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Dear MBTA Customer,

As 2019 comes to a close, we are pleased to share the attached updates on the MBTA's current accessibility initiatives. The diversity of these projects is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to the goal of a fully accessible fixed-route system. And since our last update six months ago, a number of significant projects have been completed, including:

- The opening of a fully renovated and accessible Wollaston station—achieving the milestone of a 100% accessible Red Line
- The completion of new and replacement elevators at Harvard, Alewife and Andrew, plus two new redundant elevators at Downtown Crossing that connect the Orange and Red Line northbound platforms
- The reconstruction of 63 completely inaccessible bus stops, with 67 more in the pipeline for early next year
- The implementation of new internal procedures to improve processing of accessibility-related complaints

If you would like additional information on any project, or would like to suggest an area of focus, please contact us at SWA@mbta.com. And as always, thank you for your continued partnership in making the T more accessible than ever. We look forward to forging ahead together in the new year!

Sincerely,

Laura Brelsford
Assistant General Manager
Department of System-Wide Accessibility

INFRASTRUCTURE

Subway Stations:

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: 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. 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, detectable warnings, canopies, and benches.

Update: Design is 100% complete. It is anticipated that the project will be advertised for construction in winter 2019–2020, with renovations completed in spring 2021.

3. Newton Highlands Station

Scope: This project aims to make Newton Highlands Station fully accessible and involves 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 two accessible routes down to the platforms.

Update: The design is expected to reach completion by spring 2020. To avoid interference, the construction of Newton Highlands Station will follow the ongoing Green Line D Branch Track and Signal Replacement Project, which is scheduled to be substantially complete by the end of 2020. In the interim, a temporary ramping system and raised platform have been installed to provide improved access.

4. 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: The project is in construction and is expected to be complete in spring 2021. The new elevator at the Washington St entrance is scheduled to open by the end of 2020.

5. 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 that work with Green Line Type 8 and 9 cars.

Update: Station design is approaching 90% and the Town of Brookline expects construction to begin in late 2019, with anticipated completion by summer 2021.

6. Symphony Station

Scope: The project aims to make the inaccessible Symphony Station accessible by installing elevators, raising platforms, and achieving NFPA 130 compliance in a historically sensitive manner.

Update: The MBTA has procured a design consultant for the final design. This phase is expected to take just over a year, with construction to begin in spring 2021.

7. Hynes Station Renovation

Scope: MassDOT has designated a private developer to construct an air rights development over Hynes Station and the MassPike I-90 at the northeast corner of Boylston St and Massachusetts Ave. The design will provide a renovated and fully accessible station with a reopened Boylston St entrance incorporated into the new air rights development.

Update: The MBTA is meeting with the developer on a bi-weekly basis to define the station's external dimensions, structural constraints, and utility upgrades. Simultaneously, the MBTA is finalizing designer selection for the interior of the station, including elevators and platforms. Timeline for design and construction is under development.

8. Station Wayfinding

Scope: Wayfinding signage is currently unclear, inconsistent, and non-compliant. The Wayfinding and Station Improvements Project will resign "Top 10" stations to bring them into full compliance with ADA/MAAB regulations, LEP standards, and internal wayfinding requirements. Stations will include Back Bay, Downtown Crossing, Forest Hills, Harvard, Haymarket, Malden, North Station, Park Street, South Station, and State Street.

Update: The construction for the Park Street Wayfinding and Station Improvements Project began in April 2019 and will last 17 months. The construction for the Wayfinding and Station Improvements Project for North Station, Haymarket, State Street, Chinatown, and Downtown Crossing began in summer 2019. The work on these stations has been

accelerated and will be substantially complete by the end of the year. The construction for the Wayfinding and Station Improvements Project for South Station, Back Bay, Malden, and Harvard is expected to begin in spring 2020, contingent upon identifying funding.

9. 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: Engineering and Maintenance (E&M), in coordination with SWA, has identified station locations for door openers and required hardware, and will begin the procurement of materials and staffing support. The proposed timeline calls for work to commence in spring 2020, starting with locations on the Orange Line.

10. Path of Travel Improvements

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

Update: The Office of the Chief Engineer, in coordination with SWA, has engaged a design consultant to begin the process of scoping out the amount of necessary work and the locations to be addressed. Design work is expected to begin in spring 2020.

Commuter Rail:

1. Mansfield Commuter Rail Station Renovation

Scope: The project scope includes constructing new compliant mini-highs, new accessible routes to cross under the tracks via MA Route 114, storm-water retention, and new accessible parking.

Update: The new ramps, stairs, and mini-high platforms on each side of the tracks will be in full service by the end of November. Full project completion is anticipated for early summer 2020.

2. Chelsea Commuter Rail Station

Scope: The MassDOT-led Silver Line Gateway Project was divided into two phases: Phase I built 4 of 5 new Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit stops along abandoned 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: A construction contract was awarded in June 2019. Current construction activities include Commuter Rail signal and power relocation; removal of old railroad siding track and switches; roadway–railway grade crossing signal work; and station platform mini-pile foundation construction. Work will continue into the spring on the platform piles, platform piers, and Commuter Rail signal systems. Reconstruction of local roadway–railroad grade crossings will continue into the spring/summer of next year, along with station elements and rail signal systems. The station is expected to open in fall 2022.

3. Natick Center Station

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

Update: Design has been completed and Notice to Proceed with construction is anticipated for the end of November 2019. Construction is expected to be complete in spring 2021.

4. Newtonville, Auburndale, and West Newton Stations—Design

Scope: This project will produce a design to make all three stations accessible via a high-level platform at each station on the northern embankment. Each station will have ramps to access the high-level platform.

Update: Surveying and data collection are ongoing, with 30% design expected by May 2020 and final design expected by spring 2021.

5. Winchester Commuter Rail Station

Scope: Capital Delivery will make Winchester Commuter Rail Station fully accessible.

Update: Design is advancing for Winchester Station, with 100% design expected in winter 2020 and construction to begin in summer 2020. The station design features full-high platforms, canopies, elevators, and ramps. The project is fully funded through construction. The construction duration is estimated to be three years, with completion in spring 2023.

6. Lynn Station and Garage

Scope: Lynn Station and Garage require significant structural repairs and upgrades to various components, including vertical circulation and life safety upgrades.

Update: The MBTA is finalizing a scope of work for design. Upon structural and systems assessment, a detailed project schedule will be developed; however, it is currently anticipated that the four existing garage and platform elevators will be replaced, as will the station platform.

7. Maintenance of Mini-High Platforms

Scope: All mini-highs throughout the Commuter Rail network will be evaluated for structural integrity and usability. Those found deficient will be repaired.

Update: Assessments of all mini-highs have been completed. Design is currently underway for two mini-highs at Beverly Station that require significant repair by Keolis. Once completed and approved by the MBTA, these designs are expected to be used as templates for other mini-highs that require similar restoration. Repairs to existing mini-highs that do not require significant work are currently underway on the Needham and Franklin Lines, with completion expected November 2019.

8. 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: The MBTA and Keolis are identifying contracting methods to proceed with installation work on dozens of platforms.

9. Commuter Rail Bridge Plates

Scope: Keolis, SWA, and Railroad Operations will standardize bridge plate design to the greatest extent feasible.

Update: Following the testing of a variety of existing bridge plates, an RFP is being developed for the design of a customized, lightweight bridge plate. The RFP is expected to be finalized in early 2020, followed by the procurement of a design consultant.

Vertical Transportation:

1. 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: The elevators were put into service June 14, 2019.

2. Andrew 857, 858, 859

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

Update: The Andrew elevator replacements opened on October 18, 2019.

3. 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: The second headhouse with the new elevator, located on the southwest corridor park, becomes operational on November 5, 2019.

4. Forest Hills Phase II

Scope: MBTA plans to upgrade the accessibility of Forest Hills Station. Scope includes the replacement of the 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 MBTA is in the process of procuring an engineering consultant to perform final engineering design and construction phase services. The design will begin in winter/spring 2020 and construction will start in 2022.

5. Harvard 821

Scope: Harvard elevator 821 was built in 1984 and is essentially a 48 inch square. The existing shaft will be expanded to provide an enlarged elevator pass-through cab design.

Update: 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. Central 861

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

Update: The Notice to Proceed with construction was issued in June 2017. The project encountered multiple unforeseen existing site conditions during construction. The MBTA has been working to address these issues. Construction is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2020. A shuttle bus is available to connect customers to Kendall.

7. Alewife 813, 814, 815

Scope: The 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: Construction began in summer 2018 and is phased in such a way that the station will remain accessible at all times. Elevator 813 (lobby to platform) was completed this summer. Elevators 814 and 815 will be completed by mid-2020.

8. Ruggles

Scope: Capital Delivery will install a new Commuter Rail platform along Track 2 at Ruggles Station and a new elevator (728) to the busway center platform. Following this work, existing elevators 848, 849, 850, 851, and 852 will be replaced. And once this work concludes, a variety of additional upgrades will be made to the Orange Line portion of the station—yet to be scoped.

Update: The station is currently under construction. The building of the new Commuter Rail platform and elevator 728 is ongoing, together with

the rebuilding of the lower busway. Elevator 848 will be taken out of service once elevator 728 is in operation, which is anticipated for winter 2020. Elevators 850 and 851 have been taken out of service for replacement, and are anticipated to be reopened June 2020. At that time, elevator 849 serving the Commuter Rail will be shut down for replacement. Current forecasted substantial completion date is November 2020.

9. Quincy Adams 805, 806, 807

Scope: The 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 to keep at least one redundant elevator in service at all times.

Update: The project is under construction and is anticipated to be complete in April 2021. The first elevator scheduled to be complete and ready to use is the brand new platform/lobby elevator, which is anticipated for May 2020.

10. Downtown Crossing Elevators Phase II and Park Street 808

Scope: The MBTA will construct one elevator that connects the Washington St surface to the Orange Line (both paid and unpaid area) and Red Line southbound areas of Downtown Crossing Station. It also will include an elevator that connects the Orange Line northbound to the Red Line southbound, and an enlarged Elevator 808 at Park Street as an alternate connection between the Orange Line southbound and the Red Line northbound via the Winter Street Concourse.

Update: The MBTA has procured a design consultant for final design and construction phase services. The design will start in winter 2019–2020 and is expected to last approximately 18 months.

11. Future Replacement and New (Redundant) Elevators

Scope: The following elevators will be brought to 100% design:

- 1 new unit at Sullivan lower busway + 2 replacements
- 3 new units (incl RL Platform redundant) at Davis + 2 replacements
- 2 new units at Chinatown + 2 replacements and lobby rebuilds
- 2 new units at North Station – Valenti Way lobby to OL platforms
- 2 new units at State Street City Hall entry + 2 replacements & lobby rebuild at OSMH
- 1 new unit at Mass Ave + 1 replacement
- 2 new units at Broadway + 2 replacements
- 1 new unit at Jackson Square + 1 replacement
- 3 new units at Arlington St at Berkeley exit / emergency entrance
- 3 new units + emergency egress and 2 replacement units at Wellington
- 2 new units at Central stair-only exits + 1 replacement + 1 Escalator replacement and 1 escalator modernization

Update: The MBTA is in the process of procuring multiple design consultants for final design and construction phase services. Capital Delivery has selected four consulting firms to submit proposals for final evaluation and selection. The design will start in spring 2020.

For Central, MBTA has procured a design consultant for final design and construction phase services. The design has started and is expected to be completed by mid-2020.

12. Vertical Transportation Study & Plan

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: The MBTA has procured an engineering consultant who will be leading the effort to assess all current conditions of elevators and escalators, and to develop a long-term plan for the maintenance and modernization of systems. The consultant is currently performing evaluations, fieldwork, research, and data collection of the existing conditions of the MBTA elevators and escalators. Upon completing their review, the consultant will begin development of the Vertical Transportation Plan, as well as evaluation of elevator and escalator replacement delivery methods and the existing maintenance contract with KONE.

13. Elevator Cleanliness

Scope: An interdepartmental task force comprising Engineering and Maintenance, Operations, Customer Experience, Transit Police, and System-Wide Accessibility will develop and document a protocol for addressing the issue of elevator cleanliness.

Update: The task force was established this summer and includes representatives from Engineering and Maintenance, Operations, Customer Experience, Transit Police, Customer Technology, and SWA. The group has met four times over the past six months. A plan for a holistic approach to elevator cleanliness is currently being developed and is expected to be finalized in spring 2020. The following related activities are underway:

- Replacement of elevator floors with new non-absorbent flooring materials at key locations
- Improved tracking and monitoring of the frequency and location of elevator clean-up requests
- Identifying technology solutions to pilot, such as moisture detection devices in elevators

- More frequent inspections by station staff
- Implementation of an improved, performance-based station cleaning contract

14. Digital Display Screens at Elevators

Scope: The MBTA will install digital screens at elevators that provide real-time elevator information and alternative service options, as needed. These will replace the printed flyers that we currently use to convey this information.

Update: The Customer Technology Department and SWA are currently scoping this project, to identify the subset of elevators to be included in a first phase and to develop the budget.

Bus Stops:

1. Critical Stops

Scope: In 2015, the MBTA identified 50 of its highest ridership stops that had significant accessibility barriers and warranted reconstruction. Following that effort, in 2017, the MBTA surveyed all 7,690 bus stops and determined that 273 were “critical”—meaning the stop is so inaccessible, customers using wheeled mobility must board/exit in the street. Of these 273, the MBTA determined 170 would be closed. The remaining would be reconstructed.

Update: Of the 170 stops slated for closure, 42 have been closed and the remaining 138 will be. For the 130 stops being reconstructed, 63 stops have been completed to date, and an additional 67 will be constructed by spring 2020. Another 45 stops are in conceptual design, to be constructed intermittently through 2020.

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 level and number of barriers present. Bus stops were identified as high, medium, and low priority. High priority stops have more than one significant barrier present such as, but not limited to, a sloped landing pad, narrow sidewalk, lack of a curb, or unusable curb ramp. The MBTA identified 844 stops that are classified as high priority, with multiple barriers to access. The MBTA will be advancing the design and construction of access improvements at these locations.

Update: Three design and engineering firms were selected for the planning design and construction phase services for bus stops categorized as high priority. The high priority stops will have ongoing review and analysis as possible transit infrastructure upgrades move forward. Construction on 150 of the high priority bus stops will commence in 2020.

3. Sharing Bus Stop Data and Grant Information with Cities/Towns

Scope: Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) town profiles will be created to summarize the PATI bus stop counts, scores, and types of barriers for each municipality served by the MBTA bus service. Each packet will be coupled with information regarding grant opportunities that the towns may pursue to potentially aid in advancing work.

Update: The MBTA circulated PATI data as part of the Bus Shelter Amenities Project coordination and outreach effort. Each of the 52 cities and towns that have bus service were sent a spreadsheet of the local stop information including (but not limited to) sidewalk width, condition, and existing shelter information. In early 2020, SWA will be circulating information on funding opportunities for sidewalk/curb ramp upgrades to cities that could be leveraged for bus stop improvements.

4. Bus Stop Amenities

Scope: As the MBTA's current 15-year agreement with JCDecaux, its shelter manager, comes to an end, the MBTA is developing and will procure an updated and expanded program of bus shelters and amenities.

Update: In advance of the expiration of its current bus shelter contract, the MBTA has gathered customer input and held a series of workshops to identify priorities for the future of bus shelters and amenities in its service area. Incorporating customer, internal, and municipal feedback, the MBTA recently released a Draft Request for Responses to solicit industry feedback on the program.

In the coming months, the MBTA will finalize and release a Request for Responses, seek municipal participation in the program, and work closely with municipalities and communities to update the MBTA's network of bus shelters and amenities.

5. Bus Stop "Ownership"

Scope: Operations, Real Estate, and SWA will post on the MBTA website a list of all bus stops serviced by the MBTA, identifying the property owner of each stop (e.g. municipality, private owner, MBTA, etc.).

Update: MassDOT GIS Services uploaded all of the PATI bus stop data to the GeoDOT GIS mapping tool. The GeoDOT tool allows the PATI data to be viewable on a map with ownership of each bus stop noted. Ownership information will be reviewed in early 2020.

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 PAVMS system, and other accessibility improvements.

Update: The first six-car consist went into service this summer. Two additional trainsets are expected to be in service by the end of the year. The additional 22 trainsets will follow.

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 pilot car arrived in Boston in early November. The first of 42 full consists is expected to go into service in spring 2020.

3. Green Line Type 10 Vehicle Design and Procurement

Scope: The MBTA will design and procure the next-generation Green Line train. The procurement will be for 165 vehicles to replace the Type 7 and Type 8 fleets. Vehicles will be low-floor and approximately 40 feet longer than legacy fleets.

Update: Vehicle Engineering has been working with numerous departments, including SWA, to finalize the RFP for design and ensure all key accessibility considerations are captured. The RFP is expected to be released in early 2020, with carbuilder Notice to Proceed in early 2021.

4. Priority Seating Decals on Subway

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

Update: New priority seating decals will be procured from an outside vendor as part of a broader plan to install new safety-related signs for the existing subway vehicle fleet. To date, a sign vendor has been selected, and the project team is reviewing sign samples to verify compliance with sign specifications. Completion of sign procurement is estimated to occur in December 2019. The priority seating signs will be subsequently installed; estimated completion is spring 2020.

TRAININGS

1. Bus Operations

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 customers with disabilities.

Update: SWA and Bus Operations have been meeting regularly to develop an entirely new eight-hour accessibility certification and recertification program. Focus groups with bus operators and customers occurred over the summer to inform the training. The R-TAG customer engagement group has been actively engaged throughout the process of developing the materials, attending almost every content development meeting. With the presentation portion of the training largely complete, focus is being shifted to the creation of the hands-on portion and the video content which will ensure the customer perspective is always present and consistent. The training is expected to be rolled out in mid-2020.

2. Subway Operations

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 customers with disabilities.

Update: This initiative will be undertaken once the new Bus Recertification Program training has been substantially completed.

3. Transit Ambassadors

Scope: SWA will work with Block by Block (the Transit Ambassadors contractor) and MBTA Customer Experience to review and revitalize the accessibility training module for newly hired Ambassadors. The training

will include classroom and hands-on material, as well as videos documenting first-person perspectives from customers with disabilities.

Update: SWA has met with new members of the Customer Experience team responsible for the Ambassador training program to further discuss curriculum content. Changes have been made to online refresher materials which more clearly and substantively reflect MBTA accessibility policies and procedures. The remainder of the core curriculum will be developed through winter 2019–2020.

4. Transit Police

Scope: The MASS Collaboration (comprising SWA, BCIL, MBTA Transit Police, and the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center) will develop and implement a curriculum for a disability-based training for Transit Police Officers.

Update: The MASS Collaboration is currently in the process of editing the curriculum for a disability-based training program for Transit Police Officers, based on feedback and recommendations received from Transit Police Detectives and Supervisors who attended a pilot training class in March 2019. Beginning in spring 2020, once curriculum edits are complete and the training program is finalized, up to four classes will be conducted for a combination of Boston, Cambridge, and Transit Police Officers (commitment of 9-10 officers).

5. Senior Leadership

Scope: SWA will develop an access-related training module for Senior Leadership to undergo upon hire/promotion. (Senior Leadership constitutes staff at Director level and above.)

Update: The outline for this training will be developed in early 2020.

6. Bus Evacuation Drills

Scope: System-Wide Accessibility, Security, Safety, and Operations will collaborate to implement a series of bus evacuation drills focused on the potential impacts on customers with disabilities.

Update: On October 2, 2019, SWA, in cooperation with MassDOT Security & Emergency Management and MBTA Operations, conducted four small-scale bus emergency evacuation drills based on unique emergency scenarios. In each drill scenario, bus operators were required to provide assistance to facilitate the evacuation of 1-2 passengers with physical and/or sensory disabilities. SWA and MBTA Operations will now use the drill findings for guidance as the bus operator accessibility recertification curriculum is updated.

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION / OUTREACH

1. Tracking Accessibility-Related Customer 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: 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 Customer Experience. The common goal was to create a "one-stop shopping" workspace for SWA customer 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. A total of 64 MBTA 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 and are due to be issued by year's end. These guidelines clearly explain the steps which should be taken to complete an investigation and issue an appropriate resolution.

2. Notifying Customers of Upcoming Work

Scope: In concert with the Title VI Public Participation Plan, the MBTA will develop a public engagement plan for seniors and people with disabilities.

Update: The MBTA has developed a draft Public Participation Plan that addresses how the MBTA engages its riders. The draft plan is currently being circulated and reviewed by senior staff for internal comment and feedback. The draft plan includes guiding principles for MBTA public engagement, and also outlines agency commitments to accessibility. Following a public comment period on the draft plan, scheduled for winter 2020, the MBTA will focus on building resources and guidance for internal staff in order to implement improved public participation at the Authority, including specific protocols for ensuring seniors and people with disabilities are engaged.

3. Marketing Campaign

Scope: Marketing and SWA will develop and implement a marketing campaign designed to highlight improvements to fixed-route access and to spread the message that access benefits all customers.

Update: The MBTA has contracted with the advertising agency Boathouse, Inc. to assist SWA and Customer Experience in the design

and deployment of a marketing campaign for fixed-route access. Campaign goals and concepts were developed throughout the summer; in October, R-TAG and the BCIL plaintiffs provided feedback and direction to the team. Over the next few months, content and layouts will be finalized, along with the media and outreach strategy. The MBTA intends to launch the campaign in spring 2020.

4. Audio equivalency policy

Scope: The Customer Technology Department (CTD) and SWA will develop a policy that defines when, and by what means, digital signage must have an audible component.

Update: Throughout 2019, SWA and CTD have worked to develop a audio/visual equivalency policy that outlines when audible information must be displayed visual and when digital visual information must be broadcast visually. The policy will include examples/case studies of appropriate solutions. The final draft is expected in early 2020.

5. Advertising Panels—Audio Solution

Scope: As part of a digital display screen roll-out, the MBTA will develop an app for making the screens' text-based information available audibly via a smartphone application.

Update: Following the development and testing of a beta application by a third-party tester, CTD determined that, as designed, would not solve for audio-equivalence on digital signage across the MBTA system. As a result, CTD has begun:

- work on the additional back-end technology infrastructure that is needed for the application to know what information is playing on digital screens on the system;
- conducting interviews, ride-alongs, and app-testing sessions with blind and low-vision riders, to better understand their informational needs throughout their trips.

6. 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: The SWA promotional brochure refresh, *Access in Motion: Your Guide to MBTA Fixed-Route Services*, went to print at the end of summer 2019. It includes improved font size and color contrast, updated photography, and the latest access features and travel tips for each mode. New sections are dedicated to the Riders' Transportation Access Group (R-TAG) and the MBTA Travel Training Program, among other accessibility programs/services. The brochure is available in multiple languages and alternate formats upon request.

7. Stop Announcements

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: SWA has held preliminary meetings with Bus Operations officials along with the Customer Technology Department (CTD) team. Specific challenges identified during these meetings include choosing sources to use when determining which stop announcements should be required, as well as ensuring the ability of operators to make announcements safely and consistently while in service. SWA and CTD are exploring the potential to leverage existing onboard vehicle technology in addressing these types of issues. Work on this initiative will continue in 2020.

8. 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, etc.

Update: A cross-departmental effort was undertaken to collect, organize, and verify key contacts in the cities and towns served by the MBTA in order to create a municipal contact database. Key personnel from the various departments of Public Works, Disability Commissions, Councils on Aging, and Independent Living Centers were cataloged and stored within a new software application. This software will allow T staff across departments to send and track coordinated communications to multiple groups. This tool will be leveraged in early December to send guidance to local municipalities on snow removal at bus stops.

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: 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. Transit Education—Boston Children’s Hospital

Scope: SWA will partner with staff from Boston Children’s Hospital and Boston Medical Center’s Pediatric Unit to provide information on fixed-route accessibility.

Update: A program has been developed to provide travel training sessions on an as-needed basis to parents of children who are staying at Boston Children’s Hospital or at BMC’s Pediatric Unit for long periods of time. The program also equips hospital staff with fixed-route and community mobility service resources. In November 2019, SWA provided

one travel training session to patients and parents at BMC and three mobility training sessions to staff at Children’s Hospital.

11. Transit Education—UMMS

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

Update: A presentation has been developed that includes information on the effects of transportation policy on the physical, mental, economic, and social health and well-being of individuals and rural communities. A presentation was delivered to second-year medical students enrolled into UMMS’ Population-based Urban and Rural Community Health (PURCH) track at the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation in Ware, MA, on October 28. Through this collaboration of MassDOT/MBTA, future physicians will learn about how transportation policy is made, as well as what transportation and other mobility resources are available for patients and how to access them in various communities of the Commonwealth.

SYSTEM-WIDE OVERSIGHT

1. System-Wide Accessibility

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

Update: A draft policy outlining SWA’s roles and responsibilities has been drafted and will be finalized in early 2020. Following its release, charters with key departments will be developed that provide greater detail on when/how SWA should be engaged in projects and initiatives.

2. Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) Website

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

Update: Draft content has been developed. SWA and the Customer Technology Department will be working to revise and develop the web pages in early 2020.

3. Maintenance and Barrier Reporting

Scope: MBTA station inspectors will perform regular station walk-throughs in accordance with protocol, and will report on station cleanliness, lighting, and notable barriers. Accessibility defects will be entered into a maintenance control database and coded for priority.

Update: Engineering and Maintenance (E&M), in coordination with SWA, has reviewed the work order codes within the new maintenance tracking database (Trapeze) and identified which codes should be tagged as accessibility barriers. These codes associated with a maintenance request determine the level of priority and type of response required for resolution. SWA is in the process of working with E&M on the style and layout for the regular reporting of accessibility barriers.

4. The Design Guide to Access

Scope: The MBTA will publish *The Design Guide to Access* to provide clarity on design expectations as well as best practices in universal design.

Update: The *Design Guide to Access* team is finalizing the last few chapters of the technical guidance content and formatting the full book layout. Internal staff review of remaining chapters will take place as a full initial draft is completed in early 2020.

5. Snow Removal Monitoring

Scope: The Internal Access Monitoring Program will incorporate a mechanism to better assess the quality and timeliness of snow removal

at bus stops for which the MBTA has taken responsibility (currently stops along the 15 Key Bus Routes). A protocol will also be developed for reporting any deficiencies to maintenance teams in real time.

Update: The Internal Access Monitoring Program will begin a pilot snow removal monitoring program beginning winter 2019–2020. This pilot will involve small-scale tests of different methods of monitoring both the quality and timeliness of snow removal at bus stops for which the MBTA has taken responsibility (currently stops along the 15 Key Bus Routes). The goal of these pilots will be to determine and commit to a method, or set of methods, of snow removal monitoring that is effective, safe, and efficient. Deficiencies will be reported to maintenance teams in real time via an automated alert system to ensure timely action is taken to remedy any shortcomings.