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Dear Riders,

As 2023 comes to a close, we are grateful for the opportunity to share our latest semi-annual Accessibility Initiatives report. Much has happened over the last year—including the arrival of our new General Manager, Phil Eng; wage increases for MBTA Bus Operators which have begun to help address a long-standing staffing shortage; and the development of an ambitious track improvement plan aimed at enhancing safety and service throughout the system. It's also been a year in which we advanced a number of our ongoing efforts toward achieving a 100% accessible MBTA.

Highlights of those efforts you'll find within our update include:

- Over 35 stations that are under either design or construction (and funded) for major accessibility upgrades
- The September 2023 launch of a first-of-its-kind marketing campaign, [Access in Motion](#), aimed at promoting awareness of accessibility and its benefits for all MBTA riders
- A comprehensive investigation into platform gaps on the Orange Line
- Plans for the piloting of accessible wayfinding technology to make navigating complex stations easier

We know that this is also a year which has brought frequent challenges for our system and our riders. We hope that reading about our continuing progress on the initiatives in this report leaves you sharing our optimism about the future of accessibility at the T—and our pride in how far we've come thanks to your ongoing engagement and partnership. (See the addendum for details on all the projects and initiatives we've completed together over the past four and a half years.)

As always, if you would like additional information on any project listed here, or would like to suggest an area of focus, please feel free to reach out by sending an email to [accessibility@mbta.com](mailto:accessibility@mbta.com).

We look forward to seeing you on next year's leg of our journey toward an MBTA that's safe, reliable, and accessible for all. Best wishes from all of us for a happy and peaceful new year.

Laura Brelsford & the System-Wide Accessibility Team  
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# INFRASTRUCTURE

## Subway Stations

### 1. Forest Hills Station Phase II

Scope: Building on improvements made during Phase I, Phase II includes the replacement of three existing elevators: lobby to Orange Line platform, lobby to Needham Commuter Rail platform, and lobby to lower busway. A new elevator–stair tower will be designed to connect the upper busway directly to the lower busway.

Update: The new headhouse and elevator on the Southwest Corridor Park, which provides a second accessible entrance to the Orange Line platform, opened on November 5, 2019, under the Phase I project. The design for the broader station upgrades under Phase II—including the replacement of the existing elevators and the new elevator between the upper and lower busways—is underway and is expected to be completed in summer 2024.

### 2. Ruggles Station Phase II

Scope: In addition to the station upgrades that were accomplished as part of Ruggles Phase I (see attached addendum), the Ruggles Phase II project will include the construction of an additional elevator to the Orange Line platform; an accessible entrance on Columbus Ave.; and a number of additional upgrades to bring the station into full compliance.

Update: The revised designs for Ruggles Phase II are approaching 100% and the project will be advertised for construction in December 2023, with Notice to Proceed expected in April 2024.

### 3. Longfellow Viaduct and Charles/MGH Station

Scope: As part of major upgrades to the Longfellow Viaduct, Charles/MGH Station will be upgraded in a number of significant ways. Accessibility upgrades include the resolution of a significant vertical gap between the platforms and train cars; additional accessible emergency egress options; and the construction of a new headhouse with elevators that will provide redundant access to the Red Line.

Update: The Charles/MGH and Longfellow Approach Viaduct Rehabilitation project is expected to reach the 75% design milestone in May 2024.

### 4. Newton Highlands Station

Scope: This project aims to make Newton Highlands Station fully accessible by raising and extending both the inbound and outbound platforms, as well as installing detectable warnings, canopies, and benches. Located within an approximately 20-foot-deep cut, site work will include providing three accessible routes down to the platforms.

Update: Interim accessibility upgrades were completed on platforms in December 2020 (a portion of the platform has been raised 8 in. above top of rail on both the inbound and outbound sides to provide accessible boarding). Design for the full station upgrade is complete. Advertisement for construction is scheduled for early 2024, with construction expected to begin in the fall.

### 5. Beaconsfield, Chestnut Hill, Eliot, and Waban Stations

Scope: This project will provide accessibility at these four stations through raised platforms and improvements to the paths of travel leading to the platforms.

Update: Designs for all four stations have reached 100%. The project is expected to be advertised for construction in early 2024, with construction to begin in summer 2024.

## 6. Symphony Station

Scope: This project will upgrade Symphony Station to a modern, accessible, code-compliant facility. It includes the construction of accessible routes from the street level to the platforms by means of four new elevators (two per platform), as well as raised platforms, accessible restrooms, improved wayfinding, and overall station brightening and modernization.

Update: In 2022, the project was split into two phases: 1) Symphony Utility Relocation and 2) Symphony Station Improvement/Accessibility. The Utility Relocation phase began in April 2023. The Improvement/Accessibility phase is in design and nearing completion as building code changes are incorporated. Construction work is anticipated to start in late 2024.

## 7. Hynes Station

Scope: This project will deliver a fully accessible Hynes Station with redundant elevators, areas of rescue assistance, and accessible entrances from Boylston St., Massachusetts Ave., and Newbury St.

Update: As originally envisioned, this project was to be led by a private developer as part of an air rights development over Hynes Station and the Mass Pike I-90, at the northeast corner of Boylston St. and Massachusetts Ave. In the absence of clear development plans, however, the MBTA has proceeded with design work independently in order to advance the station accessibility upgrades (while not precluding future private development). The design is currently at the 30% milestone.

## 8. Packard's Corner, South Street, Sutherland Rd, Chiswick, and Chestnut Hill Ave Stations (B Branch)

Scope: Each of these street-level Green Line stops on the B Branch will be modified by raising the existing platforms by 8 in. and adjusting nearby infrastructure as needed in order to provide accessibility.

Update: Designs are underway and approaching 30% for each of these stations. Construction is expected to begin at Packard's Corner in spring 2024, with construction beginning at the remaining four stops in spring 2025.

## 9. Tappan, Fairbanks, Summit Ave, Hawes, St. Paul Street, Englewood, Brandon Hall, and Kent Street Stations (C Branch)

Scope: Each of these street-level Green Line stops on the C Branch will be modified by raising the existing platforms by 8 in. and adjusting nearby infrastructure as needed in order to provide accessibility. Project scopes (including station consolidations) vary from stop to stop, but each requires meaningful coordination with the Town of Brookline.

Update: The MBTA has been working with the Town of Brookline on conceptual design preferences as well as developing and implementing a public outreach plan to gain consensus on station designs. The project will proceed through final design in 2024 and advertised for construction in mid-2025. Construction is expected to be completed by spring 2026.

## 10. E Branch Accessibility Upgrades

Scope: This project will include the modernization of the surface-level tracks and platforms from Brigham Circle Station to Heath Street Station in order to improve accessibility and capacity along the Green Line E Branch. The intent will be to reconstruct track and station infrastructure, including potential station consolidations, so that platforms will be both long enough to serve two Type 10 trainsets and raised to provide accessible boarding.

Update: The project received Notice to Proceed in July 2023 and is currently progressing toward the 15% design stage, which is expected to be reached in May 2024.

## 11. Station Wayfinding

Scope: Wayfinding signage is currently unclear, inconsistent, and non-compliant. The Wayfinding and Station Improvements project will replace signage at 10 of the highest ridership stations to bring them into full compliance with ADA/MAAB regulations, LED standards, and internal wayfinding requirements. Stations include Park Street, Downtown Crossing, State, Haymarket, North Station, Chinatown, South Station, Back Bay, Malden, and Harvard.

Update: Work at Park Street, North Station, Haymarket, State, Chinatown, and Downtown Crossing is complete. The designs for wayfinding, lighting, and station improvements at South Station, Back Bay, Malden, and Harvard remain underway, with the design team having identified additional code-related upgrades that need to be addressed.

## 12. Accessible Wayfinding Tech – Pilot

Scope: The MBTA will pilot accessible wayfinding technology at select stations, bus stops, and a busway to assist riders who are blind or have low vision with navigating the system.

Update: A request for proposals for the pilot is slated to be issued by the end of the year. The MBTA is currently working with the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG) to select pilot locations. Setup of the pilot is expected to commence in early 2024 after vendor selection is completed.

## 13. Path of Travel Improvements

Scope: Leveraging data from Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) surveys, the MBTA will develop a program to address serious path-of-travel deficiencies (broken curb ramps, sidewalks, etc.) at subway stations.

Update: Locations for path of travel improvements were identified by prioritizing stations with both the heaviest ridership and the highest number of significant barriers within the paths of travel in and around the station. The first set of stations to receive upgrades included Savin Hill, JFK/UMass, Malden Center, Fields Corner, Park Street, Stony Brook, and Back Bay. To date, upgrades have been completed at all locations except Back Bay, for which designs are undergoing further review.

In addition, path of travel upgrades are being planned for Ashmont, Butler, Green Street, Nubian, Massachusetts Ave, Porter, Community College, Suffolk Downs, Beachmont, and Revere Beach. Path of travel deficiencies have been identified at each location and designs are underway to resolve each barrier. Design and work is expected to be completed in early 2024.

#### 14. Accessibility Upgrades at Station Restrooms

Scope: The MBTA will address accessibility deficiencies in restrooms at subway stations by leveraging data from Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) surveys.

Update: There were 10 stations selected for restroom upgrades (totaling 18 restrooms): Alewife, Davis, Downtown Crossing, Government Center, Harvard, Haymarket, JFK/UMass, South Station, Wellington, and Wonderland. Locations were selected based on multiple factors, including the heaviest level of ridership and the highest number of restroom deficiencies at an affected station. Each restroom will be upgraded as needed in order to improve the location, height, and/or functionality of the following elements: partitions, toilet, urinal, flush valves, faucet sensors, sink, floor drains, pipe wrap, hand dryer, soap dispenser, and lighting. Designs have been completed and construction will begin in early 2024.

#### 15. “Hands-free” Fare Gate Feasibility Study

Scope: As part of the Fare Transformation program, the MBTA will explore the feasibility of piloting a “hands-free” system for riders who have difficulty reaching and interacting with fare gate targets.

Update: The vendor responsible for overseeing the implementation of the new fare collection system continues to advance the design of the new technology and its integration into existing accessible fare gates. The next step in the design process is for a working prototype of the gate to be set up in the Fare Transformation test lab, where it will undergo user testing by MBTA riders with disabilities. The MBTA is working with the vendor to finalize the testing schedule.

#### Commuter Rail Stations and Ferry Docks

##### 1. Natick Center Station

Scope: This project will make Natick Center Station fully accessible. The two inaccessible low-level platforms will be replaced with relocated, full high-level platforms accessible by elevators and ramps. The relocation work is necessary to facilitate the installation of a third track.

Update: Construction is approximately 70% complete. Upcoming work includes the construction of elevators on the inbound and outbound sides of the station, platform panel installation, and construction of a new retaining wall. Construction is expected to be completed in September 2024.

##### 2. Newtonville, Auburndale, and West Newton Stations – Design

Scope: This project will produce a design to make all three stations accessible via a full high-level platform at each station on both sides of the track.

Update: Design reached the 75% milestone in September 2023. The 75% design revealed an estimated total project cost of \$255 million. Various options for identifying funding and/or reducing

project costs are currently under discussion; further design work has been placed on hold pending discussion outcomes.

### 3. Winchester Center Station

**Scope:** This project will make Winchester Center Station fully accessible. The station design includes full high-level platforms, canopies, elevators, and ramps.

**Update:** Construction is approximately 40% complete. In order to make service available as soon as possible, a partial station opening is planned for July 2024—at that time, approximately 320 ft. of each platform will be open for service and completely accessible. The full station opening—at which time the entirety of both platforms will be open and accessible—is expected in October 2024.

### 4. Worcester Station

**Scope:** This project will restore double-track service by building a full high-level center platform with elevators on both sides.

**Update:** Construction is approximately 70% complete, and an accessible temporary platform is in place for rider use. Construction is anticipated to reach substantial completion in May 2024. Upcoming work includes the installation of elevator cab units; construction and installation of a new pedestrian overpass structure; installation of platform lighting and life safety systems; and construction of remaining parking lot utilities, as well as other related infrastructure improvements.

### 5. Lynn Station

**Scope:** Lynn Station will be fully rebuilt with two new enlarged elevators, a new full high-level platform, and new canopies, among other improvements.

**Update:** Due to the station's deteriorated condition, and in order to further evaluate the condition of the bridge structures below the station, Lynn Station was closed in October 2022, with shuttle service provided between Lynn and Swampscott. The MBTA has begun construction on an interim station to be located at Silsbee St. in Lynn, with the inbound platform accessed through the Ellis St. Municipal Lot and the outbound platform accessed through a walkway on Friend St. The interim station will be fully accessible. It will open for service in December 2023, at which time the shuttle will be discontinued. The location of the permanent station is currently being re-evaluated to meet the future needs of the MBTA and the City of Lynn.

### 6. South Attleboro Station

**Scope:** This project will make South Attleboro Station fully accessible through the construction of full high-level platforms, with two accessible paths to each platform via a combination of ramps and elevators.

**Update:** MBTA service to South Attleboro Station was suspended as of February 2021 due to the structural condition of the pedestrian bridge; service will remain suspended until the station is fully renovated. The demolition of the pedestrian bridge was completed in October 2023. The design for the full station upgrade is complete and the MBTA continues to seek construction funding.

### 7. North Wilmington Station

Scope: This project will make North Wilmington Station fully accessible through the construction of a short raised platform that will serve all active doors of the train, as well as through upgrades to the path of travel.

Update: Design work is complete. Construction contract has been advertised with construction expected to begin in spring 2024.

## 8. Interim Boarding Solutions at Inaccessible Commuter Rail Stations

Scope: There are 26 Commuter Rail stations that are fundamentally inaccessible and do not allow for accessible/level boarding via either full high-level or mini high-level platforms. As the MBTA continues to advance designs and identify construction funding for full high-level platforms, the agency is working to design a temporary freestanding platform solution that would allow for accessible boarding. If the design proves to be successful, the solution will be rolled out at several Commuter Rail stations.

Update: The design of a freestanding temporary raised platform is complete and will be piloted at Beverly Station, at which the existing mini high-level platforms are no longer salvageable. The freestanding raised platforms are expected to be in place in March 2024.

Parallel to this work, 12 inaccessible Commuter Rail stations have been identified as potential candidates for freestanding interim raised platforms. Four of them—Wellesley Square, West Medford, Walpole, and Franklin—are currently being evaluated to confirm their suitability for these platforms, as well as to identify additional accessibility upgrades that the stations might require (e.g., accessible parking, sidewalk upgrades, etc.).

Note: The 12 inaccessible Commuter Rail stations identified as candidates for freestanding platforms were selected based on their suitable topography and the fact that any additional upgrades those stations might require are likely to be minimal. As this platform solution is intended to be deployed quickly and be interim in nature (i.e. in place until resources can be secured for full station renovations with full high level platforms), it is not suitable at inaccessible Commuter Rail stations requiring extensive additional upgrades that are time-intensive (e.g. elevators).

## 9. Detectable Warnings on Commuter Rail Platforms

Scope: Detectable warning panels will be placed along the edge of all Commuter Rail platforms where they do not currently exist.

Update: Capital Delivery and SWA continue to work on establishing a method such as an on-call contract to advance the installation of detectable warning panels at several Commuter Rail stations. The first set of stations to receive new detectable warning panels will be identified in the coming months.

## 10. Accessibility Audit of Ferry Docks and Vessels

Scope: The MBTA will conduct an audit of each of the ferry docks and vessels currently in service in order to identify barriers to accessibility

Update: To date, SWA has completed audits at 12 of 13 ferry docks. Findings will be prepared in early 2024 followed by a review of the vessels in use.

## Vertical Transportation

### 1. Elevator Uptime

Scope: Since 2008, the MBTA's average elevator uptime system-wide has been 99.5% or better. However, in 2022, a noticeable spike in outages occurred such that the annual uptime dropped to 98.0%. The MBTA will take all necessary steps to understand and address the root cause(s) of this shift.

Update: In fall 2022, the MBTA established an internal working group comprised of the Office of the Chief Engineer, Engineering and Maintenance, and SWA to assess the extent of the increase in outages and to identify potential root causes. The review yielded a number of noteworthy findings, including:

- In 2022, outage time increased by 5X over the previous year. 98% of the total outage time was attributed to longer-term outages (outages lasting for three hours or more).
- No correlation exists between the age of the elevator and the frequency or duration of outages.
- Several of the root causes for the longest outages include the failure of highly customized elevator components, compounded by supply chain delays; infiltration of groundwater that damaged equipment; and delays related to inter-agency coordination.
- A number of opportunities exist to collect additional data to assist in monitoring the maintenance of both elevators and escalators and to enhance an existing quality management program.

Between January and October 2023, uptime has improved slightly to 98.8% system-wide. Based on these findings above, the MBTA continues to work to address each of the root causes of elevator downtime and to develop an enhanced program for quality management.

### 2. Quincy Adams 805, 806, 807

Scope: This project includes the replacement of two existing garage–lobby elevators and one existing platform–lobby elevator, as well as the addition of one platform–lobby elevator to provide redundant elevators for both the platform and garage. The construction will be phased so as to keep at least one redundant elevator in service at all times.

Update: Work on this project is substantially complete. All four elevators are now in service.

### 3. Downtown Crossing Accessibility Phase II and Park Street 808

Scope: This project will create a fully accessible connection between the Orange and Red Lines at Downtown Crossing with the construction of three new elevators: an elevator connecting the Washington St. surface with the Orange and Red Line southbound platforms; an elevator connecting the Orange Line northbound and Red Line southbound platforms; and an enlarged replacement Park Street Elevator 808 at the end of the Winter Street Concourse, connecting the Orange Line southbound and Red Line center platforms.

Update: Design is at the 75%–100% stage for all three elevators:

- The elevator connecting Washington St. with the Forest Hills–bound Orange Line platform and the Ashmont/Braintree–bound Red Line platform (located in the Winter Street building)

- The elevator connecting the Oak Grove–bound Orange Line platform to the Ashmont/Braintree–bound Red Line platform (located adjacent to the Macy’s building)
- The Park Street Elevator 808 replacement unit

Construction advertisement is expected in early summer 2024.

#### 4. Jackson Square

Scope: The MBTA will construct one additional (redundant) elevator and replace/modernize existing Elevator 846. Areas of rescue assistance will also be constructed.

Update: Design for this project is at 100%. Construction is expected to begin in March 2024 and to be completed by spring of 2026. The construction of the new redundant elevator will be completed prior to the replacement of the existing unit in order to ensure accessibility for riders throughout the project.

#### 5. Central Square

Scope: The MBTA will construct two additional (redundant) elevators—one on the inbound side and one on the outbound side—and replace/modernize the existing outbound elevator. Areas of rescue assistance will also be constructed.

Update: Design for this project is at 100%. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2024 and to be completed by fall 2026. The construction of the new redundant elevator will be completed prior to the replacement of the existing outbound unit in order to maintain accessibility for riders throughout the project.

#### 6. Designs for Future Replacement and New (Redundant) Elevators

Scope: The MBTA will advance designs for the following elevators:

- Sullivan: 1 new unit at lower busway + 2 replacements
- Davis: 3 new units (including Red Line platform redundant) + 2 replacements
- Chinatown: 2 new units + 2 replacements and lobby rebuilds
- North Station: 2 new units—Valenti Way lobby to Orange Line platforms
- State: 2 new units at City Hall entry + 2 replacements & lobby rebuild at OSMH
- Massachusetts Ave: 1 new unit + 1 replacement
- Broadway: 2 new units + 2 replacements
- Arlington: 3 new units at Berkeley exit / emergency entrance
- Wellington: 3 new units + emergency egress and 2 replacement units

Update: Elevator designs have been advanced as follows:

- North Station and Arlington: 100% design
- Davis and Massachusetts Ave: Approaching 100% design
- Broadway, Chinatown, and State: Approaching 75% design
- Wellington and Sullivan: 30% design

Select projects will move into construction as funding becomes available.

#### 7. Vertical Transportation Study

Scope: The MBTA will develop a system-wide elevator and escalator replacement plan. The MBTA will have a consultant develop the fiscally unconstrained 20-year SGR Vertical Transportation Plan, based on:

- Reviewing and revising prioritized inventory of existing units
- Determining what future changes may be needed to the maintenance contract to maintain or exceed current levels of uptime
- Determining at what rate units must be replaced in order to maintain or exceed current levels of uptime
- Identifying any roadblocks to replacing elevators and escalators quickly and efficiently, and providing recommendations for their resolution

Update: For this study, the MBTA procured the engineering consultants WSP and Lerch Bates. These firms have assessed all MBTA vertical transportation units and are using the findings to develop a long-term capital plan for their maintenance and modernization. The vertical transportation asset database has been finalized, and includes ratings for each unit's age, condition, parts availability, redundancy, etc. These ratings are being used in the development of the long-term capital plan as a mechanism for prioritizing units for replacement and recommending practical replacement timeframes. The MBTA is currently reviewing a capital planning report that includes strategies, technologies, and improvements for potential application to the unit replacement process system-wide.

## 8. Rider Information Displays in Station Lobbies

Scope: The MBTA will develop and install large digital displays in subway stations that will include information about elevator outages across the system. The displays, which will be located near the fare gates in pre-fare station lobbies, will provide information about current and upcoming elevator outages, as well as details about alternate accessible routes riders can utilize when those outages occur.

Update: Customer information displays are now live in 10 stations: Ashmont, Back Bay, Charles/MGH, Forest Hills, Government Center, Maverick, Porter, Tufts Medical Center, Wellington, and Wonderland. The MBTA has an agreement with its advertising partner to install these displays in all Red, Orange, and Blue Line stations over the next few years.

## 9. Customer Information Displays at Specific Elevators – Pilot

Scope: The MBTA will pilot the use of smaller digital displays at select subway elevators. The displays will include service information about that specific elevator, as well as about elevators system-wide.

Update: The smaller digital displays will be piloted at Forest Hills, with an expected launch date in early to mid-2024.

## Bus Stops

### 1. Critical Stops

Scope: In 2017/18, the MBTA surveyed all 7,690 bus stops as part of the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) and identified 280 stops that were categorized as critical—meaning the stop is so inaccessible, riders using wheeled mobility must board/exit in the street. A number

of these 280 stops will be fully reconstructed, while others that experience extremely low ridership will be closed.

Update: Of the 280 bus stops categorized as critical:

- 101 stops have been fully reconstructed
- 22 stops are under either design or construction
- 9 stops will be upgraded as part of outside municipal projects
- 96 stops have been or will be eliminated due to safety concerns and/or extremely low ridership

Progress has been temporarily paused at the remaining 52 stops while issues related to property abutters and/or easements are negotiated and resolved.

## 2. High Priority Stops

Scope: In 2017, the MBTA surveyed all 7,690 bus stops for accessibility barriers as part of the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI). Bus stop elements were scored based on the severity and number of barriers present. Bus stops were identified as critical, and/or as high, medium, and low priority. The MBTA identified 662 stops that were categorized as high priority—meaning the stops have more than one significant barrier present, including but not limited to a sloped landing pad, narrow sidewalk, lack of a curb, or unusable curb ramp. The MBTA will be advancing the design and construction of accessibility improvements at these locations.

Update: Of the 662 bus stops categorized as high priority:

- 152 stops have been fully reconstructed
- 132 stops are under either design or construction
- 17 stops will be upgraded as part of outside municipal projects
- 13 stops have been or will be eliminated due to safety concerns and/or extremely low ridership

The remaining high priority stops will move into design as funding becomes available.

Note: In addition to the critical and high priority stops that have been reconstructed as part of PATI, another 100 stops have also been reconstructed to improve accessibility. These stops are typically located directly across from previously reconstructed critical and high priority stops.

## 3. Bus Stop Amenities

Scope: In response to rider requests for more bus shelters and greater availability of real-time information, in 2021 the MBTA partnered with the media company Intersection to expand amenities across the bus network. This project includes the introduction of bus shelters and interactive digital information kiosks, which feature real-time service information, maps, and trip planning. Revenues from kiosks and shelter advertising will be used to fund additional shelters, shelter amenities, and other upgrades.

Update: Information kiosks have been installed at Maverick, Roxbury Crossing, Kenmore, and Nubian, with more planned in 2024. The installation of new bus shelters across the bus network will start in spring 2024, with priority given to locations with high ridership and service to transit-dependent populations. Designs for the new shelters and kiosks have been reviewed by SWA to

ensure physical and virtual accessibility for riders with disabilities, including audio access to service information at kiosks for riders who are blind or have low vision.

## **VEHICLES**

### **1. Deployment of New Orange Line Vehicles**

**Scope:** The MBTA has ordered and will deploy an entire fleet of new Orange Line vehicles with wider doors, seating areas for wheeled mobility device users, an improved PA/VMS system, and other accessibility improvements.

**Update:** The first new Orange Line cars went into service in summer 2019. To date, 96 new cars are used in service. The new cars comprise the entirety of the current in-service fleet; these will be supplemented by legacy cars as service requirements increase, as well as by additional new cars as they arrive. The schedule for the arrival of new cars is under ongoing evaluation and discussion with the manufacturer. Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain delays have contributed to schedule disruptions.

### **2. Deployment of New Red Line Vehicles**

**Scope:** The MBTA has ordered and will deploy an entire fleet of new Red Line vehicles with wider doors, seating areas for wheeled mobility device users, an improved PA/VMS system, and other accessibility improvements.

**Update:** The first new Red Line cars went into service in December 2020. To date, 12 new cars are available to be used in service. The schedule for the arrival of future cars is under ongoing evaluation and discussion with the manufacturer. Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain delays have contributed to schedule disruptions.

### **3. Green Line Type 10 Vehicle Design and Procurement**

**Scope:** The MBTA will design and procure the next-generation Green Line train (Type 10). The procurement will be for vehicles to replace the Type 7 and Type 8 fleets. Vehicles will be 100% low-floor and approximately 40 feet longer than legacy fleets.

**Update:** The Vehicle Engineering department worked with numerous stakeholders and peer departments, including SWA, to finalize the request for proposals (RFP) for the design of Type 10 Green Line cars and to capture all key accessibility considerations. The RFP was released in December 2019. Proposals from numerous vehicle manufacturers were received in August 2021 and evaluated by MBTA selection committees; the following year, a contract to manufacture 102 new vehicles was awarded to CAF USA, Inc. Vehicle design is currently in progress. Four pilot cars are expected for delivery in spring 2026, with production and delivery of the remaining cars starting in spring 2027. Additional vehicles are available within the contract terms in the event that they are required to support future service needs.

### **4. Real-time Information on New Trains and Buses**

**Scope:** With the design of the new Green Line Type 10 vehicles and the latest bus procurement, along with the anticipated midlife overhaul of the Blue Line fleet, the MBTA is working toward having passenger information systems on these new trains and buses

support real-time information. For example, one goal for the system would be the ability to notify riders on a train immediately when an elevator has gone out of service, rendering a station inaccessible for alighting.

Update: The MBTA is in the very early stages with each of these vehicle projects. The Technology Innovation Department is conducting research on available information-system hardware and system capabilities, as well as consulting with peer agencies that have already deployed such systems on vehicles to learn more from their experience.

## 5. Platform Gaps – Orange Line

Scope: Based on recent observations of excessive platform gaps on the Orange Line, the MBTA will conduct a comprehensive audit to identify specific locations of noncompliance and to identify options for reducing both horizontal and vertical gaps.

Update: In September 2023, the Office of the Chief Engineer oversaw an audit of platform gaps, in which data was collected regarding horizontal and vertical gaps present at each door of the train car at every Orange Line platform. Ten trainsets were used during the audit. A report regarding the findings of this audit is expected to be completed in December 2023. Additionally, the MBTA is preparing to use LIDAR technology to measure the relationship between the centerline of the track and the platform wall—information that is essential to understanding the potential root of the excessive gaps. Taken together, these data sets will point toward potential solutions.

## TRAININGS

### 1. Development of Training Videos – Instructional and First-Person Perspective

Scope: SWA will produce training videos for accessibility training programs that are designed for front line MBTA personnel, including but not limited to Bus Operators, Subway Motorpersons, and Transit Ambassadors. The videos will aid in instructing MBTA personnel on how to perform accessibility-related procedures and will document first-person perspectives from riders with disabilities.

Update: In 2022, SWA began working with a filmmaker to produce several training videos. To date, two instructional videos (how to provide sighted guide and how to deploy a bridgeplate) and four first-person perspective videos (awareness of non-apparent disabilities; the best way to offer assistance to riders; the importance of stop announcements; and the importance of priority seating) have been completed and will be added to the relevant accessibility training programs in early 2024. In summer/fall 2023, SWA will begin developing additional videos, including the importance of a bus pulling to the curb; the proper use of securements and the lap/shoulder belt (for wheeled mobility device users); and other relevant training topics.

### 2. Bus Operations Recertification Training

Scope: Bus Operations and SWA will review and revitalize the accessibility-related content within the Bus Recertification program.

Update: SWA and Bus Operations collaborated to develop a module on providing best-in-class accessibility for existing operators, which was included as part of a full day recertification training. This full-day training became available in April 2022. Additionally, in 2023, the MBTA began

developing a full-week training for existing bus operators that will launch in December 2023. This weeklong training will include at least one full day of accessibility-specific content developed by SWA.

### 3. Subway Operations Recertification Training

Scope: Subway Operations and SWA will review and revitalize the accessibility-related content within the Subway Recertification program.

Update: SWA and Subway Operations will begin work on reviewing the existing recertification program for Motorpersons in early 2024 and identifying opportunities for updating accessibility-related content.

### 4. Operations Control Center Dispatcher Training

Scope: As part of the development of a comprehensive updated training for Operations Control Center (OCC) Dispatchers, SWA and Operations will design a module specifically focused on the numerous critical accessibility-related protocols and policies essential to OCC.

Update: The development of the accessibility-focused module is underway and expected to be completed by the end of the year. Its content covers a broad array of accessibility-focused policies, e.g. communicating effectively to all riders during emergencies, providing guidance to frontline employees on riders' reasonable accommodation requests, and coordinating alternate service during elevator outages.

### 5. Transit Ambassadors Training

Scope: SWA will work with Block by Block (the Transit Ambassadors contractor) and the MBTA Customer Experience department to review and revitalize the accessibility training module for newly hired Transit Ambassadors. The training will include classroom and hands-on material, as well as videos documenting first-person perspectives from riders with disabilities.

Update: A full revision of the accessibility training module was completed and incorporated into the Transit Ambassador new-hire training program on March 1, 2023. To date, all existing Ambassadors have been trained and new Ambassadors have received the training upon hire.

### 6. Transit Police

Scope: SWA and the MBTA Transit Police Department will work together to develop an in-house training focused on serving individuals with disabilities.

Update: SWA has begun a review of content currently provided through the statewide Police Academy curriculum. In early 2024, SWA and the Transit Police will begin outlining the key topics to be covered as part of the in-house training, and will solicit and incorporate direct feedback from riders with disabilities.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE, COMMUNICATION, AND OUTREACH**

### 1. Expansion of Transit Ambassadors in Stations

Scope: The MBTA will establish a standard for staffing levels throughout its stations to help ensure that adequate personnel are available to provide assistance to riders. The MBTA will work toward expanding staffing levels to meet this standard as needed.

Update: In 2021, SWA worked together with the Customer Experience department, Operations, and Contract Services to establish a new standard for staffing levels in MBTA stations. As part of this process, station posts were prioritized based on a number of factors (e.g., ridership, station complexity, presence of elevators, etc.) and grouped into three tiers (I, II, and III). The standard calls for personnel to be present at all Tier I and II locations seven days a week, 6:00 AM to midnight, and for partial coverage at Tier III locations. This standard represents a meaningful increase in coverage compared with past staffing levels.

In September 2022, the MBTA Board of Directors approved a contract with Mydatt Services, Inc., the owner of Block by Block, for five years with three one-year options for the operation of the Transit Ambassador Program. In addition to securing the program for years to come, the new contract requires staffing levels then meet or exceed the newly developed staffing standard. With the necessary funding in place for the FY24 budget, Block by Block began increasing coverage to meet the new standard. It is expected that all required posts will be filled by January 2024.

## 2. Notifying Riders of Service Changes

Scope: In concert with the Title VI Public Participation Plan, the MBTA will develop a set of protocols for employees regarding when and how riders should be notified and/or engaged regarding various changes to service, policies, etc

Update: In early 2023, the MBTA updated its [Public Engagement Plan](#), which broadly addresses how the MBTA notifies and engages with riders about changes affecting service. A companion set of protocols is being drafted that specifies ways for employees to ensure outreach is conducted in an inclusive and successful manner. Detailed protocols for a range of service-related topics will be included, from temporarily relocating a bus stop to soliciting rider feedback about a major station redesign.

To date, outreach guidelines specific to bus stop service changes were drafted by the MBTA Service Planning department and SWA and presented to the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG). Additionally, the MBTA has issued new policies regarding alternative service standards that include a requirement of notifying riders 60 days in advance of a major diversion. Also currently underway are additional guidelines related to alternative service, bus stop changes, station redesigns, and changes to fare policies, among other topics.

## 3. Marketing Campaign

Scope: The Customer Experience department and SWA will develop and implement a marketing campaign designed to highlight improvements to fixed-route accessibility and to spread the message that accessibility benefits all riders.

Update: In September 2023, the MBTA launched [Access in Motion](#), a public marketing campaign with three primary goals:

- Communicating that accessibility improvements benefit everyone
- Raising awareness about key accessibility policies and services
- Sharing accessibility updates we've made over the past 15 years and future updates in progress

With the help of numerous longtime riders with disabilities, over 15 unique creatives were developed and shared over multiple channels including local papers, radio stations, streaming platforms, and social media, as well as throughout MBTA vehicles and stations.

#### 4. Improved Coordination with Cities and Towns

Scope: The MBTA will establish a protocol for communicating key accessibility information to the municipalities it serves in order to better collaborate on providing accessible service. This may include the sharing of information on bus-stop snow removal guidance, strategies for keeping bus stops clear of illegally parked vehicles, and other topics related to riders' ability to safely access the system.

Update: Throughout 2022–23, the Service Planning department, SWA, Legislative Affairs, and other key departments have been working to develop guidelines to formalize processes for messaging to and collaborating with municipalities around issues affecting accessibility. Specific topics include snow and ice removal at bus stops; accessible design and implementation of bike lanes near bus stops; and illegally parked vehicles in bus stops, among others. A draft of this communication and collaboration plan will be shared with the Daniels-Finegold plaintiffs and the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG) in December for review and comment.

#### 5. Remote Ticketing of Vehicles Illegally Parked in Bus Stops and Bus Lanes

Scope: The MBTA will investigate opportunities for—and the technical feasibility of—implementing remote ticketing of vehicles illegally parked in bus stops and bus lanes, leveraging camera-equipped buses to identify vehicles and issue tickets.

Update: Throughout 2023, the Policy department has taken steps to identify what legal and regulatory changes would be necessary to allow the MBTA to issue tickets based on photographs taken by camera equipped buses; advocacy work is underway to support those efforts. Parallel to this, the Bus Transformation team has begun exploring the technical feasibility of implementation, including administration, camera technology, and communications.

#### 6. Improving Outreach Through a Focus on Diversity and Inclusion

Scope: SWA will develop a strategic plan to expand the MBTA's accessibility-related outreach efforts, including its connections with individual and group stakeholders, by working to identify and address disparities in information access. Outreach strategies will incorporate best practices for information sharing that speaks to the needs and preferences of riders of different age groups in racially, ethnically, and economically diverse communities throughout the MBTA service area.

Update: SWA is in the process of documenting a strategic plan aimed at expanding accessibility-related outreach. While planning efforts are underway, much progress has been made to broaden such outreach at the MBTA. SWA has partnered with Community Engagement and the MBTA Mobility Center to expand both teams' outreach. As part of this endeavor, the MBTA has developed a shared event calendar—reviewed weekly—to determine which teams to deploy to each outreach event. This information-sharing allows all MBTA teams involved in accessibility-related outreach to effectively coordinate and expand their efforts.

Key targets for accessibility-related outreach have included disability commissions and organizations, councils on aging, schools and libraries, and healthcare organizations, among

others. Language translation has also been incorporated into outreach materials distributed to these targets for broader reach. Since June 2023, the MBTA Mobility Center has reached out to 175 new organizations. The Mobility Center regularly provides printed information in about a dozen languages (also available electronically and in other alternate formats), and staff are versed in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and French.

## SYSTEM-WIDE OVERSIGHT

### 1. Maintenance and Barrier Reporting

Scope: Enhanced and customized reports will be developed using the MBTA's new maintenance database in order to track accessibility-related barriers that are flagged by Station Officials and others as part of their daily inspections.

Update: In spring 2022, SWA collaborated with the Assets Management team to create a customized transit-facilities maintenance report, detailing every service request for accessibility-related defects reported by riders and Officials at MBTA stations and bus stops. The report—generated by the MBTA's maintenance database (Trapeze) at the beginning of each month—is designed to help SWA verify if accessibility asset defects are being identified and reported, and to monitor the timeliness of repairs. SWA continues to receive and review these customized accessibility maintenance reports on a monthly basis.

### 2. Design Guidelines for Accessibility

Scope: The MBTA will publish the *Design Guidelines for Accessibility* to provide clarity on design expectations as well as best practices for universal design.

Update: Throughout 2021–22, SWA and the Design Guidelines Working Group of internal stakeholders met regularly to draft and review content on the MBTA's standards for accessible and inclusive design. The first 10 chapters—including those covering requirements for project scoping, accessible paths of travel, temporary paths of travel, walkways/ramps, parking facilities, seating, curb ramps, protruding objects, and doors/entrances—have been reviewed by the Daniels-Finegold plaintiffs and the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG). Final revisions of these chapters are currently in progress.

### 3. Expansion of the MBTA Internal Access Monitoring Program

Scope: The Internal Access Monitoring Program, overseen by SWA, has historically focused on monitoring the fixed-route system (bus, subway, Commuter Rail, and ferry). The program will be expanded to include the monitoring of paratransit services (The RIDE).

Update: SWA, in conjunction with the Riders' Transportation Access Group (RTAG) subcommittee on The RIDE, has drafted a set of goals and sample survey questions covering a number of topics (e.g., timeliness of service, quality of securements, behavior of staff, etc.) for the expansion of the Internal Access Monitoring Program. The draft will be refined and the survey questions piloted in 2024, pending the hiring of an additional staff member to help oversee the program's expansion and implementation.

## **INITIATIVES RECENTLY IDENTIFIED AS COMPLETE IN PRIOR REPORTS**

### **1. Wollaston Station Renovation**

Scope: Wollaston is the last inaccessible station on the Red Line. This project will make the station fully accessible and address critical state of good repair issues. Specifically, the existing station will be completely demolished and rebuilt with a new headhouse, three elevators, and an accessible pedestrian route from Newport Ave toward Hancock St.

Update from November 2019 report: The station was shut down for construction in January 2018. The fully accessible station was reopened to the public on August 16, 2019, making all stations on the Red Line accessible.

### **2. Downtown Crossing Phase I**

Scope: This project includes the construction of two new elevators (within a combined hoistway shaft) to connect the Orange Line northbound (Oak Grove) platform and the Red Line northbound (Alewife) platform.

Update from November 2019 report: The elevators were put into service June 14, 2019.

### **3. Andrew 857, 858, 859**

Scope: Capital Delivery will finalize the design and construction of Andrew 857, 858, 859 elevator replacements.

Update from November 2019 report: All Andrew elevator replacements opened on October 18, 2019.

### **4. Forest Hills Phase I**

Scope: As part of the Casey Overpass project, MassDOT will construct a second accessible entrance to the Orange Line platform at Forest Hills Station.

Update from November 2019 report: The second headhouse with the new elevator, located on the southwest corridor park, was opened on November 5, 2019.

### **5. Harvard 821**

Scope: Harvard elevator 821 will be replaced and the existing shaft will be expanded to provide an enlarged elevator pass-through cab design.

Update from November 2019 report: The Harvard replacement elevator 821 reopened on October 31, 2019. The original unit measured 4'1" x 4'8" (19 square feet) with a 3'-wide door opening, and had virtually no visibility in or out of the elevator cab. The new elevator is 60% larger: 5.0' x 6.0' (30 square feet) with a 3.5'-wide door opening, and has a fully transparent cab and shaft.

### **6. Tracking Accessibility-Related Rider Complaints and Feedback**

Scope: The MBTA will finalize enhanced guidelines for tracking and resolving accessibility complaints. Additionally, a new module within the MBTA's complaint database will be created to facilitate information-sharing and data analysis internally.

Update from November 2019 report: In October of 2018, an effort was begun to build a new employee-facing portal for handling accessibility complaints. Many departments were involved in creating this new portal, including SWA, OCC, Information Technology, Bus and Subway Operations, and Rider Experience. The common goal was to create a "one-stop shopping" workspace for SWA rider complaint investigations.

On June 17, 2019, the new IRIS SWA Investigation Screen went live. Leading up to the launch, SWA held training classes for Bus, Subway, and various other areas that conducted SWA investigations. All relevant staff members received training on the new screen. The impact this new process had on the overall complaint system was immediately realized. Positive results:

- Easier collaboration and information sharing between departments
- Easier Oversight by Operations Management
- Ability to create quarterly reports much more quickly
- A significant reduction in the amount of time between a complaint being filed and an appropriate resolution

In addition, enhanced complaint investigation and resolution guidelines are complete. These guidelines clearly explain the steps which should be taken to complete an investigation and issue an appropriate resolution.

## 7. Central 861

Scope: The existing shaft of elevator 861 will be expanded to provide an enlarged pass-through cab design.

Update from May 2020 report: This fully modernized elevator was completed and put into service on April 2, 2020. The new elevator is now pass-through and largely transparent on all sides.

## 8. Bus Evacuation Drills

Scope: SWA, Security, Safety, and Operations will collaborate to implement a series of bus evacuation drills focused on the potential impacts on riders with disabilities.

Update from May 2020 report: MassDOT Security & Emergency Management and the MBTA conducted four small-scale bus emergency evacuation drills in October of 2019. Findings from the drills have been used by SWA to inform the development of the updated curriculum for new bus operator accessibility training and bus operator recertification training programs—each of which include instruction on assisting riders with disabilities during an emergency evacuation.

## 9. Transit Education

Scope: The Human Service Transportation Office of the Commonwealth, in collaboration with the MBTA, will develop a program of information-sharing about community transportation options, tools, and resources with aging and disability service providers; other social service agency staff; and individual riders.

Update from May 2020 report: Content has been developed and training video posted at <https://www.mass.gov/manual/transportation-training-for-staff-of-aging-and-disability-service-providers>.

#### 10. Fixed-Route Brochure

Scope: SWA will update its core promotional brochure, originally published in 2012 and titled *Accessibility at the MBTA: Your Guide to Fixed Route Services*. New sections will be dedicated to the Riders' Transportation Access Group (R-TAG) and the MBTA Travel Training Program.

Update from the November 2020 report: The new SWA promotional brochure, *Access in Motion: Your Guide to MBTA Fixed-Route Services*, went to print at the end of summer 2019. Since then, the brochure has been distributed at numerous public meetings and transit-education sites. An accessible electronic version of the brochure is now [available online](#). Additional languages and alternate formats are also available upon request.

#### 11. Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) Website

Scope: SWA will build a web page dedicated to updating riders on PATI and the MBTA's efforts to expand access system-wide.

Update from the November 2020 report: The "[System-Wide Accessibility Improvements](#)" [web page](#) launched in July 2020 and includes a mode-by-mode snapshot of the current state of accessibility as well as descriptions of capital projects currently in the works.

#### 12. Building a Virtual Travel Training Experience

Scope: SWA's travel training program will work to develop and incorporate virtual learning tools for trainees in order to supplement in-person training experiences and allow for travel training to continue while social distancing remains critical.

Update from the May 2021 report: Through its current contractor of travel instruction services, SWA developed webinar material for older adults, individuals with disabilities, as well as agencies serving these populations to improve rider knowledge about resources, accessibility information and skills regarding how to ride public transit. Training can be requested via live Zoom webinars. All training material will also be posted on the MBTA's website and be available on demand starting in May 2021. In addition to webinars, the T is also working on short videos about how to access and ride the T. The first of 5 videos is titled "Planning your Trip" and is posted under "Resources for Riders" at <https://www.mbta.com/accessibility/travel-training>.

#### 13. Transit Education - UMASS Medical School

Scope: SWA partnered with the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) in 2019 to develop a curriculum on transportation as an important element of health, and to integrate that curriculum into UMMS' existing multidisciplinary clerkship program.

Update from the May 2021 report: In 2020, for the second year in a row, SWA collaborated with UMMS to develop material that educates future physicians about transportation policy. The material also provides education about the transportation and other mobility resources that are available for patients in rural areas, and how to access those resources in various communities of the Commonwealth. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the manner in which public and

community transportation serve the needs of community residents is changing. Discussions with UMMS will continue about how best to educate future doctors about evolving mobility resources and a need to improve digital literacy in the communities they serve.

#### 14. Babcock, Pleasant St, BU West, and St. Paul Stations

Scope: Currently, each of these four stops along the Green Line's B branch is inaccessible. This project will consolidate the four stops into two fully accessible stops with raised platforms, canopies and seating.

Update from the November 2021 report: On November 15, 2021, two new, fully accessible, Green Line stops – Amory and Babcock – opened for passenger service, replacing four inaccessible stops that have been decommissioned and demolished.

#### 15. Chelsea Station

Scope: The MassDOT-led Silver Line Gateway Project was divided into two phases: Phase I, which has been completed, built 4 of 5 new Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit stops along abandoned Right of Way (ROW). Phase II relocates the existing inaccessible Chelsea Commuter Rail Station to the southwest, near the Market Basket supermarket and shopping area and the terminus of the new Chelsea Silver Line Gateway. The Commuter Rail station will feature two full-high 800'+ platforms, as well as canopies and benches.

Update from the November 2021 report: On November 15, 2021, the brand-new and fully accessible Chelsea Commuter Rail Station opened for service.

#### 16. Priority Seating Decals on Subway

Scope: The MBTA's new priority seating decal will be installed on existing subway cars.

Update from the November 2021 report: In addition to new priority seating decals being installed on the entire bus fleet, these decals have now been installed on all subway cars.

#### 17. Alewife 813, 814, 815

Scope: This project includes the replacement in kind of the existing elevators 813, 814, 815; repair or replacement of certain curb ramps; and minor modifications to restrooms.

Update from the November 2021 report: This project is now complete. Construction began in summer 2018 and was phased in such a way that the station remained accessible at all times. Elevator 813 (lobby to platform) opened for service in the summer of 2019. Elevator 815 opened for service in March 2020. Elevator 814 was completed in September 2020.

#### 18. Elevator Cleanliness

Scope: An interdepartmental task force consisting of Engineering and Maintenance, Operations, Rider Experience, Rider Technology, Transit Police, and SWA will develop and document a protocol for addressing the issue of elevator cleanliness.

Update from the November 2021 report: The task force was established in the summer of 2019 and identified a number of key components/activities for maintaining elevators in the cleanest

manner possible. These have been implemented and will be ongoing, representing a holistic approach to elevator cleanliness. Several of the specific activities underway include:

- Implementation of a new cleaning contract. In March 2020, the MBTA launched a new performance-based station cleaning program, of which elevator cleanliness is the key component.
- Replacement of elevator floors with new non-absorbent flooring materials at key locations. 30+ of the highest priority floors have been replaced since 2019 in addition to each of the recently modernized elevators (discussed above).
- Regular inspections conducted by Transit Ambassadors. Issues are reported in real time and yield an expedited request for cleanup. Monthly reports have been developed to help identify and track areas of concern
- Formation of a subcommittee consisting of Ambassador Management (MBTA contract oversight), Block by Block (contractor), E&M and SWA. The group meets on a regular basis to discuss the previous month's report. The data and subsequent analysis alerts the group where opportunities for improvement exist and resources can be shifted to address areas of concern.
- Sharing of elevator cleanliness reports with TPD on a monthly basis to alert them of potential areas of concern.
- Development of a prototype of a urine detection device. A demonstration of this device was conducted in early 2021. A larger scale pilot is planned for Spring/summer 2022.

#### 19. Green Line Rear Door Boarding Awareness Campaign

Scope: The Rider Experience Department and SWA will develop and implement a marketing campaign designed to highlight the availability of accessible rear door boarding on Green Line trains.

Update from the November 2021 report: Decals advertising the rear door boarding policy as well as drawing attention to the ISA button riders may push as one option to request access to the rear door were installed on all Green Line trains throughout the spring of 2021. Additionally, audio and visual (both poster and digital) messaging were deployed in Green Line stations and stops to educate riders about the rear door boarding policy in the summer.

#### 20. System-Wide Accessibility Charter

Scope: The MBTA will develop and issue a policy outlining when and how an MBTA project or initiative must be approved by SWA.

Update from the November 2021 report: A memo documenting SWA's roles and responsibilities was issued to all senior staff by the General Manager in May 2021. This document represents the memorialization of practices that have been in place for a number of years.

#### 21. Brookline Hills

Scope: The Town of Brookline is building a new high school building over Brookline Hills Station. As part of this work, the Town will be reconstructing the station with raised platforms and a number of path of travel upgrades.

Update from May 2022 report: Construction began in late 2019 and was completed in January 2022.

## 22. Mansfield Station

Scope: This project includes the construction of new compliant mini-highs, as well upgraded accessible parking, and accessible routes to cross under the tracks via MA Route 114.

Update from May 2022 report: The mini-high platforms and the new ramps for accessible routes were completed in early May 2020. All other upgrades were completed and approved in March 2022.

## 23. Ruggles Phase I

Scope: This project will install a new Commuter Rail platform along Track 2 at Ruggles Station and a new elevator (728) to the busway center platform. Existing elevators 848 (lower busway), 849 (Commuter Rail), 850 (Orange Line), and 851 (Forsyth St.) will also be replaced.

Update from May 2022 report: Construction is complete and all new elevators are in service as of February 2022.

## 24. Audio & Visual Equivalency Policy

Scope: The Rider Technology department and SWA will develop a policy that defines when, and by what means, digital signage must have an audible component as well as when information that is broadcast audibly must have a visual component.

Update from May 2022 report: The Rider Technology department, in conjunction with SWA, has developed a working set of guidelines regarding audio/visual equivalency policy, and has identified known best practices and practical solutions for a range of scenarios. One of the key takeaways in talking to blind/low-vision riders, as well as digital signage manufacturers and out-of-home advertising companies, is that there is no universal solution for audio-equivalence for digital signage. Because of this, audio/visual equivalence will be achieved using a variety of solutions, depending on a variety of factors (screen hardware, location, informational context, etc.), and the guidelines will be updated to reflect emerging best practices.

## 25. Stop Announcements on Bus

Scope: SWA and Bus Operations will develop a policy denoting when and/or where bus operators are required to make stop announcements along a route if the automated announcement system is not functioning.

Update from May 2022 report: SWA, Service Planning and Bus Operations have worked together to develop a policy that requires Operators to contact the Operations Control Center as soon as possible if any issue arises involving the automated stop announcement system so that an alternate vehicle can be secured. Operators are required to make manual announcements for all stops along the route, with particular emphasis on major intersections and transfer points. As part of the Bus Network Design process, the MBTA will work to further refine what specific stops, route by route, are most critical to be manually announced if the automated system fails.

## 26. Oak Grove Station Upgrades

Scope: The Oak Grove Station upgrade project includes making the inaccessible Washington St. side of the station accessible by installing a new elevator. New elevators will also be added to

both the Orange Line platform and the busway/parking lot entrance side of the station. Existing elevators in these locations will be replaced in kind but cannot be substantially enlarged. Various other upgrades to the busway, accessible parking, crosswalks, sidewalks, and curb ramps are included in the project scope.

Update from the December 2022 report: The new elevator at the Washington St. entrance went into service in February 2021. The new elevator from the Banks Place busway/parking lot entrance to the lobby opened in early May 2022. Additionally, the new redundant elevator from the lobby to the Orange Line platform went into service in August 2021, and the replacement of the adjacent elevator went into service in November 2022.

## 27. Re-envisioning Travel Training and Launch of MBTA Mobility Center

Scope: Historically, SWA's travel training program (focused on empowering riders to use the fixed-route system) has been managed separately from The RIDE (paratransit) eligibility center and eligibility process. That will change in 2022, when the MBTA will be launching a new Mobility Center that serves to help older adults and riders with disabilities learn more about all of the accessible mobility options available to them based on their own unique needs. The center will house the paratransit eligibility process, new travel training services (virtual and in person), and assistance with trip planning, as well as a streamlined reduced-fare acquisition process. The center will also assist in holding outreach events with local communities and organizations.

Update from the December 2022 report:: The Mobility Center opened its "doors" on July 1, 2022. The center is accessible through several channels, including its physical location at 1000 Massachusetts Avenue, our website, or via phone 617-337-2727 (711 for MA Relay). In a shared space, the Mobility Center is a service, education and information hub, providing tools and information needed to empower each rider to make the best decision about the way they want to ride. The Center has a singular intake process for all riders and the menu of services include eligibility determination for the RIDE, travel training for individuals and groups, trip planning, technology training, and assistance with reduced fare card applications.

## 28. Creation of Online Application for Free and Reduced Fare CharlieCards

Scope: The MBTA will develop online applications to allow eligible older adults and people with disabilities to apply for one of the MBTA's free or reduced fare programs remotely on the web—this includes the Senior CharlieCard, Transportation Access Pass, Blind Access CharlieCard, and Youth Pass CharlieCard. The new online option will provide applicants with an alternative to the current paper-based or in-person application process.

Update from the December 2022 report: As of December 2022, the MBTA has now launched online applications for the four free and reduced fares programs:

1. [Senior CharlieCards](#) (eligible riders age 65 and older);
2. [Youth Pass CharlieCards](#) (eligible for low income riders aged 18-25);
3. [Blind Access CharlieCards](#) (eligible riders who are legally blind); and
4. [Transportation Access Pass](#) (eligible for riders with disabilities).

Riders utilizing any of these four programs can submit an initial application, request a renewal of their Reduced Fare CharlieCard, or request a replacement CharlieCard to these programs remotely and have their free or reduced fare CharlieCard mailed to their home.

In person support continues to be available at the [CharlieCard Store](#), [Mobility Center](#), and participating [Youth Pass cities and towns](#).

## 29. Bus Operations Training for New Hires

Scope: Operations and SWA will review and revitalize the eight-hour accessibility training program. The training will include classroom and hands-on material, as well as videos documenting first-person perspectives from riders with disabilities.

Update from the December 2022 report: SWA and Bus Operations collaborated to create an entirely new 8-hour Accessibility Certification training course, with support from the Daniels-Finegold plaintiffs' group and R-TAG. This course has been used to recertify supervisory personnel and selected bus operators since February 2021, and since May 2021 it has been utilized to train new hires as well as Operators who have been identified as in need of additional training.

## 30. Subway Operations Training for New Hires

Scope: Operations and SWA will review and revitalize the accessibility-related modules within the Subway Recertification programs. The training will include videos documenting first-person perspectives from riders with disabilities.

Update from the December 2022 report: SWA and Subway Operations collaborated to develop an entirely new accessibility training for all new hires. The training, which was modeled on the Bus Operations 8-hour Accessibility Certification training, was launched in July 2021. Rider feedback via an online survey, as well as several meetings with R-TAG and the Daniels-Finegold plaintiffs' group, helped inform both specific content and the thematic direction of the new training.

## 31. Automated Door Openers

Scope: At least one entrance to each subway station will be equipped with an automated door opener (when doors are required to enter/exit a station).

Update from May 2023 report: As of May 2023, automated door openers have been installed at all accessible subway stations.

## 32. Urine Detection Sensor Pilot

Scope: The MBTA will oversee the development of a prototype urine detection device to be used in elevators, with the goal of providing real-time notifications to the Maintenance Control Center regarding the need to clean a unit.

Update from May 2023 report: From October 2022 through January 2023, the MBTA conducted [the pilot of a urine detection sensor](#) in a total of four elevators located at Chinatown, Downtown Crossing, and Park Street. The MBTA determined that the sensor did not reliably detect the presence of urine. Its error rate varied significantly across time and elevators; there were also seven instances of the sensor going offline, with operability decreasing over time. The MBTA did not assess cleaning-agent detection by the sensor, as it would not be operationally feasible for the cleaning vendor to verify sensor alerts. Based on these findings, the MBTA will not move forward with using this sensor on its elevators.

### 33. New Securement System – Pilot

Scope: As part of its next bus fleet procurement, the MBTA will pilot a new rear-facing securement system that enables the wheeled mobility user to secure themselves independently.

Update from May 2023 report: A new automatic securement system called Quantum was installed on 10 of the MBTA's newest buses, which went into service on Route 111 in February 2021. Throughout 2021 and 2022, the MBTA hosted five user-expert testing sessions and invited approximately 20 wheeled mobility device users to try the Quantum system. The user extensive feedback included uncertainty about the system's ability to effectively secure the diverse range of wheeled mobility devices utilized by MBTA riders, particularly mid-wheel and front-wheel drive motorized wheelchairs. At this time the MBTA is not moving forward with additional installations of the Quantum securement system on its bus fleet.