



**Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority**

Public Engagement at the MBTA

Public Meeting

Winter 2020

Gathering Feedback on Public Engagement at the MBTA

**Comment
period
closes 3/20**



- 1** Draft a Public Engagement Plan to outline our goals and priorities
- 2** Request feedback on the draft Plan from MBTA riders, to align our goals and priorities
- 3** Update the draft Plan, either incorporating the feedback we've received or sharing the feedback with relevant departments
- 4** Adopt the final draft of the Plan and include it in our FTA Title VI submission
- 5** Review processes relating to engagement, and make improvements agency-wide

Draft Document: www.mbta.com/public-engagement



What is Public Engagement?

- Public engagement is the opportunity for riders to influence what happens at the MBTA, from service and projects, to fares.
- Understanding the diverse wants and needs of MBTA riders will allow the MBTA to better serve its customers and deliver on critical projects.
- Further, by soliciting and incorporating customer input early, projects are strengthened



Public Meeting at MIT AgeLab



Legal Requirements for Public Engagement

- The MBTA is required to have a Public Engagement Plan for **service and fare changes** as a part of our Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 obligations.
- We also have non-discrimination obligations through:
 - Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - *Deniels-Finegold et al vs. MBTA*



Photo of Red Line Diversion



Examples of MBTA Engagement

Some examples of successful MBTA Public Engagement – these are the examples we are building on to improve engagement at the MBTA.



GLX Local Outreach*

- Community Working Group (25 consecutive monthly meetings)
- GLX website updates www.mass.gov/green-line-extension-project-glx
- Email Blasts (>7,200 registered)
- Automated phone calls
- Door-to-door leafletting
- Public Meetings
- City Traffic Engineers & First-Responders
- Tabling Events (20 events, 3,000+ engagements)

* 2.3 million personal contacts in last 24 months



Better Bus Project Outreach

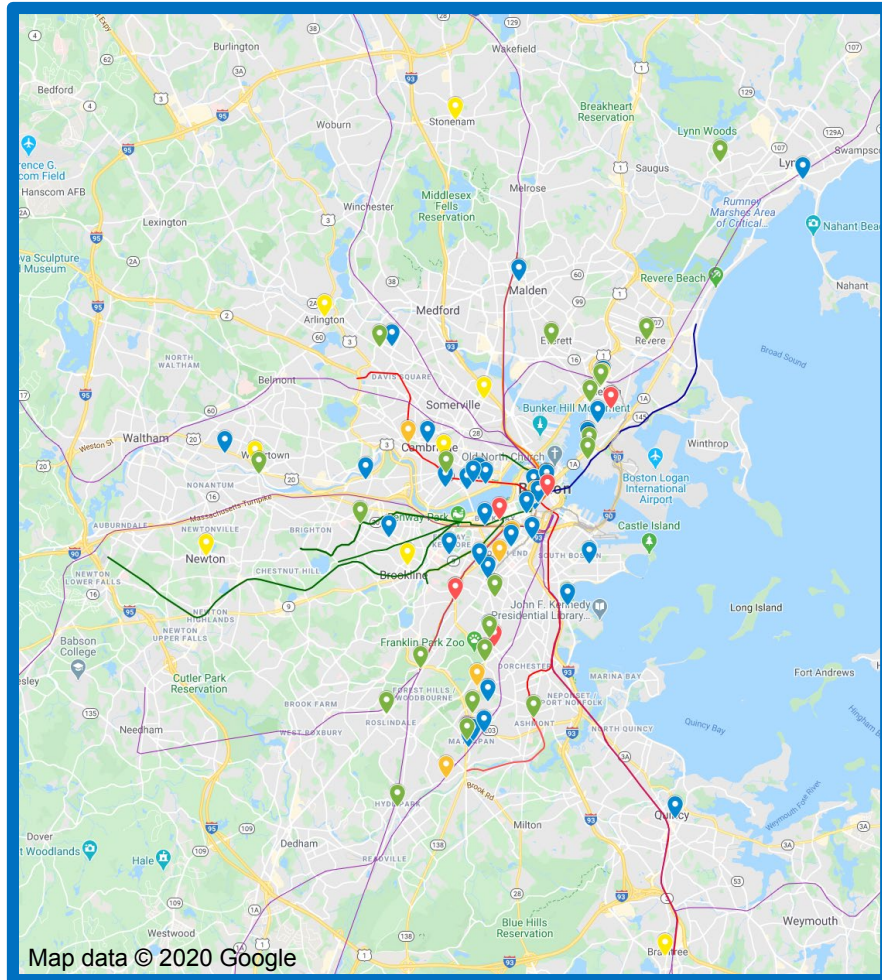
Strong External Engagement:

- Website Feedback
- Advertising Campaign
- Neighborhood Briefings
- Community Meetings
- Open Houses
- Street Teams
- Stakeholder Workshop
- Municipal Engagement
- Operator Feedback



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Fare Transformation Outreach



Accountable

- Prioritize gathering input directly from communities and people most impacted by changes
- Gather both opportunities and concerns and attempt to solve the root causes of problems

Accessible and Proactive

- Meet people where they are
- Information in multiple languages

Transparent

- Provide clear information about the project, what decisions have been made, what decisions still need to be made, how those decisions will be made, and how and when people can provide input
- Provide access and explain data used in decision-making

Iterative

- Provide opportunities for input at multiple stages of the policy development
- Develop relationships with community organizations so there are channels for feedback during and after implementation

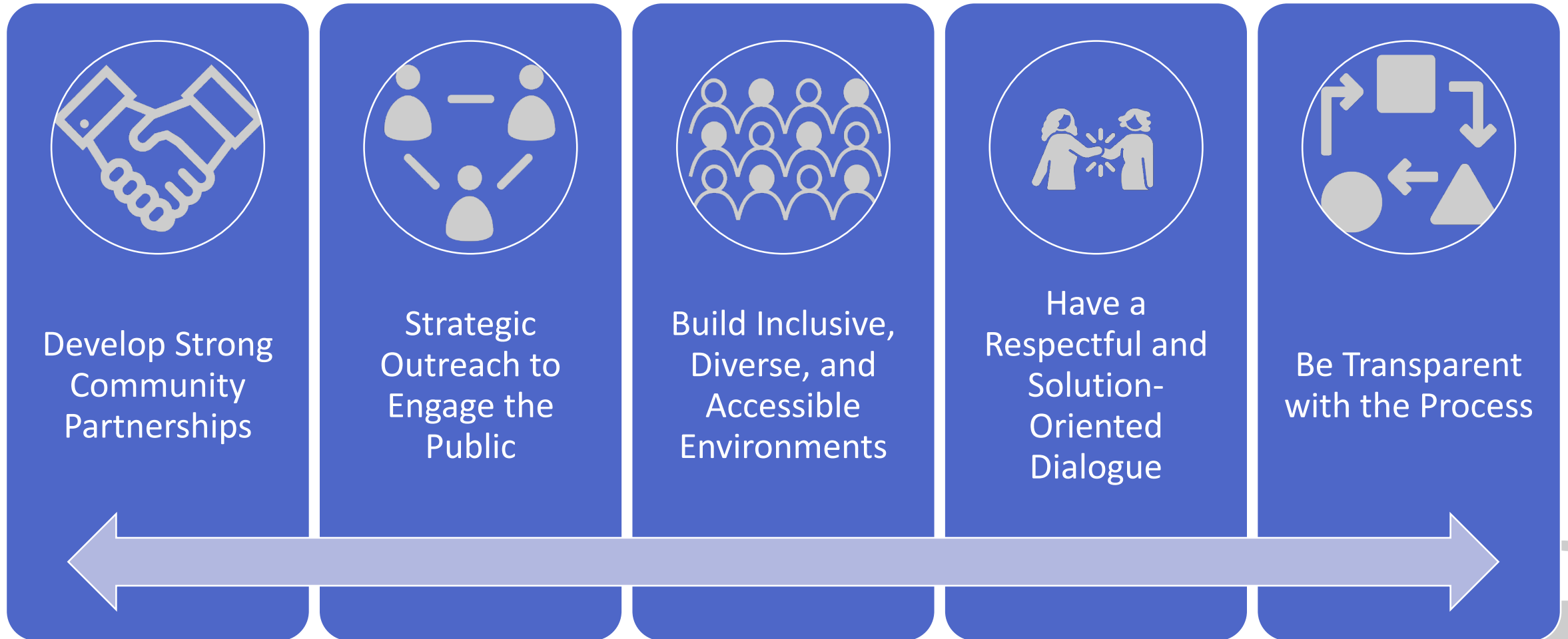


The MBTA Public Engagement Plan

- Future public engagement at the MBTA will be guided by our Authority-wide Public Engagement Plan
- The draft plan provides critical guidance, tools, and resources for how to conduct outreach, notification, and engagement with external stakeholders.
- The draft plan sets forth the baseline requirements for public engagement at the MBTA. Projects can go above and beyond this baseline, but these standards set the requirements for all MBTA engagement.



Guiding Principles for Public Engagement at the MBTA



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Develop Strong Community Partnerships

Definition: The MBTA shall develop avenues for regular communication to build trust with communities. Quality public engagement is evident in strong community partnerships and consistent commitment to on-going engagement.

Application: The MBTA will aim to understand the context in which it operates including history and community make-up, and develop relationships with community members to enable positive collaboration.



Strategic Outreach to Engage the Public

Definition: Concerted effort must be given to encouraging participation through early, accessible, and strategic outreach to the public we serve.

Application: The MBTA will reach out to communities who are not often engaged in traditional engagement processes, including low-income communities, environmental justice (EJ), immigrants and communities with limited English, people with disabilities, minority communities, and other traditionally underserved communities.



Build Inclusive, Diverse, and Accessible Environments

Definition: All public participation and engagement activities should promote diversity and accessibility in our processes. Every effort should be made to ensure that participation opportunities are physically, geographically, temporally, linguistically, and culturally accessible.

Application: The MBTA will ensure all engagement processes are accessible to all types of communities in the MBTA service area.



Have a Respectful and Solution-Oriented Dialogue

Definition: Community events should be welcoming to all opinions and dialogue should be based on respect and inclusion of all points of view. When there are conflicting opinions, conversations should be structured to allow for compromise while staying solution-focused to respond to community concerns.

Application: MBTA engagement activities will be structured to enable riders of all backgrounds to share their views on MBTA projects.



Be Transparent with the Process

Definition: Since there are many reasons to engage with the public, it is imperative that there is clarity about the process, level of input, and decision-making for any event or community process. The MBTA is open to receiving and incorporating feedback and providing appropriate opportunities for feedback. Plans and projects must be clearly framed so the potential effect may be understood by the participants.

Application: The MBTA will provide the public with the information they need to get informed feedback on MBTA projects. The Authority will ensure customers can understand how their feedback will be used to influence MBTA projects.



MBTA's Commitment to Accessibility

When planning, advertising, or hosting public meetings and/or engaging with the public, MBTA staff must be sure that everyone can fully participate, regardless of minority status, income, limited English proficiency (LEP), age, disability, and geography.

This requires special consideration for meeting notices, promotion, locations, and special accommodations.



Public Engagement is a Process

The MBTA has documented our goals and priorities regarding public engagement, but are seeking customer input to align our goals with those of our customers.

Feedback can be provided:

- Here, at today's meeting;
- Online, at www.mbta.com/public-engagement; or,
- By email, at publicengagement@mbta.com.



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