

# TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Third Central Artery/Tunnel Milestone Reached; I-93 Southbound Opens to Traffic

On December 20, transportation history was made in Boston with the interim opening of the new Interstate 93 South tunnel. This last major milestone of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project occurred on schedule when a red,

white, and blue ribbon was cut by Massachusetts Turnpike Authority Chairman Matthew J. Amorello. During a ceremony preceding the ribbon-cutting, which was attended by Boston mayor Thomas M. Menino and other dignitaries, Chairman Amorello called the one-mile long tunnel “a Christmas present to the City of Boston.” With that said, Elaine Cronin, a Boston West End resident, drove the first vehicle into the gleaming stretch of new tunnel and was presented with a souvenir autographed project

map and an I-93 South baseball cap for her feat. Only minutes before, Stoneham residents Anne and Nick Najjar received accolades for driving the last car over the old elevated Central Artery, which was closed just moments later. Within an hour, additional traffic was funneled into the new tunnel from Storrow Drive, Rutherford Avenue, the Tobin Bridge, a new on-ramp from New Chardon Street, and Haymarket Square.

On December 19, a larger ceremony was held on the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge, following a press conference at the Central Artery/Tunnel Project’s Kneeland Street headquarters. The press conference was attended by Chairman

Amorello, U.S. Congressman Michael Capuano, James Gillooly of the City of Boston’s Transportation Department, Major Michael Mucci of the Massachusetts State Police, and others. Governor



*Southbound approach of I-93 from the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge prior to its opening on December 20*

Mitt Romney, who was unable to attend the press conference, said, “There’s a light at the end of the tunnel and it’s getting brighter.” The ceremony also honored the four construction workers who perished during the Big Dig’s construction.

With the opening of the new tunnel, motorists are no longer required to use the Sumner Tunnel to get to I-93 Southbound. Vehicles also will be able to access I-93 South directly from the I-90 Connector. Even with the eventual estimated 91,000 vehicles per day using the new southbound side, speeds on I-93 South are expected to increase because with a lower total number of on- and off-

ramps, there will be less oncoming and exiting traffic.

This is called an interim opening because there is a remaining \$1 billion worth of work that still needs to be completed over the next 18 months.

This work includes: modifications to the existing Dewey Square Tunnel for its use as part of the I-93 Southbound Tunnel; dismantling of the old Central Artery viaduct; restoration and re-stitching together of affected adjacent city surface streets; and the creation of the Rose Kennedy Greenway. The Greenway will be a system of new linear parks along land reclaimed from under the old elevated structure.

This was the third major opening for the Central Artery/Tunnel project in

2003. The other two openings were the I-90 Connector to Logan International Airport in January 2003 and the opening of the I-93 North tunnel in March 2003. The entire Central Artery/Tunnel project is scheduled to be complete by May 2005.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MPO activities update .....	2
Rider oversight committee .....	2
Kendrick Street study .....	3
U.S./China trade agreement .....	3
FY 2005-2009 TIP process .....	3
Meeting calendar .....	4





