

## The MBTA in crisis!— citizen infosheet

**Q: Why is the T raising fares again, after raising them in 2001 and again in 2004?**

**A: The T is not adequately funded.**

- The T currently does not have enough money to run its operations.
- Under leadership of General Manager Dan Grabauskas, the T has done its best to cut costs and increase revenue from advertising and the sale of T properties to avoid this fare hike.
- Even with the fare increase, the T will still be operating at a deficit, and be unable to improve service.

**Q: What's the solution?**

**A: Debt Relief.**

- Far too much of the T's operating budget covers "debt service" (paying accumulated debt)—this is money not going to service improvements – like new trains, buses and bus and rail stops.
- 28% of the T's most recent budget goes to "debt service". This is the highest debt service in the nation, compared to between 0% and 15% at other transit agencies around the country.
- Eliminating the debt will allow the T to invest in service improvements.

**>>> FLIP OVER FOR MORE KEY POINTS >>>**

**LivableStreets Alliance** is a non-profit organization that believes urban transportation has the power to make Boston a more connected, livable city. We challenge people to think differently and to demand a system that balances transit, walking, and biking with automobiles. We promote safe, convenient, and affordable transportation for all users in urban Boston.

**WEBSITE: [www.livablestreets.info](http://www.livablestreets.info) <<< free newsletter!**

**Learn how transportation issues in the Boston area affect your life.**

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**Q: Why is raising fares a bad idea?**

**A: It drives away riders.**

- It's driving people away: with the fare increases since 2000, ridership is 6% lower today than 6 years ago.
- Fewer riders means more traffic congestion, more urban sprawl, more air pollution.
- Raising fares without also improving service and expanding the system for the future is not good policy.

**Q: How did this happen? Didn't the new funding mechanism passed by the Legislature in 2000 (called "Forward Funding") solve the problem?**

**A: Forward Funding did not meet the projections.**

- Forward Funding established three revenue sources for the T: one penny on the state sales tax, limited assessments on the cities and towns served by the T and fares.
- Sales tax revenues never met the expected projections and the T has been unable to meet its spending needs.
- The T was left with a large debt burden, about \$8 billion, magnitudes larger than other comparable transit agencies in the country.

**Q: What else do I need to know?**

**Quality of Service— Must be Improved**

- A huge backlog of maintenance is needed to put the system back into a "state of good repair."

**Capital Expansion Projects— Far Behind**

- The Green Line extension to Somerville, Fairmont Line servicing Dorchester, Blue Line to Lynn and scores of commuter rail improvements are nowhere near construction. The state should invest in serious planning for all of these projects .

**Q: What can I do?**

- Write your representative, telling her/him to support debt relief for the T, as a starting point to how the T is structured and funded. A healthy T is critical for the future of the economic growth and quality of life for everyone who lives, works, and plays in Boston.