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November 30, 2020

Dear Riders,

We have been issuing these semiannual reports for just over five years. Those of you who are regular readers know that the aim of each report is to provide a comprehensive list of current fixed-route accessibility initiatives, and to celebrate all the progress we've made along the way. However, as 2020 draws to a close, we find it impossible not to acknowledge what a difficult year it has been. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted nearly every aspect of our lives—including the ways we offer and use MBTA services.

Since the start of the pandemic, a number of new policies have been implemented in order to keep riders and employees safe. But while ridership has increased since its initial drop in the spring, we are still experiencing record low ridership levels—currently 26% of pre-pandemic ridership system-wide. As a result of this sustained decrease in ridership and accompanying fare revenue, we are projecting a \$525 million deficit for Fiscal Year 2022.

In order to respond to this budget crisis, the MBTA has worked to develop a number of proposals to reduce the budget gap. These proposals involve a combination of changes to the scope and schedules of certain construction projects, as well as changes to when and where service is provided—an effort collectively known as *Forging Ahead*. Although each of the proposed changes is difficult, one guiding principle has been to retain service for riders who are most dependent on public transit—including older adults and riders with disabilities. To that end, the Department of System-Wide Accessibility has been engaged in helping to identify system and project priorities throughout the decision-making process.

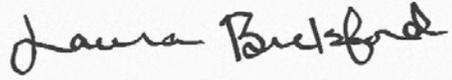
Currently, proposals are being presented for public review, and rider feedback will be factored into upcoming decisions made by the Fiscal and Management Control Board. (For more details regarding proposals under review, visit [MBTA.com/forgingahead](https://www.mbta.com/forgingahead).) Within this report, there are several initiatives under consideration to be put on "pause" until additional funding is secured. Although these decisions will not be finalized until later this year, you will find a note within the relevant updates identifying which are being considered.

While the year has brought with it many challenges, there are still good reasons to celebrate our progress toward improving and expanding accessibility system-wide. In addition to [commemorating the 30th anniversary of the ADA](#), we've been able to advance a number of our key initiatives. Highlights you'll find in the current report include:

- Major elevator upgrades at Alewife, Ruggles, Quincy Adams, and Oak Grove have been recently completed or are near completion
- Pilot beginning in 2021 of a new and innovative securement system on 10 buses that will allow wheeled mobility users to secure themselves independently
- Launch of a [new web page](#) dedicated to station and bus stop accessibility upgrades

As always, 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. We hope you find your way to a safe and happy holiday season, and we look forward to our continuing partnership as we advance access in the new year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Brelsford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light gray rectangular background behind it.

Laura Brelsford
Assistant General Manager
Department of System-Wide Accessibility

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Subway Stations:

1. 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: While progress on this project has been impacted by constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction is underway and is expected to be complete in summer/fall 2021. The new elevator at the Washington St. entrance is scheduled to open in winter 2021. The modernization of three of the station escalators has been included in the scope and is expected to be complete by fall 2021.

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: A construction contract was awarded in April 2020 and work is expected to begin by the end of this year. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 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 three accessible routes down to the platforms.

Update: The design is approaching 100% and is expected to be complete in July 2021. 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 2021. In the interim, a temporary ramping system and raised platform are on course for completion by the end of 2020.

4. 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: Construction began in late 2019 and is scheduled to be complete by fall 2021.

5. Beaconsfield, Chestnut Hill, Eliot, & Waban Stations Renovation

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: Conceptual designs have been completed for all four stations and designs are expected to reach 100% in 2021, with construction to follow.

6. Symphony Station

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

Update: The design is expected to reach the 75% milestone by the end of this year and to be complete by May 2021. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2021.

7. Hynes Station

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 biweekly basis to define the station's external dimensions, structural constraints, and utility upgrades. A design consultant began working in March 2020 and the conceptual design is expected to be complete by December 2020. Full design is expected to be complete in June 2022 and it is expected that construction will be complete in December 2025.

8. Station Wayfinding

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

Update: Work on this project began at Park Street in April 2019 and is scheduled to be complete by the close of 2020. Work at North Station, Haymarket, State Street, Chinatown, and Downtown Crossing began in summer 2019. The work at these stations has been accelerated and the project is expected to be substantially complete in early 2021. The designs for wayfinding, lighting, and station improvements at South Station, Back Bay, Malden, Chinatown, and Harvard are complete. *This initiative is under consideration to be put on pause and/or scaled back as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

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, in partnership with SWA, has identified accessible station entrance locations for automatic door opener hardware to be installed. E&M has procured the automated door hardware materials needed for installation and has begun installation at select locations. The remaining locations are scheduled to be installed over the course of the next 12 months.

10. Path of Travel Improvements

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

Update: SWA has worked to identify the highest-priority path of travel upgrades that are required throughout the system. These priorities will be provided to the design firms who have been selected in coordination with the Office of the Chief Engineer. Design work is expected to begin in spring 2021.

11. “Hands-Free” Fare Gate Feasibility Study

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

Update: The vendor responsible for overseeing the implementation of the new fare collection system has completed a design study to evaluate four different “hands-free” technologies. One of these has been identified as the preferred solution based on user experience and approach for integration into existing gates. The MBTA will be further evaluating the feasibility of incorporating this potential solution at existing gates.

Commuter Rail Stations:

1. Mansfield Station

Scope: This project 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 were completed in early May 2020. Full project completion is expected in winter 2020.

2. 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: Construction is underway. The new platform panels have been installed and work continues on the approach structures that will support the accessible rampways to the platforms. Other work for the station electrical and communications systems is ongoing. New railroad grade crossings have been installed, and railroad crossing infrastructure is being fabricated and installed. The station is expected to open in fall 2022.

3. Natick Center Station

Scope: This project will make Natick Station fully accessible. The two inaccessible low-level platforms 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: Construction continues on both platforms. A temporary platform has been constructed on the south side where the tracks have been raised to allow for new track access. To improve station resiliency, communication systems have been placed in a duct bank and drainage improvements are underway. Work is proceeding to prepare for piles and foundations for the new high-level platforms and accessible access routes. Construction is expected to be complete in spring 2022.

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: The 30% design was submitted in November 2020 and is being reviewed by the MBTA. The final design is expected by spring 2022. *This initiative is under consideration to be put on pause and/or scaled back as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

5. Winchester Station

Scope: This project will make Winchester Commuter Rail Station fully accessible. The station design features full-high platforms, canopies, elevators, and ramps.

Update: Design is complete. Negotiations with the Town of Winchester are ongoing, including for the granting of Permanent and Temporary Easements. *This initiative is under consideration to be put on pause as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

6. Lynn Station

Scope: Lynn Commuter Rail Station will be reviewed and upgraded to address a number of elements including the station platform and vertical circulation.

Update: A design consultant has been selected to begin investigation and start station design. Contract approval is expected shortly. Upon structural and systems assessment, a detailed project schedule will be developed.

7. South Attleboro Station

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

Update: The 30% design will be submitted in late November 2020 to be reviewed by stakeholders. Design completion is projected for June 2021. *This initiative is under consideration to be put on pause as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

8. 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: Repairs to existing mini-highs that do not require significant work have been completed. The MBTA and Keolis are identifying contracting methods to proceed with further design and rehabilitation at those locations that require more complex solutions.

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: The MBTA and Keolis are identifying contracting methods to proceed with design work on platforms throughout the Commuter Rail system.

10. Commuter Rail Bridge Plates

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

Update: In 2021, as a first step toward identifying the most appropriate bridge plate design, a system-wide survey will be conducted of each Commuter Rail platform and Commuter Rail coach, as well as of the platform gaps resulting from the relationship between the platforms and train cars. Following this data collection, concepts for a universal design will be developed and tested.

Vertical Transportation:

1. Forest Hills Phase II

Scope: This project will expand the accessibility of Forest Hills Station. The scope 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: A design firm was recently selected and design work will begin by the end of this year. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2022.

2. 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: All elevators have been replaced and are back in service. Construction began in summer 2018 and has been 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 opened for service in September 2020.

3. 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, 849, 850 and 851 will also be replaced.

Update: Construction of the new Commuter Rail platform and elevator 728 is ongoing. Rebuilding of the lower busway is mostly complete. Elevator 848 will be taken out of service once elevator 728 is in operation, which is projected for December 2020. Elevators 850 and 851 have been taken out of service for replacement, and are expected to reopen in December 2020. At that time, elevator 849, serving the Commuter Rail, will be shut down for replacement.

4. 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 to keep at least one redundant elevator in service at all times.

Update: Work on this project has commenced and is anticipated to be fully complete in October 2021. Elevators will be opened as they are completed. The first elevator scheduled to be completed is the replacement of existing garage/lobby elevator 806, which is expected to reopen in late November 2020.

5. Central Square 860 & Redundant Elevators

Scope: This project includes the construction of an additional (redundant) elevator on both the inbound and outbound sides of Central Square Station as well as the replacement and modernization of the existing elevator on the outbound platform.

Update: The design is expected to be complete in spring 2021. *This initiative is under consideration to be put on pause as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

6. 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 contract was awarded in March 2020 and design work began in October 2020. The design is expected to be complete in fall 2022.

7. 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 Street: 2 new units at City Hall entry + 2 replacements & lobby rebuild at OSMH
- Mass Ave: 1 new unit at + 1 replacement
- Broadway: 2 new units + 2 replacements
- Jackson Square: 1 new unit + 1 replacement
- Arlington: 3 new units at Berkeley exit / emergency entrance
- Wellington: 3 new units + emergency egress and 2 replacement units

Update: Conceptual designs for each of the above elevators have been completed. Designs for each unit are advancing to the 30% milestone. *This initiative is under consideration to be scaled back as part of the Forging Ahead discussions.*

8. 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: The MBTA has procured the engineering consultant firm WSP, who is leading the effort to assess all current conditions of elevators and escalators, in addition to developing a long-term plan for the maintenance and modernization of systems. To date, evaluations of all vertical transportation assets on the Blue Line have been completed, with evaluations of the Green Line to begin in December 2020. Upon completing their review, the consultant will begin development of the Vertical Transportation Plan, as well as evaluations of elevator and escalator replacement delivery methods and the existing maintenance contract with KONE.

9. Elevator Cleanliness

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

Update: 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. Several efforts have already been implemented, and a documented plan for a holistic approach to elevator cleanliness is expected to be finalized in early 2021. The following related activities are underway:

- Implementation of 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. Twenty-nine of the highest priority floors were replaced between 2019 and 2020.
- Regular inspections conducted by Transit Ambassadors. Issues are reported in real time and yield an expedited request for cleanup. Sample reports are being developed to help identify and track areas of concern.
- Identification of technology solutions to pilot. This includes such solutions as moisture detection devices in elevators.

10. Real-time Elevator Outage Information on Digital Displays

Scope: The MBTA is working on two pilot projects that will provide riders with additional real-time information about elevator outages. The first is an effort to install digital screens at elevator entrances which would include details about that specific elevator as well as elevators system-wide.

The second is an effort to install large digital displays in unpaid station lobbies, near the fare gates, with information about elevator outages across the system. The screens would provide information about current and upcoming outages, as well as relevant information regarding alternate access during outages.

Update: With respect to the first pilot, elevators at 13 stations were assessed for construction feasibility and a handful of locations have emerged as potential pilot locations. Digital screens will likely be installed at one to two stations during the first half of 2021.

For the second pilot, the MBTA is in the process of purchasing and installing large-panel digital screens for each lobby at eight stations, while working concurrently to develop the content that will be displayed. The screens are scheduled to be installed in early 2021.

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 as part of the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) and determined that 273 were “critical”—meaning the stop is so inaccessible, customers using

wheeled mobility must board/exit in the street. A number of these stops will be fully reconstructed while others that experience extremely low ridership will be closed.

Update: To date, 36 critical stops have been fully rebuilt, while an additional 15 are under construction and will be completed in spring 2021. Design consultants are currently progressing on designs for the reconstruction of approximately 80 additional critical stops. It is important to note that for each critical bus stop upgraded, the MBTA is typically also upgrading the reciprocal stop. In addition to the stops that have been or will be reconstructed, roughly 120 critical bus stops have been closed.

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 critical, 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 have been selected to review and address stops designated as high priority for accessibility upgrades. Throughout 2019, they worked with the MBTA's Service Planning Department to analyze a number of factors regarding each of the stops open (e.g. ridership, stop spacing, etc.), in order to determine which stops should move forward for reconstruction versus which should be potentially eliminated. These recommendations will be further informed by decisions made regarding upcoming service plan changes resulting from the *Forging Ahead* effort. Currently, the design teams are working on designs for 100+ stops. Stops are being bundled by what city/town they are located in to make the municipal review process more streamlined.

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.

Update: SWA continues to share PATI survey data for cities and towns upon request by project managers, organizations, or cities and towns. During the summer of 2020, PATI data reports were created for the participating gateway cities and shared with the members of the Governor's Council to Address Aging Transportation Work Group.

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: The MBTA finalized and released a Request for Responses seeking municipal participation in the program, and plans to work closely with municipalities and communities to update the MBTA's network of bus shelters and amenities. The technical specifications provided

for the RFR were developed in close coordination with SWA. A vendor is expected to be selected in early 2021.

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 has 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.

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 six-car consist went into service in summer 2019 and one additional trainset went into service at the end of 2019. Two more trainsets were Conditionally Accepted in 2020, and the additional 21 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: Six pilot cars arrived in Boston in early October 2019 for testing. This first six-car consist is expected to go into service in winter 2020-21.

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 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 worked with numerous departments, including SWA, to finalize the RFP for design and ensure all key accessibility considerations were captured. The RFP was released in December 2019, with Notice to Proceed expected in 2021.

4. Priority Seating Decals on Subway

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

Update: Installation of new priority seating decals is underway. To date, new decals have been installed on the entire Orange Line fleet, one-third of the Green Line fleet, and nearly two-thirds of the Red Line fleet. Completion of decal installation on the entire subway car fleet is estimated for winter 2021.

5. 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: A new and innovative securement system called Q-POD has been installed on all 10 of the MBTA's newest buses that are expected to go into service by the beginning of 2021.

Customer surveys will be developed to obtain user feedback on the system, which will help inform decisions regarding its use in future bus procurements.

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 continued regular meetings to develop an entirely new eight-hour accessibility certification. The R-TAG customer engagement group has been actively engaged throughout the process of developing the materials. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the production of videos for the training, featuring customers with disabilities, was underway. However, for the safety of all participants, the video shoots have been indefinitely postponed and alternate content that presents the customer perspective will be used in the interim. Video content aside, at this time the eight-hour training program is substantially complete, with rollout dates to be determined soon.

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: SWA has begun preliminary work on the updated training and will shift full focus to its development once the new Bus Operator training is complete. Video production for both this training and the new bus training are expected to be combined once it is safe to do so.

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 is in the early stages of creating a refreshed version of the Transit Ambassador accessibility training program. The curriculum will be developed as part of a broader initiative to create new subway accessibility training for Motorpersons and Customer Service Agents (CSA's), as Transit Ambassadors and subway personnel are required to comply with many of the same policies and procedures. In winter 2021, curriculum development will accelerate and continue through the year.

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: Development of the curriculum for a disability-based training program for Transit Police Officers is complete. Plans were initially in place to hold four training classes for Transit Police Officers (with a commitment of 9-10 officers), as well as for Boston and Cambridge Police Officers, beginning in summer 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the classes will be postponed until 2021.

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 2021.

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION / OUTREACH

1. 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 issued a new Public Engagement Plan that addresses how the MBTA notifies and engages with customers. A companion to the policy document will be developed beginning in winter 2020-21, detailing ways for employees to ensure that outreach is conducted in a successful and inclusive manner.

2. 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 an advertising agency to assist SWA and Customer Experience in the design and deployment of a marketing campaign for fixed-route access. In the fall of 2019, campaign goals and concepts were developed, and both R-TAG and the BCIL plaintiffs provided feedback and direction to the team. Media and outreach strategies were

underway, with the intention of a campaign launch in fall 2020. However, given the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign will be reimagined and rescheduled.

3. Audio & Visual 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 as well as when information that is broadcast audibly must have a visual component.

Update: SWA and CTD have worked to develop an audio–visual equivalency policy that outlines when audible information must be displayed visually and when digital visual information must be broadcast audibly. A draft has been completed and is under review. The final policy will include examples/case studies of appropriate solutions.

4. 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: Customer Technology has developed the ability to support audio equivalence on all digital screens directly controlled by the MBTA. Two recent examples:

- The digital screens located at 12 major bus stations (e.g., Ashmont, Dudley, Forest Hills, Ruggles, etc.) have gotten updated visual displays—and upgrades to the accompanying push-button audio read-outs, too.
- On the new center-running bus-priority corridor on Columbus Ave. in Boston, the digital screens to be installed at bus shelters will have an audio component. Bus arrival information, for example, will be made available to riders in both audio and visual formats.

The MBTA is still working with its advertising concessionaire, Outfront Media, on their supporting similar functionality on the screens that they control.

Development has paused on the app that would provide digital screens' text-based information audibly, after CTD's research and interviews with blind/low-vision riders suggested that riders would not want or use an app that was limited to this single functionality. Discussions are ongoing regarding what additional functionality would be most valuable to riders.

5. 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 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.

6. 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: SWA is in the process of reviewing route guides currently distributed to all new Bus Operators which highlight those stops that must be announced at all times. Following the completion of this review, SWA will reconvene with Bus Operations to discuss next steps. Work on this initiative will be ongoing in 2021.

7. 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: Throughout 2019, various departments created a database of key municipal contacts—including public works departments, disability commissions, and councils on aging—to be used as a listserv for various service-related updates. In January 2020, the MBTA leveraged this distribution list to send snow removal best-practice guidance to key public works department personnel in the 50+ municipalities with bus service. A similar communication is planned for winter 2020-21. Future communications regarding accessibility-related topics will be developed and distributed on an ongoing basis, as relevant.

8. 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. What

Update: Webinar material is under development for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and travel trainers serving students with disabilities in the classroom. Educational videos about how to interact with MBTA services are also being developed. All material will be available online and taught via Zoom sessions by travel training staff.

9. 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: Throughout 2019, SWA worked to develop a customized travel training program for parents of children receiving regular care at Boston Children's and/or BMC's Pediatric Unit. The program also equips hospital staff with fixed-route and community-mobility service resources. Sessions were provided in late 2019/early 2020, with preliminary discussions underway to explore expansion to Mass General and Spaulding Rehab. Work on this effort is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. 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: 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, and how to access those resources in various communities of the Commonwealth. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the manner in which public and community transportation will serve the needs of community residents is likely to change in significant ways. Discussions with UMMS are continuing about how best to educate future doctors about evolving mobility resources.

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 policy outlining SWA's roles and responsibilities has been drafted and will be finalized in early 2021. Following its release, charters with select departments will be developed that provide greater detail on when and 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: 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.

3. 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: SWA, in coordination with Engineering and Maintenance, is currently compiling the set of elements to be included in the enhanced reports. Sample reports, which will include information on what accessibility-related issues are found and the length of time taken to resolve them, will be developed and refined in 2021.

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: SWA has established the Design Guide Working Group—composed of internal staff members from various MBTA departments—to review the first draft of the guide. Since the end of summer 2020, the working group has been meeting bi-weekly to review, comment, and offer feedback on completed chapters of the guide. This effort is ongoing and will continue into 2021.

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 took initial steps toward a pilot snow removal monitoring program in the winter of 2019–20. However, progress on this goal was hampered by the lack of accumulated snowfall during the winter season. While small-scale tests were designed of different methods of monitoring the quality and timeliness of snow removal, testing of only one method was able to be performed. The goal remains to conduct further pilot testing in the future to determine and commit to a method, or set of methods, of snow removal monitoring that is effective, safe, and efficient. The design and full execution of this initiative is on hold due to the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic. The effort is expected to be resumed in the winter of 2021-22.

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 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 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 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. 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. A 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 customers 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 customers 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>.