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Metro

T plans to increase weekday trips between Boston, Worcester

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT AUGUST 01, 2012

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The MBTA plans to increase the number of weekday train trips between Boston and Worcester this fall, soon after the state closes on a \$50 million deal with CSX Corp. to buy 21 miles of commuter rail track along the Framingham-Worcester line, officials said Tuesday.

Seven weekday round trips are set to be added to the current 13 made between Boston and Worcester, according to T spokesman Joe Pesaturo.

Three of the new trips are expected to launch soon after the final deed transfer from the CSX deal is made, he said. The transfer, expected to happen in October, will grant ownership of the tracks to the state's Transportation Department and control to the MBTA.

Within a few months after the transfer, at least two more trips will be added, including one that would run

on an express schedule, Pesaturo said.

The remaining trips are expected to be rolled out sometime in 2013, after the T receives new bilevel coaches that are being manufactured, he said.

The plan to reach 20 round trips between the state's two largest cities will double the number the T offered just before the state reached an agreement with CSX in September 2009 to buy the tracks for \$50 million, as part of a larger deal.

The agreement calls for CSX operations at Beacon Park railyard in Allston to be relocated to expanded facilities in Westborough and Worcester.

CSX spokesman Robert Sullivan said company operations are expected to begin moving from the Allston site in the fall.

The 80-acre railyard, next to the Massachusetts Turnpike, will then come under the control of Harvard University, which has no immediate plans to develop the property, said university spokeswoman Lauren Marshall.

As part of the 2009 CSX deal, the state also agreed to pay another \$50 million to buy a secondary line that runs from Allston through Cambridge and into East Boston; other tracks and the West First Street yard in South Boston; and the New Bedford-Fall River line as part of the South Coast Rail project, which Pesaturo said is undergoing an environmental review.

In addition, the state and CSX agreed to spend \$79 million to raise bridges and lower tracks between Interstate 495 and the New York State line to allow for double-stacked cargo trains. That project is due to be completed by the end of September, Pesaturo said.



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