



# Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Mitt Romney  
Governor

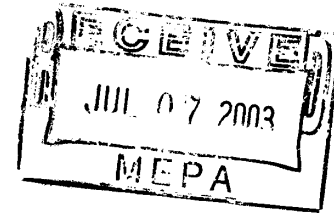
Kerry Healey  
Lt. Governor

Daniel A. Grabauskas  
Secretary and MBTA Chairman

Michael H. Mulhern  
General Manager

June 30, 2003

James W. Hunt  
Director of MEPA  
251 Causeway St. – Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114



Reference: EOE A Number 12565  
Certificate establishing a Special Review Procedure  
Circumferential Transit Improvements in the Urban Ring Corridor.

Subject: Annual Progress Report

Dear Mr. Hunt:

By this letter we are transmitting the Annual Progress Report (APR) in accordance with the terms of EOE A Certificate Number 12565, dated November 9, 2001 and DEP/EOTC Consent Order No. ACO BO-00-7001, dated September 1, 2000.

Although, as indicated in the APR, steps have been taken to advance Phase 1 of the Urban Ring, it has been necessary to revise the schedule for its implementation. Completion of the Phase 2 Draft Environmental Impact Report Statement (DEIR/S) has also been delayed.

Severe financial constraints currently facing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in general, and the MBTA in particular, have necessitated a reevaluation of the schedule for implementation of several Urban Ring Phase 1 CT and EC bus routes. The MBTA's recently adopted 5-year Capital Improvement Program does not contain sufficient funds to support either the capital or O&M costs of Phase 1 bus routes as defined in the Major Investment Study (MIS). Therefore, it is now anticipated that the full implementation of Phase 1 bus service improvements would occur simultaneously with Phase 2 BRT services. The advantage of this approach would be that the balance of the unfunded Phase 1 services could be federalized by inclusion in the New Starts application for Phase 2.

The DEP/EOTC ACO called for completion of the DEIR/S for the Urban Ring Phase 2 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service and new and improved Commuter Rail stations DEIR/S by August 31, 2003. It is anticipated that the DEIR/S will be delayed by three months, submitted to EOE A by December 4, 2003, and a Public Hearing held by December 31, 2003 as shown in the attached Schedule 1. This change is due primarily to the additional time associated with the following four factors:

- 1) The evaluation of a larger than anticipated number of variants (over 40 including sub variants) to the original Phase 2 alignment defined in the MIS, in response to the requirements of the Certificate issued by the Secretary of EOE A on November 9, 2001;

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- 2) The process required to reach agreement with the Cities of Boston, Cambridge and Somerville and the North Point project developers about the preferred concept for the Phase 2 BRT busway connecting the new Lechmere Green Line Station from Charlestown via the MBTA rail yard and North Point site;
- 3) The effort (still ongoing) to identify feasible innovative funding sources to make up for the drastic reduction in federal and state funds available to the project; and
- 4) Ongoing negotiations with CSX Transportation regarding the use of the Grand Junction railroad right-of-way, modifications to the railroad bridge over the Charles River and the acquisition of soon-to-be-abandoned rights-or-way in Chelsea and East Boston.

We expect that an application for New Starts funding for Phase 2 will be prepared following the hearings on the DEIR/S and submitted to FTA in August 2004. Assuming a favorable FTA New Start Project Rating for Phase 2 is received in November 2004 and anticipating the availability of future funds, the combined full Phase 1 and initial Phase 2 BRT service could be implemented by early 2009 as shown in Schedule 2.

We regret the necessary delays in completion of Phase 2 DEIR/S and projected implementation of the three phases of the Urban Ring Project. If you have any questions on the APR please contact me at (617) 222-3366 or [pccalcaterra@mbta.com](mailto:pccalcaterra@mbta.com).

Sincerely,



Peter C. Calcaterra, P.E.  
Project Manager Urban Ring

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Distribution per EOE A Certificate No. 12565