Better; Bus; Project Making transit

better together

## Welcome!

This is a Community Meeting on the Bus Network Redesign.

Please settle in!

The meeting will start shortly.



# Better; Bus; Project

Making transit better together

Caroline Vanasse Melissa Dullea Christof Spieler

May 19, 2022

**Bus Network Redesign** 

# **Diversity and Civil Rights**

#### English

All MBTA activities, including public meetings, are free of discrimination. The MBTA complies with all federal and state civil rights requirements preventing discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, and additional protected characteristics. We welcome the diversity from across our entire service area. If you have any questions or concerns, please visit <u>www.mbta.com/titlevi</u> to reach the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights.

#### Spanish

Todas las actividades de MBTA, incluidas las reuniones públicas, están libres de discriminación. La MBTA cumple con todos los requisitos de derechos civiles federales y estatales que impiden la discriminación por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, dominio limitado del inglés y características protegidas adicionales. Damos la bienvenida a la diversidad de toda nuestra área de servicio. Si tiene alguna pregunta o precupacion, visite <u>www.mbta.com/titlevi</u> para comunicarse con la Oficina de Diversidad y Derechos Civiles.

#### Chinese

MBTA 的所有活动,包括公开会议,都没有歧视。 MBTA 遵守所有联邦和州公民权利要求,防止基于种族、肤色、国籍、有限的英语能力和其他受保护特征的歧视。我们欢迎来自我们整个服务领域的多样性。如果您有任何问题或疑虑,请访问 <u>www.mbta.com/titlevi</u> 联系多元化和民权办公室。

# Welcome

#### English

Thank you for joining the meeting! We appreciate your participation.

- This meeting will be recorded so that it can be shared with the people that were unable to join.
- All participants will be muted upon entry so that only the presenters can be heard.

## Spanish

¡Gracias por atender esta junta! Agradecemos su participación.

- Esta junta estaría grabada para poder compartir con los que no pudieron asistir.
- Los participantes están silenciados al entrar la junta para que solo se pueda oír a los presentadores.

#### Chinese

感谢您参与此会议!

- 本次会议将会被录像,以便我们把它分享给没能来参加的人。
- **所有参与者在进来时都会**被静音,以便于演讲者能被听到。

## Interpretation

#### English

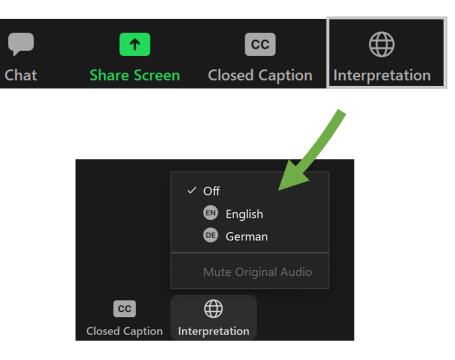
We offer interpretation during this meeting. In your meeting/webinar controls, click Interpretation (the small globe icon) and click the language that you would like to hear.

#### **Spanish**

Ofrecemos interpretación en español durante esta junta. Para escoger el audio en Inglés o en Espanol tendrá que picar el botón de interpretación, el cual tiene un imagen de un mundo. Cuando le pique la interpretación por favor de escoger el idioma cual le gustaria oir.

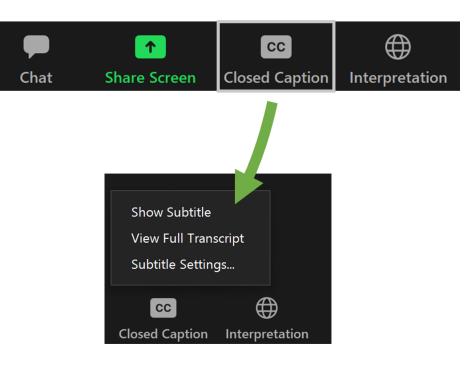
#### Chinese

我们本次会议期间提供口译服务。在您的会议/网络研讨会的 控件中,单击口译(小地球图标)·并单击您想听到的 语言



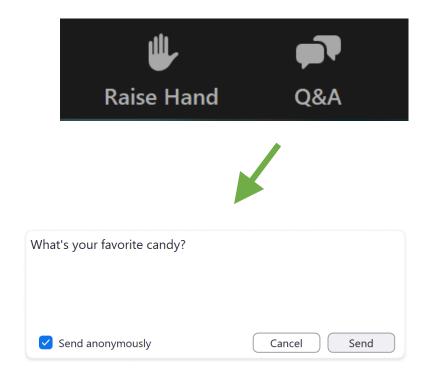
# Captioning

- You can view closed captions by clicking the Closed Captions feature and selecting from the options shown.
- **Show Subtitle** will display a caption at the bottom of the screen.
- View Full Transcript will display the meeting's audio transcription in a window to the right.
- To adjust the caption size, click the upward arrow next to Start Video / Stop Video. Click Video Settings then Accessibility. Move the slider to adjust the caption size.



# Submit a Question/Comment

- To submit a question, click the Q&A icon at the bottom of the window. When Q&A window pops up, type your question or comment in the comment box. To provide your comment anonymously, also click the Send anonymously checkbox before clicking the Send button.
- If you have a technical problem, please share your issue using the Q&A feature at any point during the meeting with a member of the project staff, and we will respond as quickly as possible.



# **Today's Meeting**

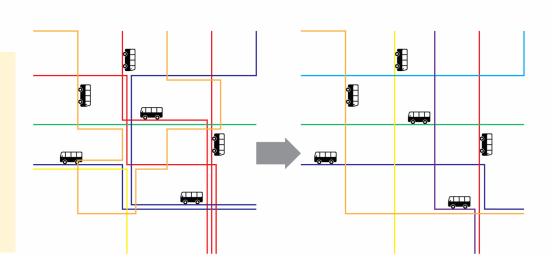
Better Bus Project Making transit better together

- Project overview
- Goals, Benefits, Trade-offs
- Design Principles
- What's Coming Next

**Q**&A

## What is Bus Network Redesign?

A complete re-imagining of the MBTA's bus network to better reflect the travel needs of the region and create a better experience for current and future bus riders.



# Why are we doing this?

The region has changed.

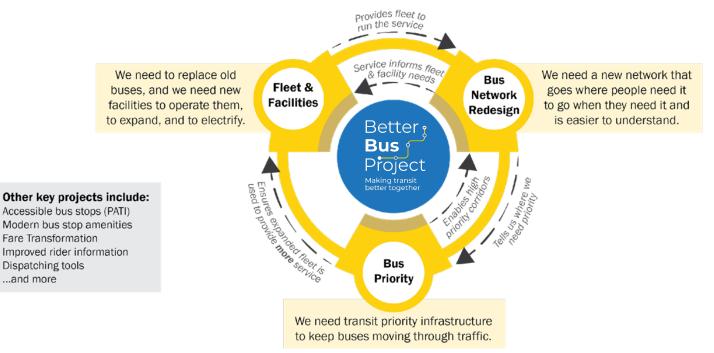
But our bus network has not changed with it.

Transit is essential to the region's economy. And the bus serves our most transitdependent populations.

So it's essential that our bus network adapts to change.



# The Redesign is coordinated with other initiatives to maximize benefit to riders





## Municipal partnerships are key to success

To increase service in congested corridors we need effective transit priority.

Increased service will also require new and expanded layover locations.

We will need bus shelters and accessible bus stops in new locations.

We will need new and upgraded garages to operate this service.

In some cases, transit priority is critical for implementation. For example, transit priority will be necessary in the Longwood Medical Area to ensure a positive rider experience.



## We've listened to our riders WE HEARD THAT GREAT BUS SERVICE:



Goes where people want to travel, when they need it



Is simple to use and understand



Is fast, frequent, and reliable



Serves the people who need it the most



## **Great Bus Service** SERVES THE PEOPLE WHO NEED IT THE MOST



During the COVID-19 pandemic, bus ridership was more durable than any other mode, retaining up to 4x more of its riders than Commuter Rail or Ferry.

Ridership during the pandemic has been less focused on the traditional peak times around 8 AM and 5 PM on weekdays and more focused on off-peak travel. These new travel patterns merit a new network that better serves all trip types throughout the day.



## Great Bus Service GOES WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO TRAVEL

## How do we know where people want to travel?

- Using Location-Based Services data about where people actually travel – even if not currently served by the MBTA
  - Describes trips on **all modes**
  - Represent all types of trips (i.e. work, social, medical, etc.)
  - Anonymized and unlinked from cell phone numbers to preserve privacy

**Public survey about travel destinations** 

General Travel Patterns Exhibited from the LBS Data

## We're measuring success



**Transit-critical populations:** low-income populations, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, or people who live in households with few or no vehicles.

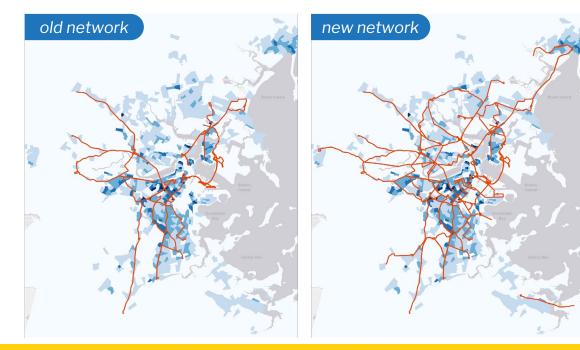
# What we are trying to do

- Equity first\*, prioritizing the needs of those who depend on buses and need frequent, reliable service
- **2** More frequent service in busy neighborhoods
- <sup>3</sup> More all-day service
- 4 New connections to more places (including non-downtown centers)
- **5** A network that's simpler and easier to use

\*Equity is defined as improving access and quality of service for transit-critical populations (low-income populations, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, or people who live in households with few or no vehicles)

## 1 We are providing better service for low-income populations and communities of color

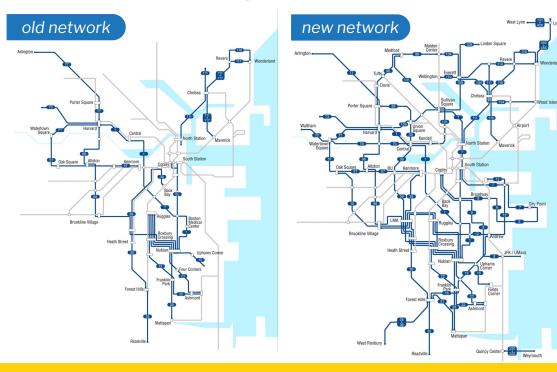
### Frequent service over low-income population



#### In the new network:

- **60% residents of color** have access to high frequency service.
- **115,000 residents of color** gain access to high frequency service.
- More than 50% of low-income households have access to high frequency service.
- **40,000 low-income households** gain access to high frequency service.

## 2 We are doubling the amount of high frequency service



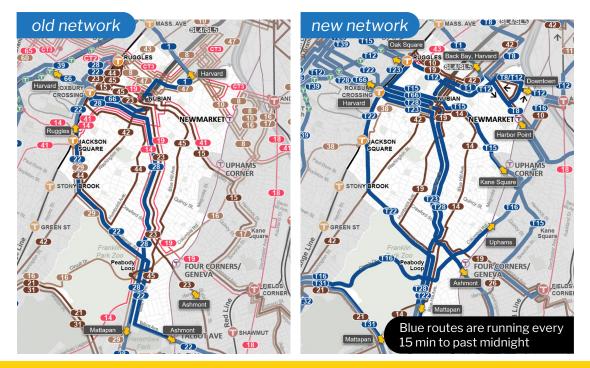
#### **Frequent service**

**275,000 more residents** with access to 15 min or less all-day 7-day-a-week service

- 15 corridors  $\rightarrow$  30 corridors
- Today, only 27% of weekday service is frequent – in this plan it's 50%.
- Today Everett, Lynn, Medford, Somerville, South Boston, and West Roxbury have no all-day high frequency routes – now they would.
- Today LMA has only 2 frequent routes – now it would have 6. Seaport and Kendall also get new frequent service.
- We are focusing on frequent bus service on corridors and connections that are not served by rapid transit

## **3** We are providing more midday, evening, and weekend service

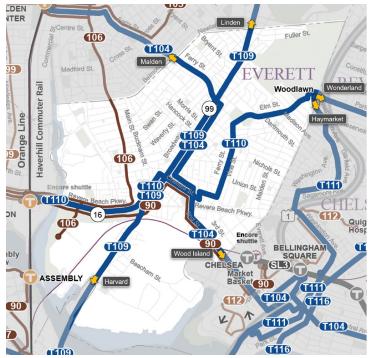
## Example: Roxbury at 11:00 pm weekdays



- We know people travel all times of day
  - The plan adds: 4% more weekday 30% more Saturday 90% more Sunday

•

## **4** We are creating better connections to more places



\_\_\_\_

000

**Example: Everett** 

Destination	% of Total Weekday Demand	Covered by direct frequent connection?
Within Everett	33%	new
Everett to Malden	11%	new
Everett to Chelsea	10%	new
Everett to Medford	7%	new
Everett to Revere	5%	new

Much of the travel demand is local rather than to downtown; the new network provides more crosstown connections.

Service

000 Every 15 min or better 5:00 am to 1:00 am, 7 days a week. In some cases this service is provided by two overlapping routes. Every 30 min or better 6:00 am to 10:00 pm, 7 days a week. Some routes run more frequently at peak. Some routes have service as early as 5:00 am and as late as 1:00 pm.

## **4** We are creating better connections to more places

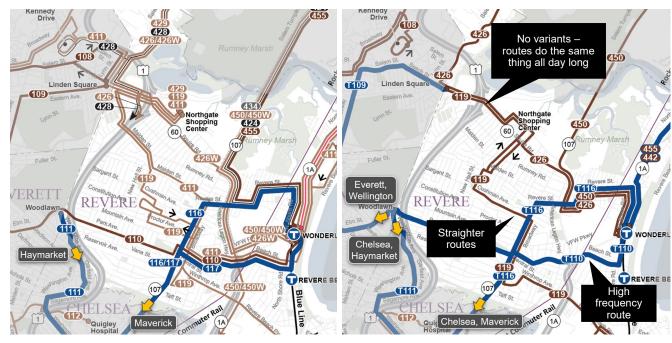
We are improving access to the top regional destinations with fast, frequent service\*

Destination	# of residents in MBTA service area that gain access to fast and frequent service to destination
Longwood Medical Area	200,000+
South Boston Waterfront	180,000+
Back Bay	50,000+
Kendall Square	58,000+

\*Fast and frequent service is defined by trips have a transit option that is *competitive* with driving options. Competitiveness is defined by have a fast trip that minimizes walk distance, transfers, and wait time.

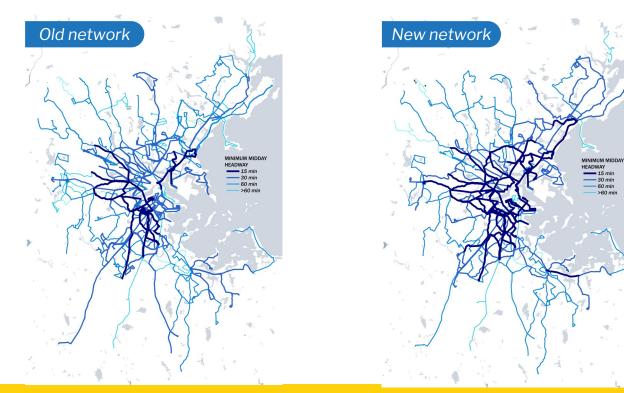
## 5 We are making service simpler and easier to understand

#### Example: Revere, old network (left) and new network (right)



- More routes that run the same service all day, every day. Fewer exceptions, variations, and complication.
- In the old network only 24% of weekday routes were simple – in the new network it's 68%.

## We're making changes all over the network



# **Bus Network Redesign Benefits**



## 275,000 more residents

would be near high frequency service



## 115,000 residents of color

gain access to high frequency service



## 40,000 low-income households

will gain access to high frequency service



## **25% increase in bus service** across the network





## **200,000** more residents

would gain access to fast and frequent service to Longwood Medical Area

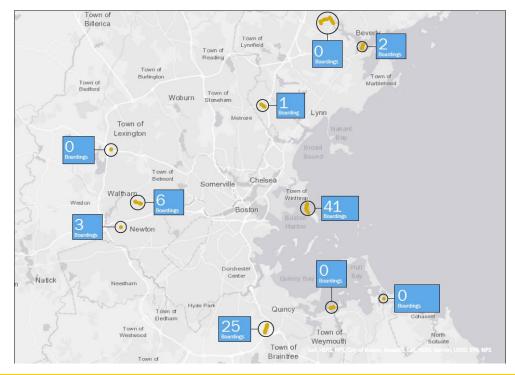
## Regardless, we always have to confront trade offs, simply because a bus is carrying a range of different people making different trips who have different needs.



## But there are some general trade-offs

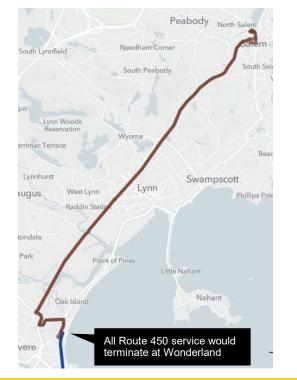
- We are running less express service in some areas but those places get better local service; people can still get downtown via local bus and rapid transit connections
- Some riders who do not transfer today will need to transfer, but new crosstown services mean that many 2 or 3 seat trips become 1 or 2 seat trips. Today, approximately half of passengers who board buses then transfer to rapid transit, and about 5% of them transfer to another bus.
- Some people will need to walk further (less than .5% of total riders)
- Some service will change from high frequency to lower frequency service

## 99.97% of current weekday riders do not have to travel more than <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> mile to access service



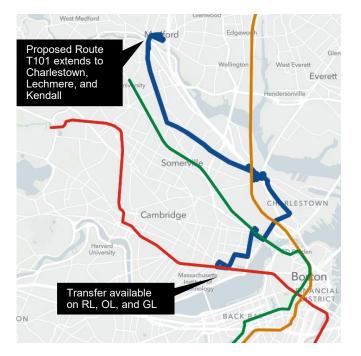
Note: Comparison to Fall 2021

# Express routes trade-off (example)



- Salem & Lynn proposed Route 450 would terminate at Wonderland every day, instead of Haymarket on weekdays and Wonderland on weekends for better consistency, simplicity
- Blue Line provides competitive travel time to Boston
- Lowers cost to rapid transit fare (\$2.40) rather than express fare (\$4.25) for trip into Boston
- Salem & Lynn also provide direct Commuter Rail access to North Station

# Transfers trade-off (example)



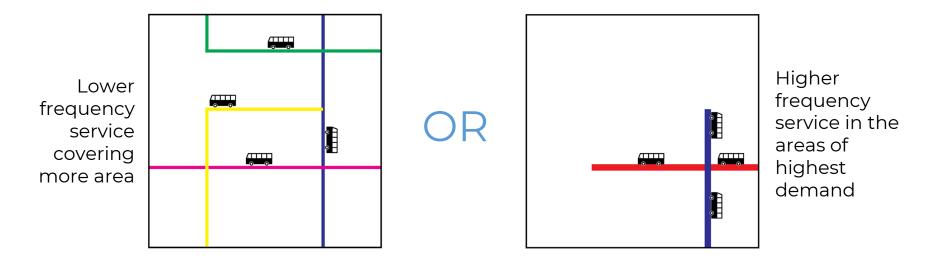
- **Proposed T101** would extend to Charlestown, Lechmere, and Kendall and replaces part of 92, 95, 326.
- Accessible transfers would remain available at Orange Line, Red Line, and Green Line stops for those continuing to downtown Boston.
- **Provides a new direct connection** from Charlestown to Lechmere to Kendall Square and replaces 2- or 3-seat rides.

# Walk distance trade-off (example)



- **Route T96 in Medford** is proposed to omit George St, Winthrop St, and Boston Ave.
- Frequency would be improved to be highfrequency all-day service
- Allows for more direct route for riders who would connect to Orange Line at Malden, Green Line at Medford/Tufts, or Red Line at Davis
- All stops are within 1/4 mi of transit service on **T96 or 94;** some riders might walk a little farther (up to 1/2 mi) for better frequency and connections on T96

## There are tradeoffs we're not making

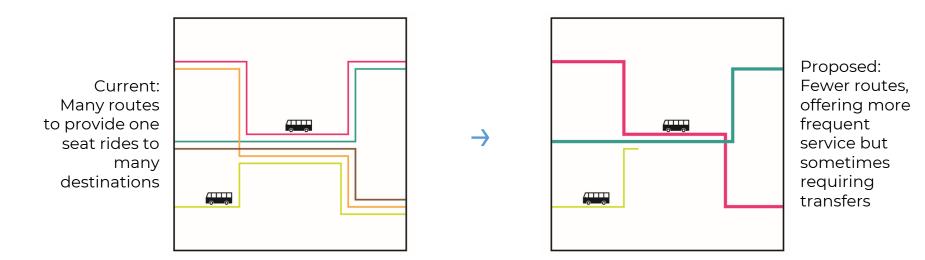


We are planning to maintain overall network coverage – the places we serve today will still have service within walking distance.

# We are following design principles

- **1** Prioritize frequency over one seat riders
- 2 Create rapid transit connections, but also keep going for crosstown trips
- **3** Focus on all-day service
- **4** Combine routes to create high frequency corridors
- **5** Minimize route variations
- 6 Minimize deviations on high frequency routes

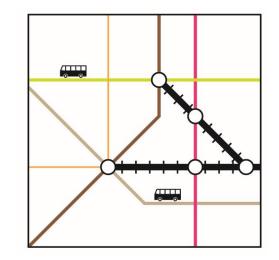
## We prioritize frequency over one seat rides



## <sup>2</sup> We create rapid transit connections, but also keep going for crosstown trips

 $\rightarrow$ 



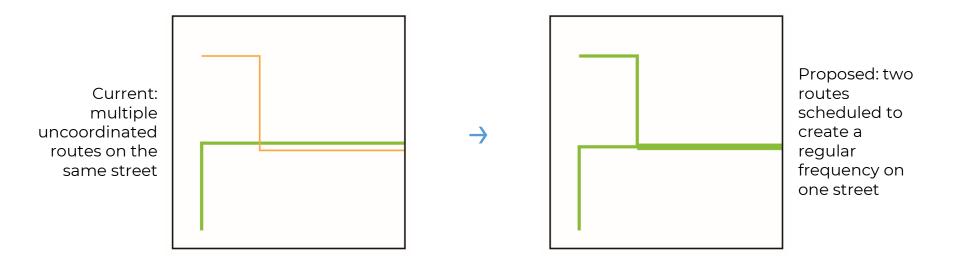


Proposed: Bus that feeds into rapid transit and continues for crosstown trips

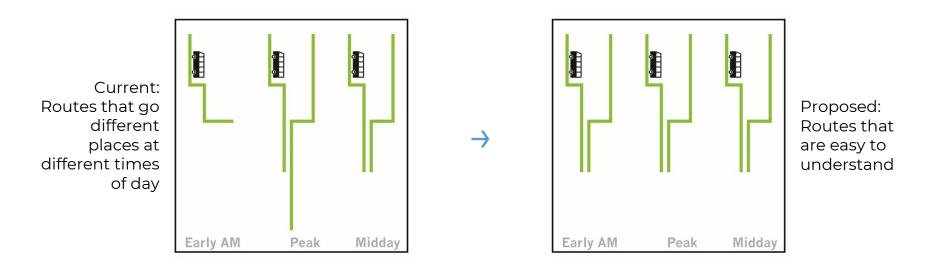
# <sup>3</sup> We focus on all-day service



#### We combine routes to create high frequency corridors.

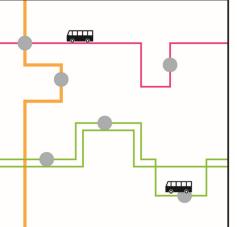


#### <sup>5</sup> We minimize route variations

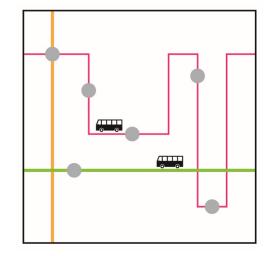


#### <sup>6</sup> We minimize deviations on high frequency routes

Current: Many routes go out of their way to reach the front doors of destinations



 $\rightarrow$ 



Proposed: Frequent routes stay on major streets within walking distance of destinations; low frequency routes provide front door service

# Fundamentally, this is a better network for the people who ride the MBTA

"Chelsea and Everett are neighboring towns and I think there should be a more efficient bus route to connect both towns. The towns are very close together and it shouldn't take an hour bus ride to get from one town to the other." Chelsea resident "The frequency for the bus is really far apart, especially on the weekends." Quincy resident

"I want the MBTA to improve frequent service throughout the day, not just rush hours." Hyde Park resident

"I use public transport every day for going to the doctors, grocery shopping, airport, train station, Brighton, downtown across the river, Somerville." Roxbury resident



#### Silvia

#### Mattapan

Silvia commutes from Mattapan to Boston Children's Hospital. Today she takes the 28 to Ruggles, then transfers to the CT2. Because the CT2 isn't frequent, she sometimes has to wait a while.

In the new network the T28 is a one seat ride for Silvia, and it comes every 15 minutes all day.

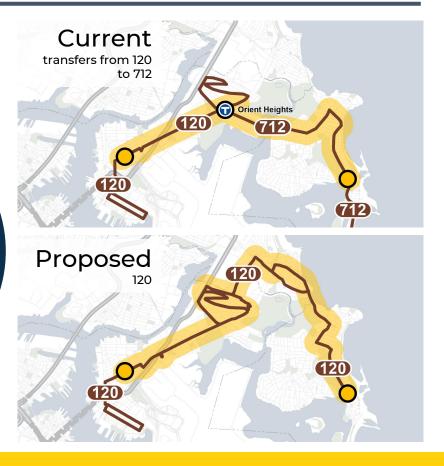
RUGGLES 28 Current 28 28 to Ruggles, then CT2 or walk Proposed T28 A

#### Kat

1

#### Winthrop

Kat goes grocery shopping every Sunday. Right now, she can take the bus to the Blue Line, then another bus. But with a 5-year-old and groceries, transferring on and off the bus is hard

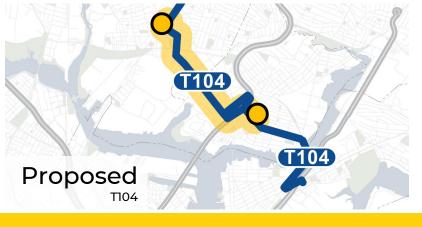


#### David

#### Bellingham Square, Chelsea

David commutes to the school he teaches at by bus. It's a one seat ride – but it's slow because the bus drives up and down two hills on the way. After a long day in the classroom, he wants to get home as soon as he can.

### Current

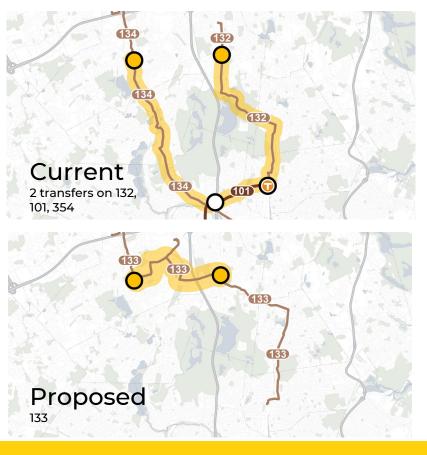


(112)

#### Doug

#### Stoneham

Doug goes to see his high school buddies every week to watch a game. But even though they're only three miles away, he has to take two bus trips to get there.



#### Sam

#### Western Ave, Lynn

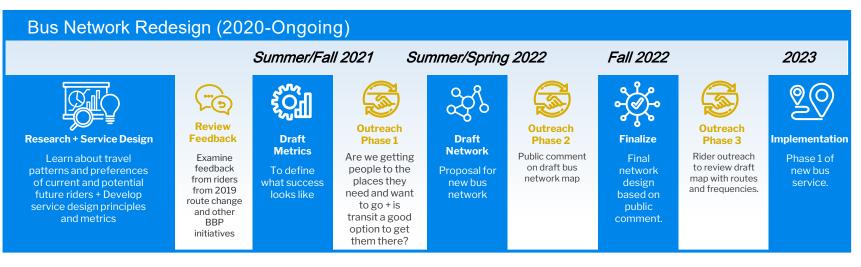
Sam commutes to work near Government Center. On weekends, he connects to the Blue Line when he heads into Boston for a game at the Garden. Sometimes he forgets that the weekend bus is different. Sam pays extra for the express pass for weekday travel.

#### Current 450



450/450V

### **Bus Network Redesign Project Timeline**



\*We are planning for phases of implementation over five years. Implementation timing will depend on structure and interdependencies of the new network, staff and public outreach capacity (including operator headcount), and the availability of bus priority.

# Implementation will be an agency-wide effort

- We will hire more operators
- We will do extensive rider communications
- Any new bus stop will be accessible
- We will look at transfer locations and identify potential capital improvements to make sure those are good locations to transfer

- May 24 Virtual (South Shore & South Suburbs)
- Includes:
  - o Avon
  - o Braintree
  - o Brockton
  - o Canton
  - o Hingham
  - o Holbrook
  - o Hull
  - o Milton

- o North Weymouth
- $\circ$  Norwood
- o Quincy
- o Randolph
- o South Weymouth
- o Walpole
- o Westwood

- June 2 Virtual (Boston)
- Includes:
  - o Allston
  - o Back Bay
  - o Beacon Hill
  - o Boston
  - o Brighton
  - o Charlestown
  - o Dorchester
  - Downtown
     Boston

- o East Boston
- o Fenway
- Hyde Park
- o Jamaica Plain
- o Kenmore
- Longwood
   Medical Area
- o Mattapan
- o Mission Hill

- o North End
- o Roslindale
- o Roxbury
- Seaport
- o South Boston
- o South End
- West End

- June 8 Virtual (Mystic River & North Shore)
- Includes:
  - o Beverly
  - o Chelsea
  - o Danvers
  - o Everett
  - o Lynn
  - o Lynnfield
  - Malden
  - o Marblehead

- o Nahant
- o Peabody
- $\circ$  Revere
- o Salem
- o Saugus
- Swampscott
- o Winthrop

- June 16 Virtual (Inner Core)
- Includes:
  - o Brookline
  - o Cambridge
  - $\circ$  Medford
  - o Somerville
  - o Watertown

- June 22 Virtual (Minuteman & Metro North)
- Includes:
  - $\circ$  Arlington
  - o Bedford
  - o Belmont
  - o Burlington
  - Lexington
  - o Melrose
  - Reading
  - o Stoneham

- o Wakefield
- Winchester
- o Woburn

- June 28 Virtual (Metrowest)
- Includes:
  - o Dedham
  - Needham
  - o Newton
  - o Waltham

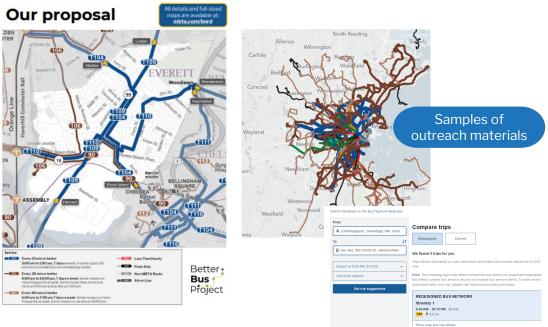
### Additional public outreach events

Community Meetings	Station Open Houses	Street Teams
<ul> <li>July 19 In-person- Open House - Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building</li> <li>July 26 Virtual public hearing</li> <li>July 28 in-person public hearing @ 10PP</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>May 18 Nubian Square</li> <li>May 26 Chelsea City Hall</li> <li>June 1 Harvard</li> <li>June 7 Quincy</li> <li>June 14 Dewey Square</li> <li>June 23 Ashmont</li> <li>June 30 Malden Center</li> <li>July 7 Sullivan</li> <li>July 12 Forest Hills</li> <li>July 21 Wonderland</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>May 17 Haymarket</li> <li>May 25 Central Sq (Cambridge)</li> <li>June 9 Copley Station</li> <li>June 15 Andrew</li> <li>June 21 Longwood Medical Area</li> <li>June 27 Kenmore</li> <li>June 28 Bellingham Square</li> <li>July 6 Nubian Square</li> <li>July 11 Maverick Station</li> <li>July 14 Oak Grove Station</li> <li>July 20 Ruggles Station</li> <li>July 27 Wonderland</li> </ul>

# How to get more details about your neighborhoods

- Explore changes in your neighborhood
- Explore the proposed bus network

Visit mbta.com/BNRD



### How to provide feedback

- Submit feedback online through our survey (available in multiple languages): <u>mbta.com/bnrdfeedback</u>
- Attend an event: <u>mbta.com/bnrdevents</u>
- E-mail us: betterbusproject@mbta.com

- Mail written comments: MBTA ATTN: Victoria Ireton 10 Park Plaza - Suite 3830 Boston, MA 02116
- Leave a voice message: 617-222-3011

We think this is a network that improves the bus experience for many riders.

We think we can make it even better because of YOUR feedback.



# How to Stay Informed

#### mbta.com/bnrd

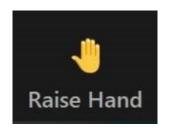
- You can find more details about Bus Network Redesign and other Better Bus Project initiatives on the <u>project website</u>.
- We will continue to provide updates to you on these efforts and inform you of opportunities to provide your feedback via our email list. You can <u>sign up for</u> <u>updates</u> on our website.
- Feel free to reach out to the Better Bus Project team at <u>BetterBusProject@mbta.com</u> with any questions.



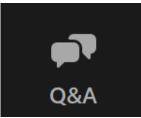


### Questions & Answers

- Please share only one question or comment at a time.
- Use the "Q&A" button to submit a typed question or comment. The chat is not open, but if you direct your question to "Ask A Question" we will receive the comment/question.
- Press the "Raise Hand" button to share your question or comment verbally. Wait for the moderator to recognize and unmute you before speaking.
- If you have joined by phone only, you may "raise your hand" by pressing the star button and then nine (\*9).
- After you speak, we will lower your hand and you will be muted to allow the team to respond and provide opportunities for others to participate.



To speak, click **"Participants"** then **"Raise hand"** 



Click **Q&A** to "Ask A Question"



\*9 Raise Hand

# How to Stay Informed

#### mbta.com/bnrd

- You can find more details about Bus Network Redesign and other Better Bus Project initiatives on the <u>project website</u>.
- We will continue to provide updates to you on these efforts and inform you of opportunities to provide your feedback via our email list. You can <u>sign up for</u> <u>updates</u> on our website.
- Feel free to reach out to the Better Bus Project team at <u>BetterBusProject@mbta.com</u> with any questions.

Better; Bus; Project

Making transit better together **Thank you!** 

Website: MBTA.com/BNRD Contact: Betterbusproject@MBTA.com Appendix



#### **Example engagement to date on Bus Network Redesign**

Ongoing engagement and outreach since 2019 includes:

- **1,000+ comments on travel survey** in multiple languages
- Focus groups with 100+ riders held in multiple languages in partnership with community organizations
- 10+ meetings with BNRD External Task Force
- **50+ meetings with municipalities and roadway owners** to discuss how to partner to implement high frequency corridors
- **30+ hours of street teams** at stops and stations in different languages to promote the project
- Engagement with Operators and the Training School
- **Presentation to elected officials** at briefing hosted by MAPC, Rep Madaro, and Sen DiDomenico
- Advertising in multiple languages in newspapers, radio, stations, etc.



Street Team outreach at Harvard busway

Builds on significant outreach from 2018/19 on first phases of Better Bus Project

#### FOR INTERNAL DISCUSSION ONLY

### How are we measuring travel demand?

#### Location-Based Services (LBS) data

- Average weekday, Saturday, and Sunday travel based on travel across all modes (not just transit)
- This data captures **all types of trips**.
- Is anonymized and unlinked from cell phone numbers and individuals to preserve privacy.
  - Able to make inferences about which trips are made by low-income, people of color, and people in zero and low vehicle households
- Representative of different demographic groups with some exceptions (e.g. Seniors)

#### LBS data allows us to identify new or underserved areas that have high travel demand.

This is the best information we've ever had on how low-income residents and people of color—groups that have traditionally been unrepresented in decision making—travel.

Using data ensures the new service we propose reflects everyone (whether they had time to participate or not) and all of their trips (the ones they're making on transit today and the ones they're not because transit doesn't serve them well).

## **Competitive trip coverage**

Competitive trip coverage = what percent of trips have a transit option that is competitive with driving

- A measure of scheduled service (not operated service)
- Compares travel time by transit to travel time by car
- Transit is held to a higher standard (relative to travel time by car) to pass if trip is associated with inconveniences due to:
  - Total travel time
  - Walk distance
  - Transfers
  - Frequency
  - E.g. A direct, frequent trip with short walks can be up to 3x as long but a direct, *infrequent* trip with short walks can only be up to 2x as long

### **Regional Destinations**

Important places that residents from across the region should be able to reach by public transit



Key Components for Determining Regional Destinations, Adjusted Based on Summer 2021 Travel Survey Feedback:

- **1. Travel Demand:** Minimum numbers of total trips and unique origins indicate universal importance (rather than local or sub-regional importance)
- 2. **Density:** Minimum density requirement indicates transit-supportive land use
- **3. Equity:** Only locations that are top destinations for all travelers, travelers of color, *and* low-income travelers are considered

### How did we get input on data?

We created a survey to receive public input to check the data. We asked:

- What are the important local and regional destinations people need and want to get to?
- What makes public transit a good option for a trip?

The outreach targeted seniors and people with disabilities, but the survey was widely available

- Partnered with Mass Senior Action Council, MBTA System Wide Accessibility Office, and Boston Union capital to promote survey
- Received 1,000+ survey responses