

# Vision 2020

Association for Public Transportation

APT has created this vision of a transportation system for the year 2020 and beyond for the City of Boston and its immediate surroundings. This transportation system would be the result of progressive transportation improvements during coming years. It would continue the tradition of Boston as a vibrant and livable city, built as a walking city and builder of the first subway in America.

Boston's many crooked and narrow streets make using an automobile in the city difficult. People and businesses do not move into Boston because of its drivability, but rather, because of its livability. Citizens want to be able to walk or ride to work, school, shopping and social and sporting events. Retailers want foot traffic and employers want

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easy access to public transportation. Nearly every tourist to Boston is primarily a pedestrian. Thus economic growth in Boston will be best served by an efficient public transportation system, supported by a pedestrian and bicycle network. Boston's automobile-dominated highway infrastructure has not contributed to its job base, its neighborhoods, its relationship with its harbor and rivers, or its natural environment. Rather, the over-reliance on highway infrastructure has led to damage that can

best be undone with a proper realignment of transportation policies.

Boston is not in compliance with the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act Amendments. Coupled with new automobile technology, greater use of public transportation can accomplish the goal of cleaner air and other parallel benefits including reduced energy consumption, better land use, greater safety, greater savings, and the provision of mobility for persons with disabilities and those economically disadvantaged.

The transportation system reflects and in turn influences social, economic, and technological choices. These include ride-sharing provisions, better land-use patterns, and more judicious location of housing and businesses, a better mix of manufacturing and service industries, flexible work hours, telecommuting, day-care provisions for working parents, extended home delivery service for food and retail items, and pedestrian-friendly cluster housing that promotes community interaction with libraries, community centers, parks, playgrounds, etc.

We believe the benefits listed here emerge from phrasing the transportation debate in terms that allow the infrastructure to promote societal goals of community, convenience, economic balance, environmental health, and safety. We welcome and want to contribute to this debate.

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Association for Public Transportation, 1995

Our *vision* for the transportation system in Boston and its immediate surroundings for the year 2020 and beyond has the following elements:

1. It is a system that is safe, reliable, economically efficient, environmentally sound, and the foundation for the Boston region to compete in the global economy by moving people and goods in an energy-efficient manner.
2. The system is efficiently maintained, managed, and operated. New, improved technologies and transportation concepts are continuously evaluated and used when feasible.
3. Decisions on the allotment of resources, frequency of service, selection of transportation routes and modes (bus, train, light rail, etc.) and future system expansion are based on a priority system that takes into account considerations of ridership needs, safety, costs, economic benefits, needs of handicapped persons, and environmental impact.
4. In recognition of the fact that placing sole reliance on automobile use is expensive and destructive to the environment, the system is a balanced one that promotes walking, bicycling, and the use of public transportation.
5. The public transportation system is expanded to make convenient train or subway connections to population and employment centers, airports, ferry landings, educational and medical centers, suburban shopping centers, stadiums and other large public gathering places. The service is reliable, fast, safe comfortable, aesthetically pleasing and clean, and available to everyone 24 hours a day. Bicycles and wheelchairs can be accommodated. Circumferential transit links that close the gaps left by the present radial system are in place. An equitable fare policy exists for all services.
6. Boston enjoys frequent high-speed rail service to other major cities within a 500-mile range. Air travel service locations outside a 300-mile radius of Boston. Commuter ferries provide convenient transportation for communities along the shoreline and to Logan Airport.
7. Some areas of the center city are out of bounds to private automobiles. An equitable fee is charged for all vehicles parked in the city. Walkways are kept clean, well maintained and free of snow in the winter. A clearly marked network of bicycle paths and lanes exists, along with bicycle rental and storage facilities.
8. The planning and policies of Boston transportation are coordinated with federal and state agencies, with neighboring communities, and with public interest groups. Full advantage is taken of funding for non-automobile transportation projects.
9. Boston leads the way in compliance with the Clean Air Act Amendments and the Americans with Disabilities Act and takes full advantage of ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) and subsequent legislation.
10. Boston is a more livable world-class city again, where it is a pleasure to, live and visit, where it is easy and safe to walk or bicycle and where user-friendly public transportation is once again predominant.