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SECRETARY CARD GIVES APPROVAL
TO OLD COLONY RAIL PROJECT

BOSTON -- The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) has been given the green light to move ahead with plans to restore a commuter rail line in an area southeast of Boston, Secretary of Transportation Andrew H. Card Jr. announced today.

The signing of a federal-state agreement called a Record of Decision (ROD) applies to the Old Colony Rail restoration project and will allow the MBTA to submit a federal grant application for the start of construction of the long-awaited project.

"Transportation has a long-term impact on jobs and productivity," Card said. "In the case of the Old Colony project, it will reduce the number of hours of congestion on the Southeast Expressway and eliminate over 1,000 peak period automobile trips from heavily traveled roads." He added that the project will create 2,000 jobs in construction and related industries.

"This is the kind of progress that will make Massachusetts even more attractive to industry, and lead to more economic growth and more jobs," Card added. "Being from Holbrook, I know from experience that South Shore commuters face the worst traffic congestion in the Boston area every day."

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The federal-state agreement completes the environmental process and allows federal funds to flow to the Old Colony project. The next step will be the submission by the MBTA of a grant application to the Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Card said that the FTA could approve a grant for the project sometime later this summer.

The total cost of the project is expected to be \$478 million, with the federal and nonfederal shares yet to be determined.

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of Transportation

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