

# Transit Improvements Help Cyclists, Cut Traffic

By David Chase

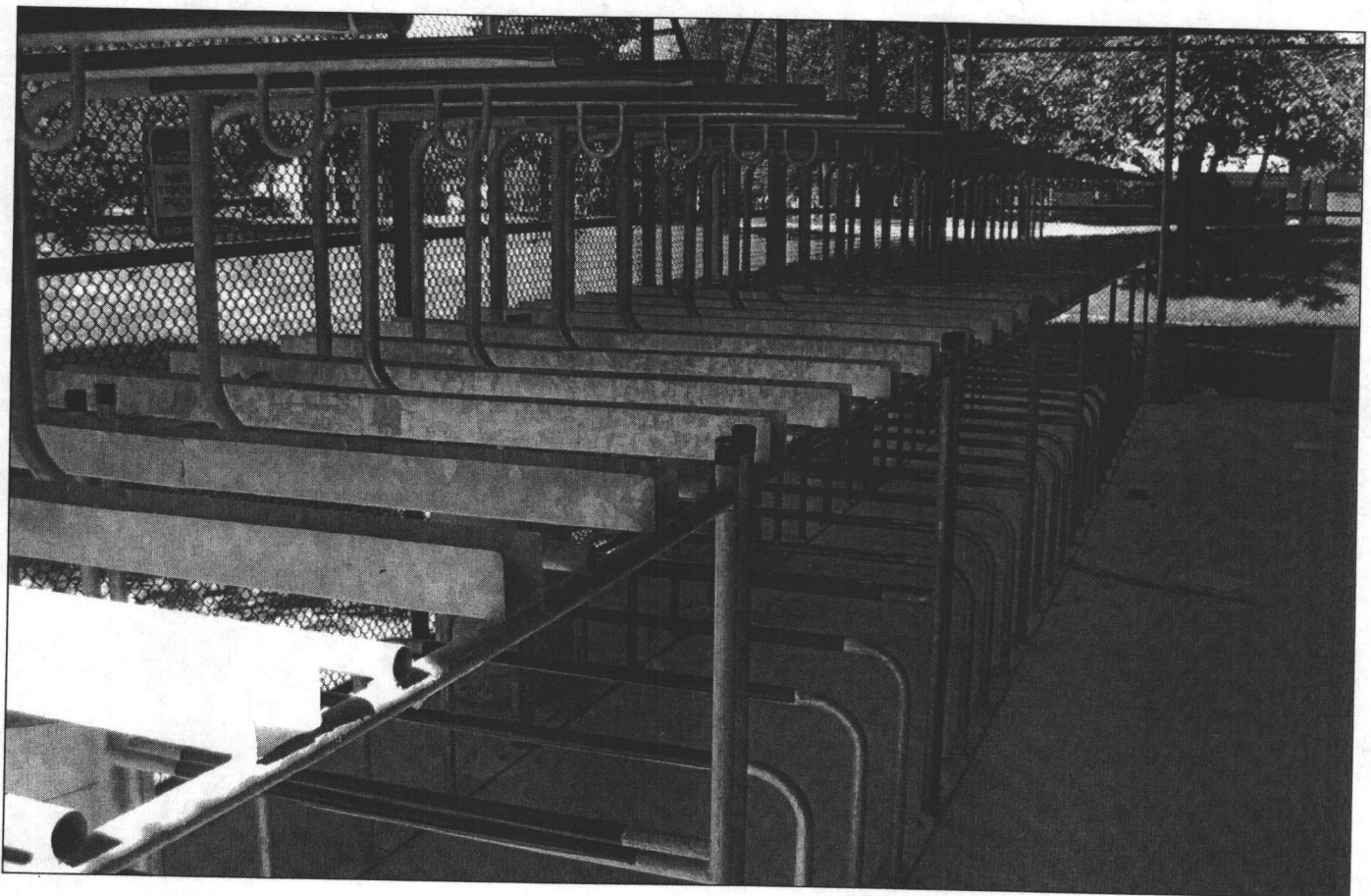
The MBTA is improving bicycle support on subways, buses, and trains over the next two years. These changes are not only good for people who might want to avoid driving; they also bring more riders to the T at a relatively low cost per additional rider.

In September 2008, the MBTA opened two Pedal & Park facilities, otherwise known as “bike cages”. These enclosed bike parking areas have a capacity of 150 bicycles each. To increase security, each cage has a video camera and can only be opened with a Bike CharlieCard, available for free from staff at Pedal & Park stations. These cages have been successful; they are often full and they reduce theft. At Alewife, ca. 500 bicycles park each day, 300 in the cages. As of July this year, 20 bikes had been stolen from Alewife—but none from inside the bike cages.

Even with the cages, on good-weather weekdays almost all the racks outside the cages are filled with bikes, so there is ample demand. The two cages provide about a 10 percent increase in Alewife’s “parking” capacity without consuming otherwise useful space or adding to the road traffic. Another cage opened at Forest Hills in September 2009.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded the addition of up to eight more Pedal & Park bike cages. The cage in South Station is under construction, Oak Grove and Braintree facilities are out to bid, and those at Ashmont, Davis Square, and Malden are still being designed. To increase security, starting in 2011 the bike cages will require use of registered Bike CharlieCards to open the cages. To register your Charlie Card, visit [www.mbta.com/riding\\_the\\_t/bikes/](http://www.mbta.com/riding_the_t/bikes/).

Compared to parking spaces, bicycle cages provide more than 1 space for every 9 square



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View of bicycle racks in the Pedal & Park bike cage parking at the Forest Hills MBTA station.