



GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT

Winter 2008



Introduction

The Green Line Extension Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation & Public Works (EOTPW) in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). This project will extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest Boston corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford, with an extension of the main line to Medford and a spur line to Union Square in Somerville.

Extending the Green Line to Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford offers many potential benefits. The project will:

- Improve regional air quality in a corridor containing Environmental Justice communities.
- Encourage economic development and job creation by providing improved transportation access to a key region of Massachusetts.
- Address long-standing transportation inequities by extending MBTA light rail service to three densely populated cities where there is high demand for public transit services.
- Support opportunities for smart growth initiatives and sustainable development.
- Reduce automobile congestion along the heavily traveled I-93/Route 38/Route 28/Route 16 corridors.

Welcome to the Project

The project team is currently finalizing the best route and station locations for the Green Line Extension. This work includes conceptual engineering and environmental analysis. To comply with State requirements, EOTPW is developing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). At the same time, EOTPW is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for federal review to support efforts to seek federal funding through the New Starts program, which is run by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). New Starts is the federal government's financing program for supporting local public transit expansion projects.

EOTPW is looking at five alternatives for the Green Line Extension:

1. No-build alternative;
2. Green Line extension to Medford Hillside with a spur to Union Square;
3. Green Line extension to Mystic Valley Parkway with a spur to Union Square;
4. Green Line extension to Medford Hillside with a spur to Union Square via Somerville Avenue; and
5. Green Line Extension to Mystic Valley Parkway with a spur to Union Square via Somerville Avenue.

Siting the proposed stations is an important part of the environmental process. The project team is developing criteria to evaluate potential locations, including spacing, platform configuration, and connections for buses, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Station workshops are also underway to seek public input as part of this process.



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Station Evaluation and Workshops

EOTPW is further exploring station sites identified in a previous study. The locations for which stations have been proposed include Washington Street, Gilman Square, Lowell Street, Ball Square, College Avenue, Winthrop Street, Mystic Valley Parkway, and Union Square. Possible stations in the Inner Belt/Brickbottom area and at Tufts University are also being considered. A Tufts stop would consolidate proposed Winthrop and College Avenue stops.

When evaluating the specific station sites, EOTPW will work with the neighborhoods to consider access, ADA compatibility, intermodal connections, parking, traffic, and connections to the proposed Community Path, among other issues. The project team will look at land use compatibility and the potential for economic development along with capital costs and environmental impacts. Specific issues such as platform length, fare collection, and the location of canopies/benches are also part of the station design program that the team is developing with the MBTA.

EOTPW is conducting a series of community workshops to discuss the specific station locations. The goal of these meetings is to gather input and ideas from neighborhood residents on the proposed station locations, design elements, and potential neighborhood impacts.

All of the meetings will take place from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. The meetings will be preceded by an Open House at 6:00 PM. Participants can look at maps and project materials and talk with project staff during the Open House.

Schedule

Monday, January 28

Somerville High School Library
81 Highland Avenue, Somerville

This meeting will focus on stations proposed for the Washington Street, Gilman Square, and Inner Belt/Brickbottom neighborhoods (in the vicinity of the existing Lowell Commuter Rail Line).

Tuesday, January 29

Visiting Nurses Association
Community Room, 259 Lowell Street, Somerville

This meeting will focus on stations proposed for the Magoun Square (Lowell Street) and Ball Square neighborhoods (in the vicinity of the existing Lowell Commuter Rail Line).

Thursday, January 31

Sophia Gordon Hall, Tufts University, 15 Talbot Avenue
Somerville (*Talbot Ave. is off College Ave. at the city line*)

This meeting will focus on stations proposed for the College Avenue and Winthrop Street neighborhoods (in the vicinity of the existing Lowell Commuter Rail Line).

Wednesday, February 6

South Medford Fire Station Community Room
Zero Medford Street, Medford

This meeting will focus on the proposed stations in the Mystic Valley Parkway area (near the intersection of the Lowell Commuter Rail Line and Route 16/Mystic Valley Parkway).

Tuesday, February 19

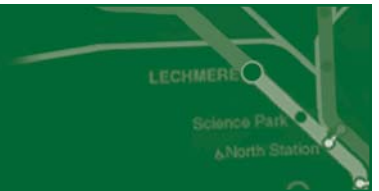
Cummings School Gymnasium
93 School St., Somerville

This meeting will focus on potential alignments and proposed station locations in the Union Square area.



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Project History

Extending Green Line service to Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford has been the subject of several studies over the last 40 years. One of the objectives of the 1962 North Terminal Area Study was to “design a new transit alignment to permit a future branch extension (of the Green Line) to Somerville and communities northwest along the right-of-way of the Boston and Maine Railroad.” The 1973 Boston Transportation Planning Review Northwest Study focused on identifying and evaluating various bus, commuter rail, and Green Line extension alternatives in the “Somerville Radial Corridor.” In 1981, the MBTA conducted the Green Line Northwest Project Study, which evaluated transit alternatives beyond Lechmere Station.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in obtaining environmental permits for the Central Artery/Tunnel Project in the early 1990s, committed to implementing a number of Boston region transit improvement projects as mitigation measures, including a Green Line extension to Medford. This commitment was embedded in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality conformity.

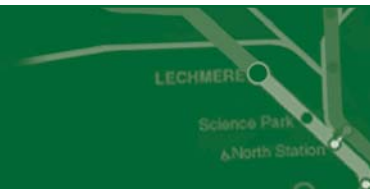
In 2005, the MBTA prepared the Beyond Lechmere Study, a Major Investment Study/ Alternatives Analysis (MIS/AA), to define the most appropriate transit investment strategy for improving mobility and regional access for residents in Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford.

On October 2, 2006, EOTPW submitted an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF) to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) for an extension of the MBTA Green Line to Somerville and Medford. Public comment for the project was received for eight weeks from the initial filing — including at public meetings in Somerville and Medford — after which the Secretary of EOEA issued a certificate requiring the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). EOTPW is working with a consulting team led by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin and with the communities to prepare the DEIR for submittal in 2008.



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Public Involvement

EOTPW is working closely with the communities of Cambridge, Somerville and Medford on the Green Line Extension design and environmental review. The outreach includes monthly meetings with members of a Citizens Advisory Group. Members represent the three communities. They review and comment on project concepts and plans, bring suggestions and ideas to EOTPW, and share project information with the groups and communities they represent.

In addition to the Advisory Group, EOTPW is reaching out to stakeholders using:

- Public Meetings and Open Houses, timed to provide information at key milestones so the public can review and comment on project plans
- Station Workshops, to involve neighborhoods in discussions about proposed station locations, design elements and potential neighborhood impacts
- Project fact sheets, like this one, which are available at meetings and on the website
- The project website — www.GreenLineExtension.org — which contains project documents, meeting minutes and maps
- Community or group meetings, which can be set up on request
- Email blasts to provide notice of meetings, new website postings and information on key milestones

If you would like to be added to the project mailing list or email database, please contact Regan Checchio at rhecchio@reginavilla.com or 617-357-5772. EOTPW welcomes your participation in the project.

EOTPW CONTACT

For project information or questions, please contact the staff at the MA Executive Office of Transportation & Public Works:

Steve Woelfel
(617)973-7474 or steve.woelfel@eot.state.ma.us

Katherine Fichter
(617)973-7342 or katherine.fichter@eot.state.ma.us

Where Can I Get More Information?

The project website, www.GreenLineExtension.org, includes project documents, relevant regulatory reports, and an opportunity to sign up for the project mailing list.

Citizens Advisory Group

The Green Line Extension Citizens Advisory Group includes representatives from Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford, as well as representatives of regional groups with an interest in the project. The members were recommended by the respective municipalities and appointed by the Secretary of Transportation. The Green Line Extension Citizens Advisory Group provides important guidance and input to the project on a range of issues relating to the project. The Advisory Group meets approximately once a month; all meetings are open to the public.

Members of the Advisory Group are listed below:

David Aposhian, *Appointed by City of Somerville*

Lee Auspitz, *Davis Square Task Force*

Paul Cote, *Appointed by City of Cambridge*

William Deignan, *City of Cambridge*

Councilor Frederick DelloRusso, *City of Medford*

Mimi Graney, *Union Square Main Streets*

Joe Guelpa, *Appointed by City of Somerville*

David Jordan, *Appointed by City of Somerville*

Kenneth Krause, *Appointed by City of Medford*

Barbara Lucas, *MAPC*

Steve Mackey, *Somerville Chamber of Commerce*

Jim McGinnis, *Appointed by City of Somerville*

Ellin Reisner, *STEP/Green Line Forum*

Barbara Rubel, *Tufts University*

Carrie Russell, *Conservation Law Foundation*

William Wood, *Appointed by City of Medford*

Open Seat, *To Be Appointed by City of Medford*