

<i>For Office Use Only</i> <b>Executive Office of Environmental Affairs</b> MEPA Analyst: <i>Rick Bouere</i> Phone: 617-626-1130
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# NPC

## Notice of Project Change

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review of a NPC in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations (see 301 CMR 11.10(1)).

Project Name: <i>Circumferential Transportation Improvements in the Urban Ring Corridor – Phase 2</i>		EEA #: <i>12565</i>
Street: <i>N/A</i>		
Municipalities: <i>Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Medford, and Somerville</i>	Watersheds: <i>Charles, Boston Harbor (Mystic), and North Coastal</i>	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: <i>N/A</i>	Latitude: <i>N/A</i>	Longitude: <i>N/A</i>
Status of project construction: <i>0% construction.</i>		
Proponent: <i>Executive Office of Transportation</i>		
Street: <i>10 Park Plaza</i>		
Municipality: <i>Boston</i>	State: <i>MA</i>	Zip Code: <i>02116</i>
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this NPC May Be Obtained: <i>Rebecca Arsenault</i>		
Firm/Agency: <i>AECOM Technical Services, Inc.</i>	Street: <i>300 Baker Avenue</i>	
Municipality: <i>Concord</i>	State: <i>MA</i>	Zip Code: <i>01742</i>
Phone: <i>978-371-4141</i>	Fax: <i>978-371-2468</i>	E-mail: <i>Rebecca.arsenault@aecom.com</i>

In 25 words or less, what is the project change?  
*Short term action plan and long range phasing and implementation schedule, with responses to comments on RDEIR in accordance with March 6, 2009 Certificate.*

See full project change description beginning on page 3.

Date of ENF filing or publication in the Environmental Monitor: August 8, 2001  
Was an EIR required?  Yes  No; if yes,  
was a Draft EIR filed?  Yes Date: DEIR December 8, 2004; RDEIR December 10, 2008  
was a Final EIR filed?  Yes (Date: )  No  
was a Single EIR filed?  Yes (Date: )  No  
Have other NPCs been filed?  Yes Date(s): 8/31/05; 6/11/07; and 4/23/08.

If this is a NPC solely for lapse of time (see 301 CMR 11.10(2)) proceed directly to **“ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES”** on page 4.

**PERMITS / FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE / LAND TRANSFER**

List or describe all new or modified state permits, financial assistance, or land transfers not previously reviewed: *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has an agreement with CSX that establishes the general terms under which EOT will purchase certain property interests of CSX, including some of the rights of way needed for implementation of Urban Ring Phase 2 as identified in the project RDEIR filing.*

Are you requesting a finding that this project change is insignificant? (see 301 CMR 11.10(6))  
 Yes  No; if yes, attach justification.

Are you requesting that a Scope in a previously issued Certificate be rescinded?  
 Yes  No; if yes, attach the Certificate

Are you requesting a change to a Scope in a previously issued Certificate?  Yes  No; if yes, attach Certificate and describe the change you are requesting:

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Previously reviewed	Net Change	Currently Proposed
<b>LAND</b>			
Total site acreage	N/A	N/A	N/A
Acres of land altered	N/A	N/A	N/A
Acres of impervious area	N/A	N/A	N/A
Square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands alteration	N/A	N/A	N/A
Square feet of other wetland alteration	N/A	N/A	N/A
Acres of non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>STRUCTURES</b>			
Gross square footage	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of housing units	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maximum height (in feet)	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
Vehicle trips per day	N/A	N/A	N/A
Parking spaces	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>WATER/WASTEWATER</b>			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	N/A	N/A	N/A
GPD water withdrawal	N/A	N/A	N/A
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Does the project change involve any new or modified:

1. conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?  Yes  No

2. release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?  Yes  No

3. impacts on Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?  Yes  No

4. impact on any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes  No; if yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?  Yes  No

5. impact upon an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?  Yes  No

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these 5 questions, explain below:

**PROJECT CHANGE DESCRIPTION** (attach additional pages as necessary). The project change description should include:

- (a) a brief description of the project as most recently reviewed
- (b) a description of material changes to the project as previously reviewed,
- (c) the significance of the proposed changes, with specific reference to the factors listed 301 CMR 11.10(6), and
- (d) measures that the project is taking to avoid damage to the environment or to minimize and mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts. If the change will involve modification of any previously issued Section 61 Finding, include a proposed modification of the Section 61 Finding (or it will be required in a Supplemental EIR).

**Project Description** – This Notice of Project Change is in response to the EOEEA Certificate dated March 6, 2009 on the RDEIR for the Urban Ring Phase 2 project. The project as most recently reviewed by EOEEA is the recommended Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), which is a proposed circumferential bus rapid transit (BRT) system. BRT is a transit mode that employs modern bus vehicles within a system of coordinated infrastructure and service enhancements that enable the buses to operate more like rapid transit service. The Urban Ring Phase 2 would operate in a roughly circular “ring” through densely developed portions of Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Medford and Somerville. The project would provide faster and more direct transit service both for the high volume of trips within the Urban Ring corridor, as well as better connections between points in the corridor and the MBTA’s existing radial rapid transit and commuter rail systems. As a result, the Urban Ring Phase 2 would improve transit access and capacity in the corridor, reduce crowding in the central subway system, and support transit-oriented development and smart growth plans and policies.

**Material Changes to the Project as Previously Reviewed** – The March 6, 2009 Certificate on the RDEIR set forth three primary requirements to be addressed in the NPC, as summarized below.

- *Early Action Implementation Plan*: to identify near-term actions that EOT can undertake to improve transit service in the corridor.
- *Implementation Plan for the Full Project*: to define project phasing and implementation approach for the full Urban Ring Phase 2 project.

- *Comment Responses:* to provide thorough responses to the comment letters received on the RDEIR document.

The early action and full project implementation plans provided in the NPC do not materially change the project as previously reviewed, but rather provide further details on phasing, implementation, and schedule than were available in the RDEIR document due to conditions external to the project that were not yet known at that time.

**Significance of Proposed Project Changes pursuant to 301 CMR 11.10(6)** – The proposed project changes are insignificant in consideration of the following factors:

- (a) The proposed change will not result in an increase in the physical dimensions of the overall project by more than 10%.
- (b) The proposed change will not result in an increase of any impacts in excess of 25% of any review threshold and will not generate any increase in the release of emission of pollutants or contaminants during or after completion of the project.
- (c) The proposed project change is expected to result in earlier implementation of some project elements compared to the schedule assumed for the LPA in the RDEIR. By identifying a minimum operating segment (MOS) and early action items the NPC implementation schedule will enable project benefits to be realized sooner.
- (d) There is no change in the project site.
- (e) The proposed change will not result in any new applications for permits, financial assistance, or land transfer not already identified in the RDEIR.
- (f) The proposed project change will not prevent or delay the realization of net benefits to environmental quality and resources or public health. The NPC is expected to expedite the realization of net benefits.
- (g) The proposed project change does not involve a lapse of time.


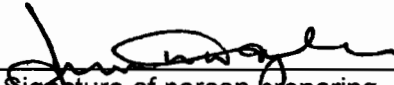
**Measures to Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Environmental Impacts** – The proposed change consists of identifying potential early actions and full project implementation plans and schedule, which do not change the environmental impacts of the project or the measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate them as identified in the RDEIR.

**(h) ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES**

Attachments:

1. Secretary's most recent Certificate on this project
2. Plan showing most recent previously-reviewed proposed build condition
3. Plan showing currently proposed build condition
4. Original U.S.G.S. map or good quality color copy (8-1/2 x 11 inches or larger) indicating the project location and boundaries
5. List of all agencies and persons to whom the proponent circulated the NPC, in accordance with 301 CMR 11.10(7)
6. Project Change description – supporting details

Signatures:

	
Date	Date
Signature of Responsible Officer or Proponent	Signature of person preparing NPC (if different from above)

<u>James A. Aloisi, Jr., Secretary</u>	<u>James A. Doyle, AICP</u>
Name (print or type)	Name (print or type)

<u>Executive Office of Transportation</u>	<u>AECOM Technical Services, Inc.</u>
Firm/Agency	Firm/Agency

<u>10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170</u>	<u>300 Baker Avenue, Suite 290</u>
Street	Street

<u>Boston, MA 02116</u>	<u>Concord, MA 01742</u>
Municipality/State/Zip	Municipality/State/Zip

<u>617-973-7000</u>	<u>978-371-4064</u>
Phone	Phone



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION**

**EOT**

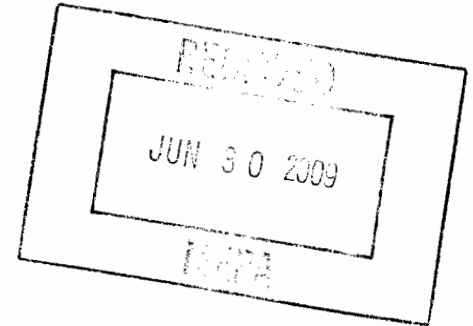
DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JAMES A. ALOISI JR.  
SECRETARY

June 30, 2009

Secretary Ian A. Bowles  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Attn: MEPA Office  
Rick Bourre, Assistant Director  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114



Re: Urban Ring Phase 2, EOEEA #12565

Dear Secretary Bowles:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOT) is pleased to submit for your review the attached Notice of Project Change (NPC) for the Urban Ring Phase 2 project, for publication in the July 8, 2009 Environmental Monitor. On behalf of EOT, I would like to request an extended 30-day comment period for this document, with comments due by August 7, 2009.

The attached NPC proposes a number of changes to Urban Ring Phase 2 project relative to the recommendations included in the November 2008 Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/DEIS), which proposed a major new bus rapid transit (BRT) system that would run in a roughly circular "ring" through residential neighborhoods, employment centers, and major educational and medical institutions in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Medford and Somerville. This NPC proposes the following principal changes:

- Changes, clarifications, or re-evaluations of segments of the alignment recommended in the RDEIR/DEIS.
- An implementation plan for the project that addresses portions of the project corridor where the RDEIR/DEIS recommendations can be implemented; potential early action items in other sections of the corridor; and major project elements that cannot be implemented under current conditions due to outstanding issues.
- Proposed changes to the MEPA Special Review Procedure.
- Responses to comment letters received on the RDEIR/DEIS.

The NPC proposals have been informed by three meetings of the Urban Ring Citizens Advisory Committee and several meetings with municipal and institutional stakeholders.



I have enclosed two hard copies of the NPC for MEPA review. Copies of the NPC have also been sent to individuals on the document's distribution list, including all members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and all individuals who submitted a comment letter on the RDEIR/DEIS. In addition, hard copies of the NPC are available for public viewing at sixteen libraries in the Urban Ring corridor:

- State Transportation Library of Massachusetts, 10 Park Plaza 2nd Floor, Boston
- Boston Public Library, 700 Boylston Street
- Boston Public Library, Honan – Allston Branch, 300 North Harvard Street, Allston
- Boston Public Library, Uphams Corner Branch, 500 Columbia Road, Dorchester
- Boston Public Library, East Boston Branch, 276 Meridian Street
- Boston Public Library, Dudley Square Branch, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury
- Boston Public Library, Parker Hill Branch, 1497 Tremont Street, Roxbury
- Boston Public Library, South Boston Branch, 646 East Broadway
- Boston Public Library, Washington Village Branch, 1226 Columbia Road, South Boston
- Boston Public Library, South End Branch, 685 Tremont Street
- Public Library of Brookline, 361 Washington Street
- Cambridge Public Library, 359 Broadway
- Chelsea Public Library, 569 Broadway
- Parlin Memorial Library, 410 Broadway, Everett
- Medford Public Library, 111 High Street
- Somerville Public Library, 79 Highland Avenue

An electronic copy of the NPC has been posted on the project website at [www.theurbanring.com](http://www.theurbanring.com), and additional copies of the NPC will be provided upon request.

We look forward to public review and comment on this document, and we will work with you and your staff to address issues relevant to the NPC. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Scott Hamwey, Project Manager, at 617-973-7210 or at [scott.hamwey@state.ma.us](mailto:scott.hamwey@state.ma.us).

Sincerely,



James A. Aloisi, Jr.  
Secretary