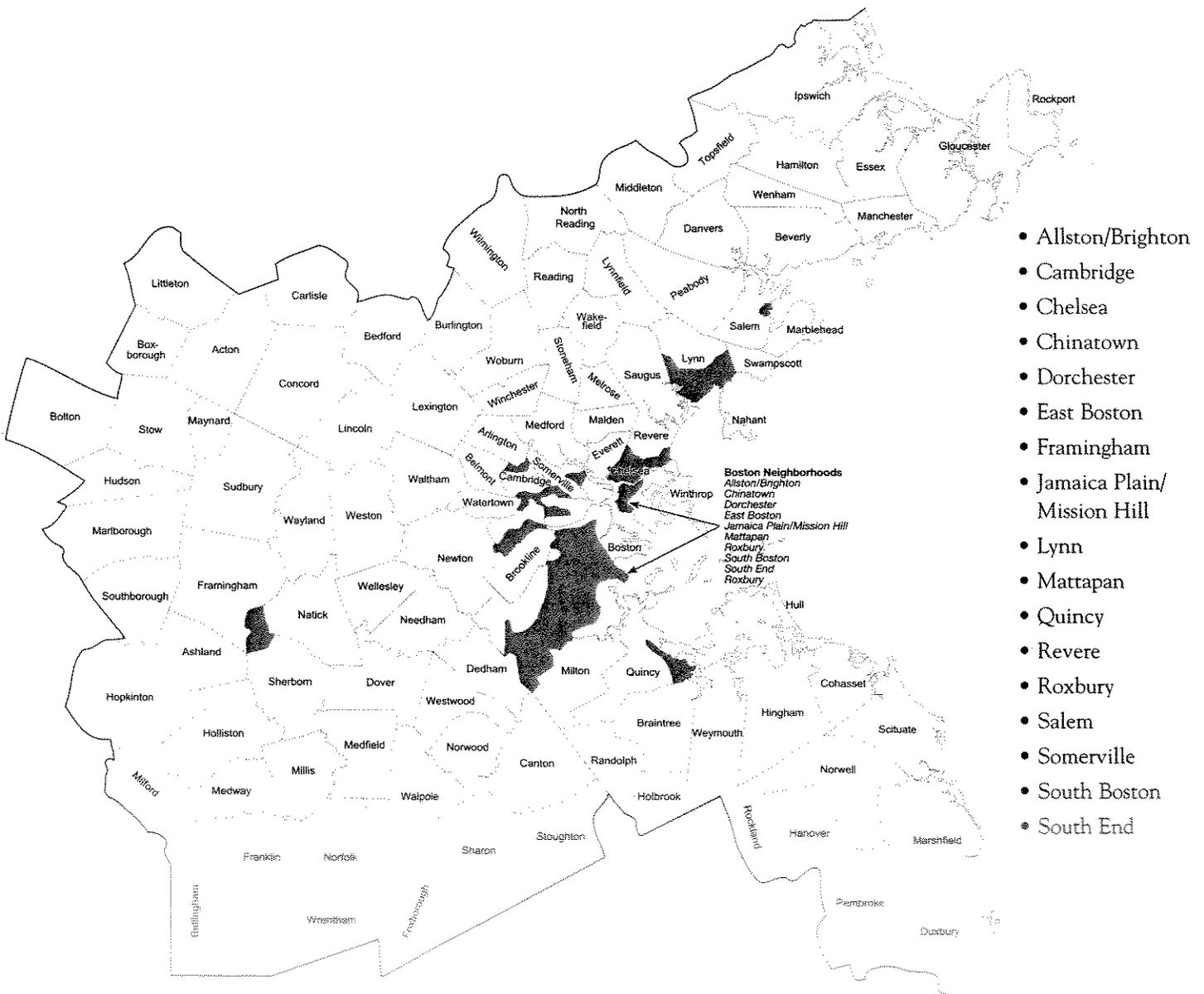
Based on these needs and concerns, several indicators of benefits and burdens were developed by the MPO to analyze potential project scenarios for the Transportation Plan. The MPO will also conduct a system-level analysis of travel patterns, as it did for the preceding (2004–2025) Transportation Plan, to identify inequities in the existing transportation system and to understand how projects and programs considered for **JOURNEY TO 2030** can address the equity needs of the future.

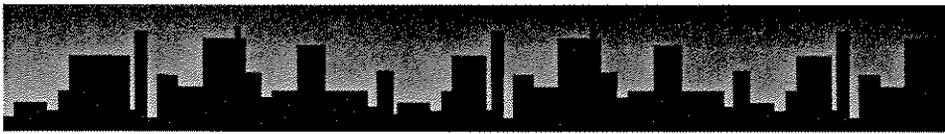
# HOW DOES THE MPO PROVIDE FOR REGIONAL EQUITY IN THE BOSTON REGION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM?

The regional equity process builds on previous environmental justice outreach and analysis and consultation with representatives of low-income and minority communities. As first steps in the process, the MPO developed its definition of environmental justice and began evaluating neighborhoods' mobility and their transportation burdens using performance measures. Later, the MPO identified 17 "communities of concern" (see below) and evaluated access and mobility for those communities. Most recently, the MPO has continued its outreach to organizations serving communities of concern in the region and has participated in regional forums. It is working to ensure that environmental justice is incorporated into all of its transportation-planning efforts.

## COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN

Communities of concern are specific neighborhoods within the Boston Region MPO area for which the MPO performs special outreach and analysis. The MPO has identified 17 communities of concern based on household income and minority population. They are shown in the map below.





## AIR POLLUTANTS, AIR TOXICS, AND GREENHOUSE GASES

### WHY IS AIR QUALITY AN IMPORTANT PART OF MPO PLANNING?

Transportation infrastructure investment influences emissions of air pollution, primarily by affecting the number of vehicle-miles traveled in the region. Nationwide, vehicle sources are responsible for about 75 percent of carbon monoxide pollution and at least half of emitted ozone precursors. Long-term exposure to high levels of air pollution can affect the natural and built environments, as well as harm health by damaging the immune, neurological, reproductive, and respiratory systems.

In response to public health concerns, the federal government has developed air quality standards for specific air pollutants. The 1990 Clean Air Act requires MPOs to perform an air quality conformity determination for any pollutant for which the region has not attained the standard (or has only recently attained it).

### HOW IS AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINED?

To determine conformity, the MPO must show that the changes in emissions expected to result from implementation of its Transportation Plan will not exceed the mobile-source emission "budget" that has been set by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

To do this, the MPO forecasts travel behavior and associated emissions using its regional transportation model. Currently, the MPO is required to demonstrate conformity for two ozone precursors—nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds—and for carbon monoxide (for which the region has recently attained the standard).

In addition, the MPO must confirm that all appropriate transportation projects and programs outlined in the Commonwealth's air quality plan are included in the region's Transportation Plan and show they will be implemented in a timely manner.

### Air pollutants

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set national air quality standards for six common pollutants:

**Carbon monoxide (CO)** is a colorless, odorless gas that reduces oxygen delivery to the body. As much as 95 percent of the CO in a typical U.S. city comes from mobile sources.

**Ozone** is not directly emitted from a specific source: it forms when volatile organic compounds chemically react with nitrogen oxides in the presence of sunlight and warm temperatures.

Mobile sources are responsible for more than half of **nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>)** emissions.

**Particulate matter** consists of very tiny solid or liquid particles. Diesel-powered engines contribute more than half the mobile-source particulate emissions.

Over 65 percent of the **sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)** released to the air comes from electric utilities. Other sources include petroleum refineries and cement factories.

Levels of **lead** in the air have decreased dramatically since 1978, due to the phase-out of leaded gasoline.

### Air toxics

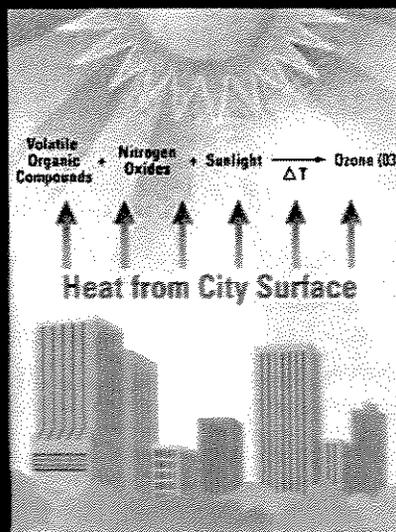
EPA has identified 188 air toxics, which are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects, or certain adverse environmental effects. The air toxics include benzene (found in gasoline), formaldehyde, dioxin, asbestos, and heavy metals.

### Greenhouse gases

Emissions of greenhouse gases—primarily carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide—enhance the heat-trapping capability of the earth's atmosphere. Increases in these gases have resulted in the earth's surface temperature rising by about one degree Fahrenheit in the last century, with accelerated warming over the past

## OZONE

Currently, eastern Massachusetts is not in attainment of federal ozone standards. Unlike many other pollutants, ozone is not directly emitted from a specific source. It is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOC) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) chemically react in the presence of sunlight and warm temperatures. Therefore, ozone is considered a summer pollutant and is monitored during the months of April through October. Both VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> are emitted from transportation sources. Adverse health effects associated with short-term exposure to ozone include coughing, painful breathing, and temporary loss of some lung functions. Long-term effects may include biochemical and structural changes in the lungs leading to chronic respiratory diseases.



# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How can the MPO measure the equity of potential transportation projects?

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What activities should the MPO promote in order to help improve the air quality of the region?

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## KEEP UP-TO-DATE

- YES! I would like to receive additional information about events, documents, or meetings related to the Transportation Plan. *(Please provide contact information below.)*
- YES! I am interested in inviting the MPO to learn about my organization's transportation needs and views. *(Please provide contact information below.)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please provide your e-mail address if you would prefer to receive information electronically.)*

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

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# 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, February 2  
**Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee** 10:00 A.M.  
 MPO Conference Room Suite 2150
- Wednesday, February 8  
**Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee** 1:00 P.M.  
 MPO Conference Room Suite 2150
- Regional Transportation Advisory Council Transportation Plan Committee** 2:00 P.M.  
 MPO Conference Room Suite 2150
- Regional Transportation Advisory Council** 3:00 P.M.  
 Conference Room 1
- Thursday, February 16  
**Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee** 10:00 A.M.  
 MPO Conference Room Suite 2150
- Wednesday, February 22  
**Advisory Committee to the MBTA** 1:00 P.M.  
 Conference Room 2
- Monday, February 27  
**MBTA Rider Oversight Committee** 5:30 P.M.  
 Conference Rooms 2 and 3
- Thursday, March 2  
**Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee** 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, February 13  
**MassHighway Public Hearing: Proposed Page Road Bridge Replacement in Bedford** 7:00 P.M.  
 Old Town Hall, Great Room  
 16 South Road, Bedford
- Wednesday, March 1  
**28th Annual Disability Issues Legislative Reception** 10:30 A.M.  
 Grand Staircase Hall  
 State House, Boston

### MBTA Preliminary 2006 Service Plan

The MBTA began a series of meetings in January to present its Preliminary 2006 Service Plan. The series will continue in February, as described below, concluding with a public hearing on February 9.

To download a copy of the Preliminary 2006 Service Plan, go to: [www.mbta.com/inside/thet/2006\\_service\\_plan.asp](http://www.mbta.com/inside/thet/2006_service_plan.asp).

- Thursday, February 2 2:00 P.M.  
**Dudley Branch Library and**  
 65 Warren Street, Roxbury 6:00 P.M.
- Tuesday, February 7 6:00 P.M.  
**Cambridge Citywide Senior Center**  
 806 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge
- Thursday, February 9 6:00 P.M.  
**Boston Public Library Mezzanine Conference Room**  
 700 Boylston Street, Boston

\* See page 1 for information on the MPO's Municipal-Official Seminars and JOURNEY TO 2030 focus group sessions, and page 3 for information on meetings of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council subregional groups where the Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program will be discussed.

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).

## ■ Agency Notes cont. from p. 2

### From MassPike

The January 13 opening of the Albany Street off-ramp from Interstate 93 southbound, while not as dramatic as other milestones in the Central Artery/Tunnel project's 14-year construction history, is significant because it marked the point where all of the project's tunnels and bridges, as well as their connections and ramps to surface roads, were open to general traffic.

Finish work on the project will be completed in the upcoming months, while the restoration of surface roads and the construction of parks will continue into mid-2007.

### TRANSREPORT

PRODUCED BY THE CENTRAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING STAFF

#### Editors

Mary Ellen Sullivan  
 Jonathan Church  
 Sean Daly

#### Contributors

Jared Fijalkowski  
 William Moore

#### Graphics

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Jane Gillis

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John Cogliano, MPO Chairman  
 Kenneth S. Miller, P.E., 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@bostonmpo.org](mailto:publicinformation@bostonmpo.org) (e-mail).

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

Planning Director  
 Town of Acton  
 472 Main St.  
 Acton MA 01720

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