

Construction Mitigation Points
Arborway Rail Restoration Project

Responding to the current concerns that businesses have raised regarding construction of the E-line project, we offer some points for ARRPAAC to consider in its recommendations. Our goal is to help write a contract which will build a high quality transitway most quickly and efficiently with the least disruption to businesses and people living along the way.

Signage

During construction every effort should be made to create a hospitable transitional environment for customers by providing good directional information and special paths and signs to encourage shopping in the area. It should be informative, but also clever and unique to JP to point drivers and pedestrians to businesses which might look blocked or disrupted, but are open and ready to meet their needs. An ad agency should be hired for this.

Advertising

Positive promotion of the E-line and specific mention of local stores should be a part of the plan while construction progresses. Ads on buses and subways should note location and highlight that JP's businesses are open during construction. Something like, "The E-line is returning and during construction the following businesses are looking forward to serving you."

Scheduling

Consider two or three shifts, and six day work weeks to get the job done quickly.

Coordinate **all** utility work with this project, so the same area is not disrupted and dug up many different times during the construction, or worse, dug up *after* the line opens. (Includes cable, telephone, fiber optic, sewer, water, gas, electric, and storm drains.) Evaluate plans to increase capacities in these systems to anticipate future needs.

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No construction during Christmas holiday shopping season.(Oct 1 to Dec 25, from Pond St. to Child St.)

Concentrate the heaviest and most disruptive construction in the business district when business is lightest and residents are on vacation. *e.g.* July 1 to Aug 20. Extra shifts and larger crews could be considered for this period.

Quality

It will be a strong selling point if we can point to a “state of the art” E-line infrastructure. Put in rail and catenary which will last longer than previous installations so it will be many years before the transitway will be disrupted again.

Require that contractors have significant manpower and equipment capacities to accomplish the task. We can learn from the mistakes of the Silver Line and the Huntington Ave. rebuild.

The coordinator for this project should be readily accessible to the public and shopkeepers so that she/he may respond to issues as they arise.

Parking and traffic

Be creative and persistent in efforts to create additional parking, such as double decking the Blanchard lot with pre-fab car elevators.

Loading and deliveries should be specific and time limited, and strictly enforced, with a plan that will accommodate business while ensuring the smooth flow of the streetcar.

Make specific suggestions to the City of Boston *now* about reworking streets . These changes should be to reduce traffic congestion on Centre Street without reducing the number of shoppers on the street. For example, if Harris Avenue and Revere Street (or Roanoke Av.) were made two way or reversed, they could provide access to the parking lot without having cars travel on Centre Street at all. If an exit were created out to Seaverns Avenue, the Harris lot would be much more efficient. The importance of making traffic changes immediately, would be that

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drivers would become familiar with the new traffic pattern *before* having to deal with construction detours.

Similarly, ask that parking, loading, and other *legal* requirements for cars be enforced *now* so that the rules of the road and safety issues are addressed as they should be *before* the streetcars roll down the street. Traffic is a mess in JP partly due to the fact that drivers and delivery trucks do park illegally anywhere, U-turn anytime, and block traffic at will, without ever being ticketed. Let them get used to doing it correctly now. It is always safer and fairer to implement enforcement before and during all stages of the project. Once streetcars are in place, ridership will increase dramatically and thus overall car usage will decline, easing traffic flow, and providing business with a strong customer base.

Respectfully submitted,

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