



Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Better Bus Project - Update

September 24, 2018



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About the MBTA Bus Service Network

- More than a third of all MBTA trips are taken on buses.
- The MBTA's bus network consists of 175 routes.
- Nearly 450,000 trips are taken on MBTA buses in a single weekday.
- Serving 50 communities, the bus network provides critical connections.
- Overall On Time Performance for the bus network is 65%, well below the target of 75%.

Types of bus routes	% of Routes	% of Bus Ridership
Key bus routes (longer span, higher frequency)	11%	42%
Local bus routes (full weekday service)	73%	55%
Commuter bus routes (limited peak-direction trips, express bus routes)	16%	3%



What we have heard through the Better Bus Project

Audience	Comments
FMCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make the highest impact, as quickly as possible to routes that would create the bus network backbone
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More reliable service• More frequent service
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedules that can be met• Better spacing of stops
Consultant Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service is too complex• There are too few frequent routes• Service is slow and getting slower• Service is unreliable• Schedules are irregular• Many buses are overcrowded• Many routes start too late• Many routes end service too early• Many routes operate too infrequently



Better Bus Project Service Improvement Process Map

Quarterly Changes - Ongoing

- Within the allocated FY operating and capital budget.
- No Board Vote is required
- Changes need to be implemented

Tier 1: Budget Neutral Opportunities

- No additional resources beyond FY19. Goal is to simplify routes, adjust schedules, and improve efficiency along routes.

- Board needs to provide guidance
- Public Comment
- Board needs to Vote on recommendations
- Recommendations need to be implemented

Tier 2 – Tier 5: Investment Opportunities

- Need additional resources dependent on tier investment selection. Goal is to achieve Key Bus Route Standards and/or Service Delivery Policy Standards to create a high frequency core network.

- Board needs to provide guidance
- Public Comment
- Board needs to Vote on recommendations
- Budget in FY20 to implement
- Recommendations need to be implemented



Quarterly Changes to the Bus Network

Quarterly Changes Ongoing

- No addition resource requests beyond FY19 operating budget.
- No Board Vote is Required
- Changes need to be implemented through quarterly updates.

Spring 2018 (April)

- ✓ Early Morning Service Expansion Pilot
- ✓ Chelsea Gateway Silver Line Service

Fall 2018 (September)

- ✓ 83 changes; 49 routes
- ✓ 158,571 Passenger Trips
- ✓ 38% of Trips/Weekday
- ✓ Route 111 – 5 additional operators added to improve reliability
- ✓ Late Night Service Expansion Pilot

Winter 2018-19 (December)

- 43 changes; 29 Routes
- 568,146 Passenger Trips (Weekly Trips)
- Changes to 24% Passenger Trips
- Cabot Garage – 5 additional operators added to improve reliability
 - Routes 1, 47 and 66
- Additional inbound trip during the AM peak on Route 111



Optimization of the Bus Network – Fall 2018

Date	Bus Transit Priority Project Description
Sept 21	Cambridge Parking Day <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 Bus lanes for one day only• Mass Ave and Main St• Many routes benefit
Oct 9	Arlington bus lane on Mass Ave (1 month) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mix of bus lane, queue jump, and TSP• Routes 77, 79, 350
Oct 26 (Likely)	Cambridge Mt. Auburn St. bus lanes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Painted, all-day bus lane, pre-empted queue jumps, TSP• Routes 71, 73
Fall/Winter (Likely)	Cambridge South Mass Ave <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Painted, all-day bus lane, TSP evaluation, coordinating with DCR and MassDOT for transit improvements on bridge• Routes 1, CT1



Next Steps – Tier 1, Budget Neutral Opportunities

- Meet with Board Members
 - Late September 2018
- Hold Public Meetings to share recommendations and receive feedback
 - January 2019
- Board Vote on Proposals to Adopt
 - April 2019
- Implement Adopted Proposals
 - Fall 2019 (Based on timeline for planning, scheduling and picking)