



**Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority**

The Better Bus Project – Part 1

Review of Work Plan

December 10, 2018



Overview

This presentation will update the Board on the Better Bus Project work plan including the timeline for key deliverables. The Project Team welcomes the Board's feedback on this plan and will return to the Board in January to update the board and recommend improvements to bus routes across the system.

- **Analysis Update:**
 - Initial Feedback Summary
 - Lessons Learned from Initial Outreach
 - Market Analysis
 - State of the System
- Progress towards near-term Changes
- Multi-year Investment Strategy
- Key Next Steps - Decisions and Implementation Timelines



What we are aiming to achieve

A Better Bus Network for our riders and operators that:

- Builds a foundation for ongoing and future bus service improvements
- Leverages municipal partnerships to improve bus service
- Improves how we deliver service to build a more effective transit system
- Focuses on positively impacting the greatest number of riders as possible

Better
Bus
Project

A stylized yellow graphic representing a bus route. It consists of a horizontal line connecting the 't' in 'Better' to the 's' in 'Bus'. From the 's', a vertical line goes up to a small white circle, then a horizontal line goes right to another small white circle, then a vertical line goes up to a third small white circle, then a horizontal line goes right to a fourth small white circle, and finally a vertical line goes up to a small black circle above the 't' in 'Project'.



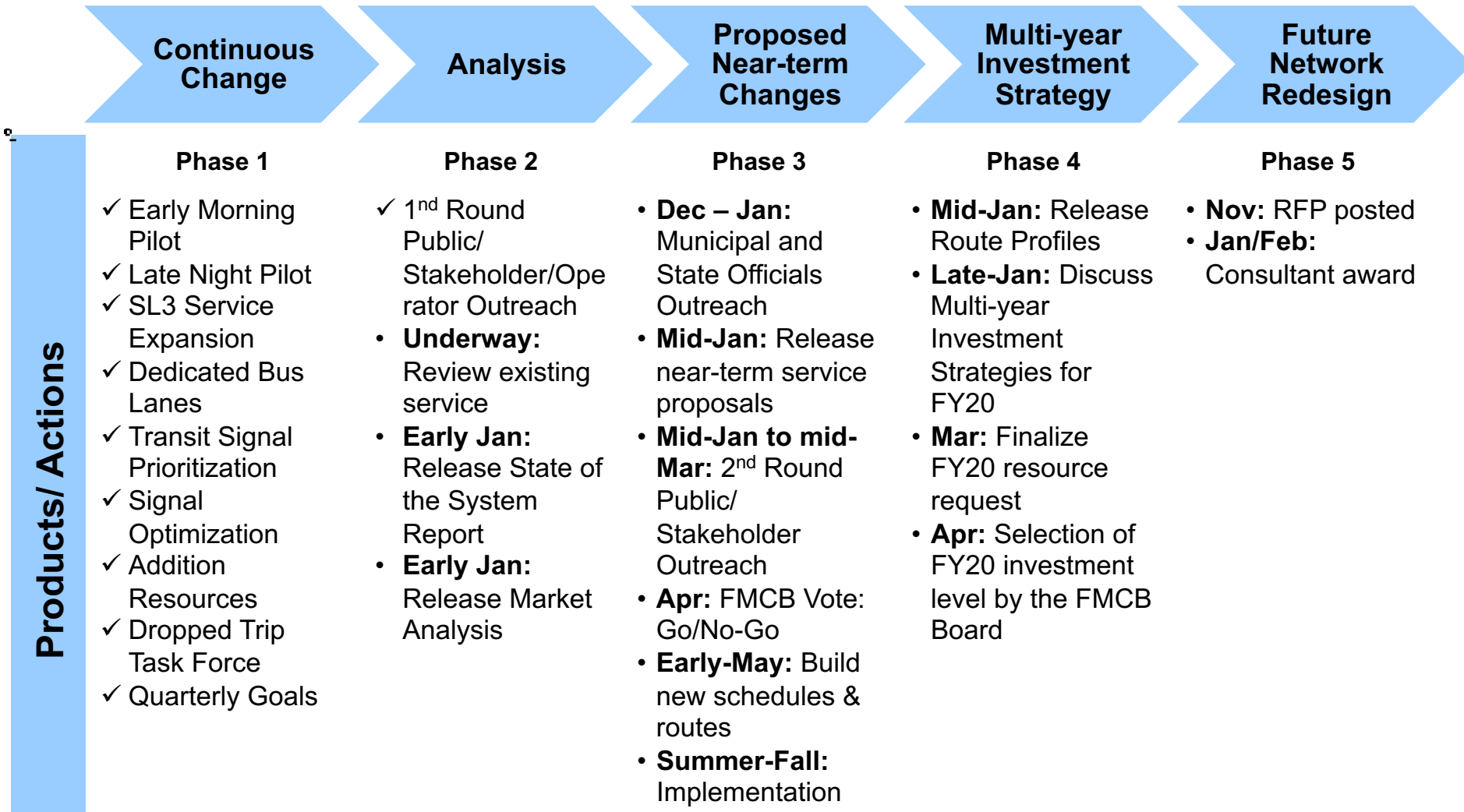
Why we need to improve bus service: Performance of cities with highest weekday trips

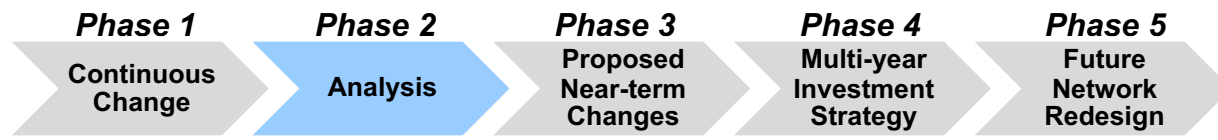
9.

Municipality	No. of Routes	Weekdays Trips	Routes that Fail the Service Delivery Policy Standard (2017 Data)		
			Reliability	Comfort	Frequency
Boston	99	252,749	92% (91)	41% (41)	78% (77)
Cambridge	29	36,031	93% (27)	59% (17)	79% (23)
Somerville	16	15,618	94% (15)	63% (10)	63% (10)
Malden	20	12,501	100% (20)	40% (8)	80% (16)
Chelsea	5	11,854	100% (5)	60% (3)	80% (4)
Quincy	18	11,546	89% (16)	6% (1)	67% (12)



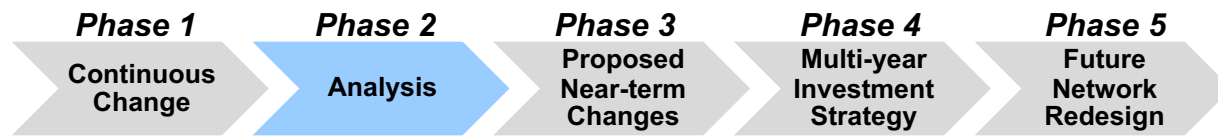
Better Bus Project Process Map: Update





Analysis Update: Initial Feedback Summary

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 have irregular headways • Many buses are overcrowded • Many routes start too late and end too early



Analysis Update: Lessons Learned from Initial Outreach

Most participation through online feedback (1,986 respondents) and street teams cards (1,143 completed)

- Online feedback was open for 3 full months – we received a steady number of responses for all months (April-24; May-945; June-465; July-552)
- Street teams were conducted for 12 weeks (24 in total)
- Online feedback was increased when we had street teams to publicize

Our team has reached out to community groups, municipal staff and others to get feedback on how to reach populations in more depth for Round 2

- Attend community events/municipal/neighborhood association briefings
- Conduct stakeholder workshop(s) with community leaders
- Share information in neighborhood newsletters/community social media groups

There are trade-offs by using different types of public outreach approaches:

- Regional public meetings can cover large areas of ridership with high quality feedback, but attendance is low and reaches a limited audience
- Street Teams, Transit Talks, Online, and other community focused efforts reach active riders who may not otherwise engage in the outreach process

Phase 1
Continuous
Change

Phase 2
Analysis

Phase 3
Proposed
Near-term
Changes

Phase 4
Multi-year
Investment
Strategy

Phase 5
Future
Network
Redesign



Analysis Update: Market Analysis

Market Analysis:

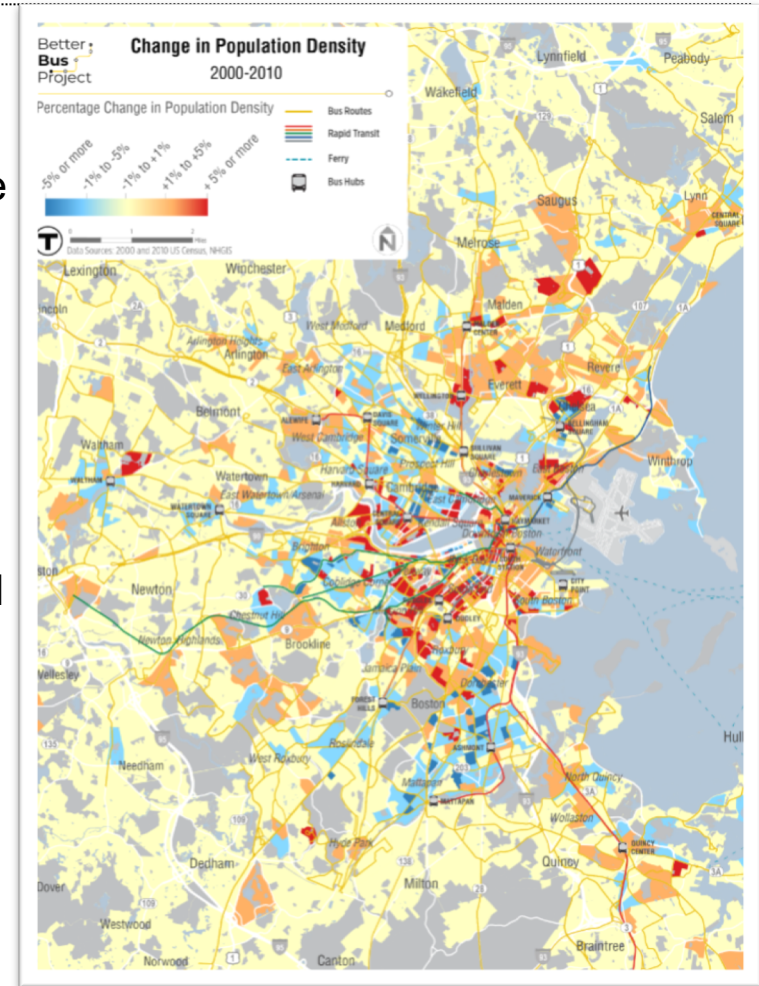
- A comprehensive evaluation of the underlying transit demand throughout the MBTA's bus service area

Key Findings:

- More than any other factor, population and employment density will determine the underlying demand for transit
- People travel throughout the service area using all modes, however transit is only oriented toward downtown Boston
- Complete Market Analysis will be available online

Available: Early January, 2019

Report will be posted on: mbta.com/betterbus





Analysis Update: State of the System

State of the Bus System Report:

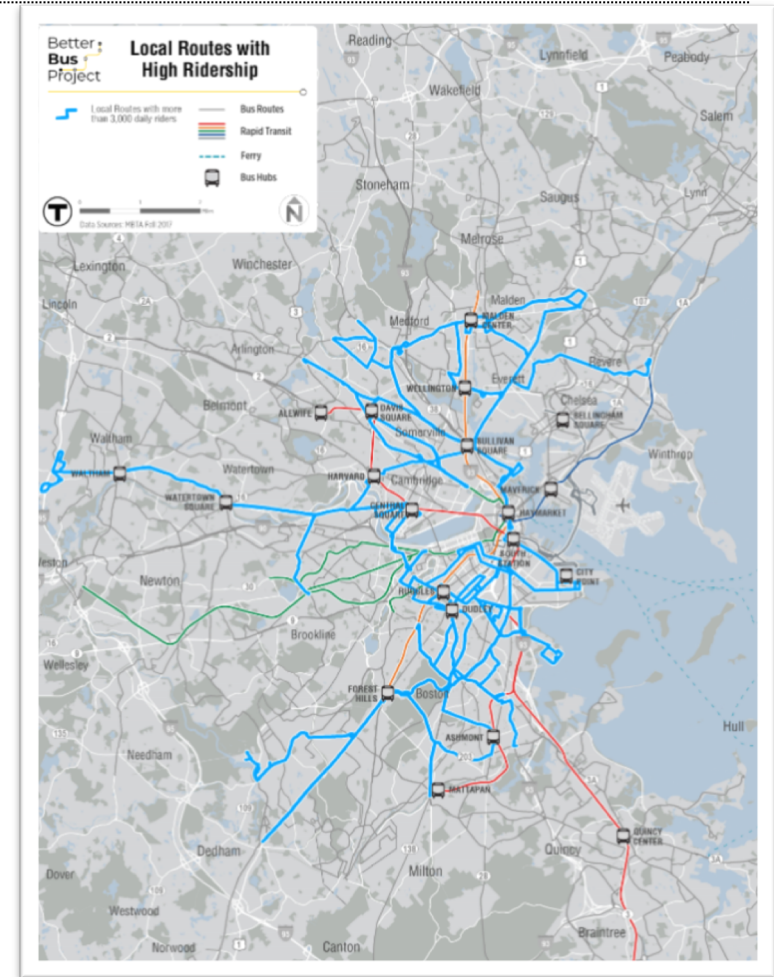
- Highly illustrated briefing book that provides a review of the MBTA's existing bus transit service and operating characteristics

Key Findings:

- Develop a 'Frequent Transit Network' to better match service with demand
- Simplify routes and the overall network, including consolidation of stops
- Build new schedule to reflect actual service and address SDP standards
- Work towards eliminating dropped trips
- Focus on bus transit priority improvements
- Complete Market Analysis will be available online

Available: Early January, 2019

Report will be posted on: mbta.com/betterbus





Proposed Near-term Changes Update

Near-term Change Proposals:

- One page overview of each of the MBTA's proposed service changes, including maps, justifications, and supporting data

Detailed Description:

- About 50 service change proposals across the network that can be implemented in 2019
- Will include: a map of the proposal, current metrics on the performance of the route, and an explanation on why we believe these changes are beneficial to the riding public
- This document will be used to gain feedback from the public both in our public meetings and through our online survey

Available: Mid-January, 2019

Report will be posted on: mbta.com/betterbus

Mock-up for illustrative purposes only

Boston Station <-> Mass Square

54

You asked for buses that come **on time & more often**

Our proposal

- Remove midday variant on route
- Shorten the resulting route by eliminating the traffic-heavy loop



< 3

min shorter wait for 91% of all riders


~ 7

min faster ride from Mass Square for Route 54 riders

100%

of corridor riders will experience better service

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Multi-year Investment Strategy Update: Route Profiles

Route Profiles:

- In-depth report of each of 180 MBTA operated routes (15-20 pages each)

Detailed Description:

- Provides a detailed analysis of each route designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each route
- Data includes: Network Importance, Ridership, Passenger Comfort, reliability and speed
- The profiles assist with identifying ways to improve each route for both phase 3 and phase 4

Available: Mid-January, 2019

Report will be posted on: mbta.com/betterbus

Route 120

Orient Heights-Maverick Station via Bennington Street

Route Overview

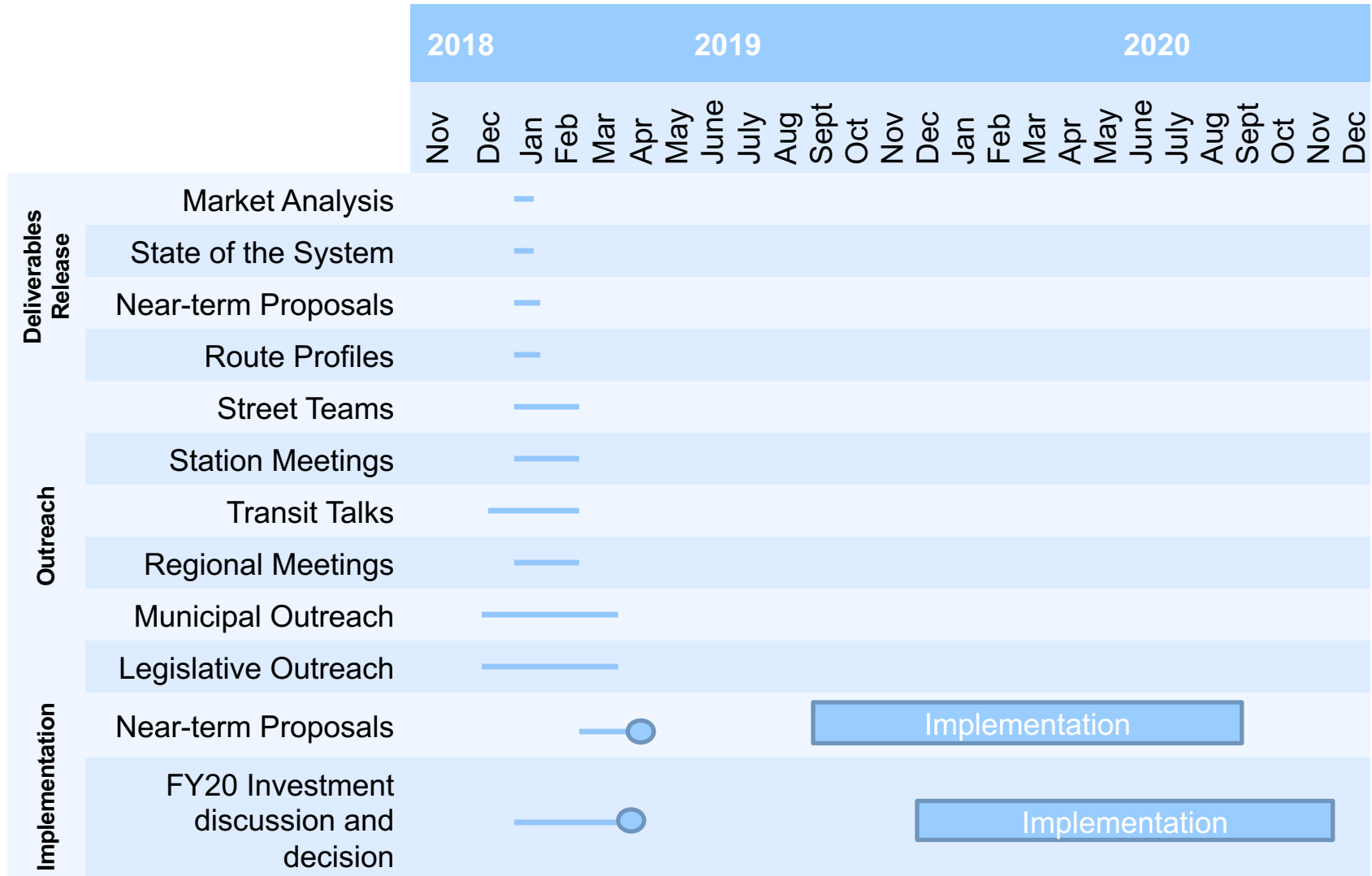
Route 120 is a local that operates between Orient Heights Station and Maverick Station. Inbound trips include a loop through Jefferies Point and outbound trip include a loop through Orient Heights (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 | Service Map

The map shows the route starting at Orient Heights Station, heading west through Bennington Street, then south through Maverick Station. Key transfer points include Airport, Wood Island, and East Boston. Landmarks like Logan International Airport and the Blue Line are also visible.



Timeline for Next Steps, Decisions and Implementation





Key Next Steps

Date	Meeting/Deliverable Release
Dec 10	<i>FMCB Presentation – Part 1 Work Plan Review, Overview of State of System and Market Analysis</i>
Jan 7	<i>FMCB Presentation – Part 2 Overview of Near-term Change Proposals and Route Profiles</i>
	Early January <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Release Market Analysis• Release State of the Bus System Report Mid January <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Release Near-term Change Proposals• Release Route Profiles• Begin Municipal and Legislative Briefings
Jan 28	<i>FMCB Presentation – Part 3 Discuss Multi-year Investment Strategies for FY20</i>
March	Action: <i>FMCB Propose FY20 Budget</i>
April	Action: <i>FMCB Vote on Package for Near-term change proposals</i>