

# Proposed Foxborough Service Pilot

**Need and Opportunity**

*Presented by Town of Foxborough*

**FOXBORO STATION**

**INBOUND TO BOSTON**

**Fiscal Management and Control Board  
July 31, 2017**

**massDOT**  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation



**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

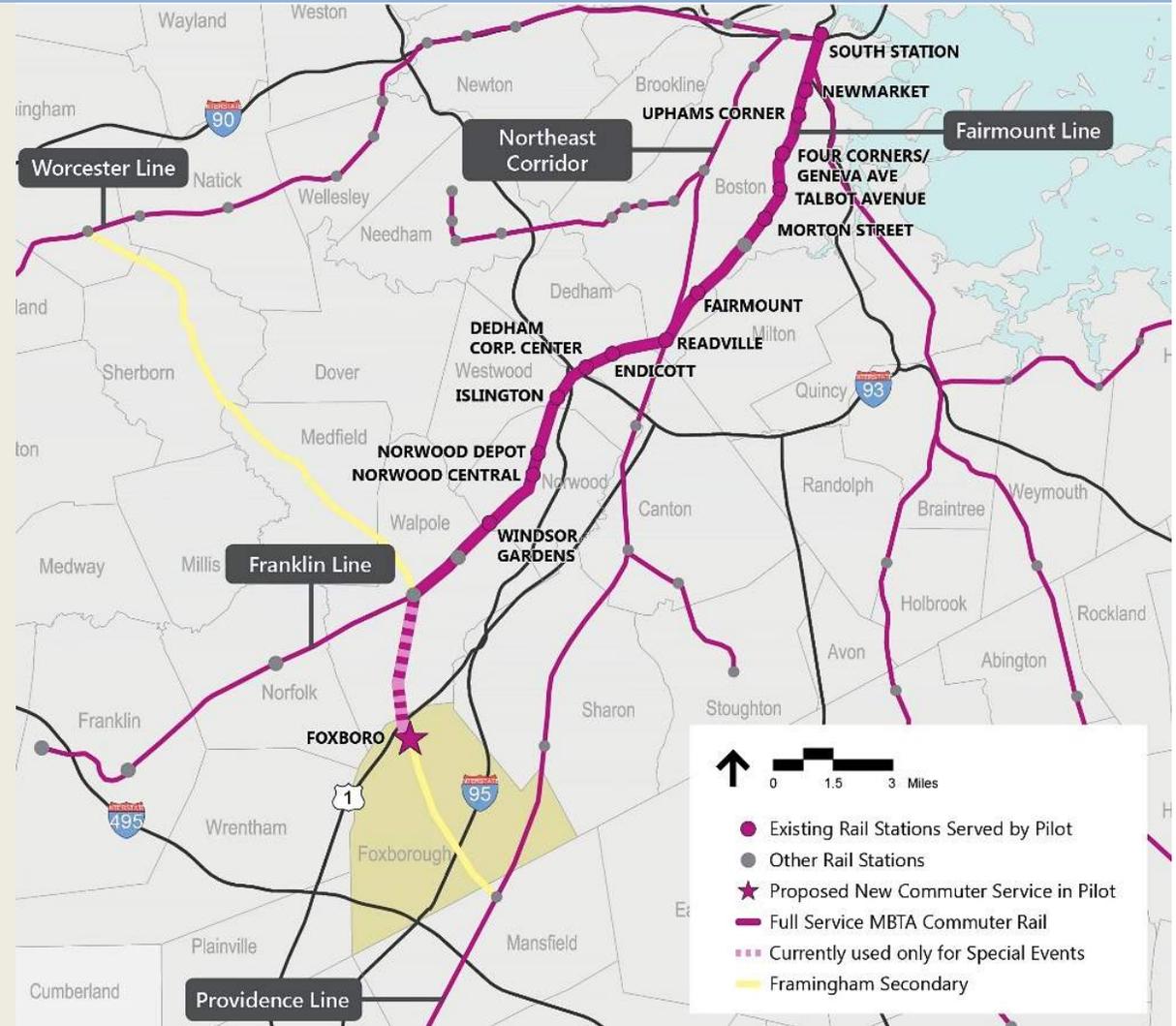
# Why the Foxborough Service Pilot?



- **Transportation options in Foxborough are limited** – choices are to drive to other towns to use MBTA services or drive to Boston, a lengthy and expensive option.
- Foxborough has a train line that exists, but does not have access to the MBTA's system from it. The station and parking are in place. This an **underutilized asset** that could provide great benefits to the region, by improving access to transportation and getting cars off the road.
- There is **local support in the region** for this service – residents, municipalities, businesses, unions
- **Economic development opportunities** in the region are directly tied to the availability of rail, which would support 3M square feet of potential development, creation of 12,000 new jobs in the region, and connect communities to employment opportunities along the line. Area employers cite rail availability as a critical component for hiring.
- The Town is encouraging **last-mile connections** to the stations for improved access and to promote healthy transportation.
- Through a **Public/Private partnership** and the FMCB's consideration of Pilot Projects, the cost of the pilot will be minimized and its successes measured before making a larger capital investment.

# Presentation Overview

- **Need** for Daily Commuter Rail Service to Foxborough
- **Opportunities** for Service Pilot
- Public **Support** of Service Pilot
- **Summary** of Service Pilot Benefits



Proposed Foxborough Service Pilot

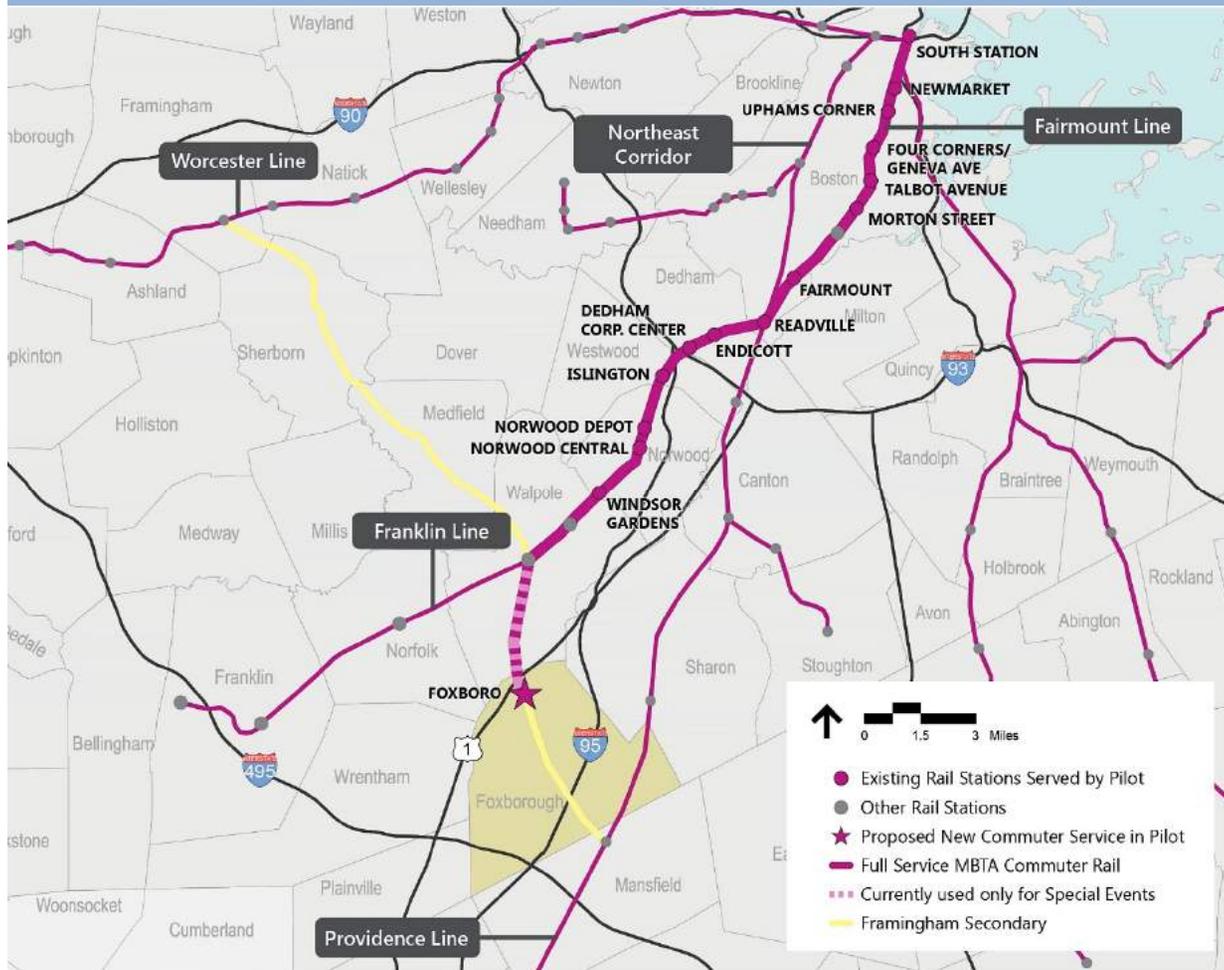
# Need for the Service Pilot

# Transportation Needs

- Regional highways are **heavily congested** during peak periods
  - Drive times for the 22-mile highway commute from Foxborough to Boston range **from 45 minutes to 2 hours** during peak periods.
- **Demand for additional rail services continues to grow** in the region.
  - **Passenger capacity** constraints exist today on trains.
  - **Parking capacity** constraints exist today at station parking lots.



# Previous Studies



- Foxborough has two rail lines operating through its borders, yet is one of the only towns in the region to have a station without the benefit of **regular commuter rail service**.
- Studies\* have shown a **need for additional commuter rail service** to this region to **support access to opportunities**.

\* Sources: MBTA Foxborough Commuter Rail Feasibility Analysis (9/1/2010); I-495/Southwest Regional Commuter Rail and Operations Study (9/28/11); Town of Foxborough Economic Development Master Plan (2013); Town of Foxborough Master Plan (2014); Foxborough Route 1 Economic Development Study (2015); Commonwealth of Massachusetts Secretary Jay Ash FMCB Testimony (2/27/2017)

# Parking Capacity Limited in Region

- Existing town-owned and town-managed lots in the area **are at or near capacity** and **limit parking options** for commuters. Foxboro Station would have a minimum of 500 spaces available to the public to ease this constraint and **encourage modal shift** to rail.
  - “The **demand for parking** at our commuter rail station **has significantly exceeded the amount of spaces we have available**, as a large number of out-of-town commuters attempt to park daily at our commuter rail station.”  
*Frederic E. Turkington, Jr.,  
Town Administrator, Town of Sharon*
  - “We view the proposed Foxborough Pilot as an opportunity to evaluate whether increased commuter rail service to the region, with **ample parking and easy access, will improve conditions at our train station.**”  
*Michael Trowbridge Sr./cc, Chairman,  
Mansfield Board of Selectmen*
  - “At times, I must drive to Boston at peak commuting hours, **sitting in hours of traffic because I cannot conveniently find a parking space**... Access to 500 parking spaces at Gillette Stadium will help alleviate a **daily concern, that I will not be able to find a parking space at Walpole, Sharon, or Mansfield commuter lots, which are more often than not, at capacity.**”  
*Members of New England Regional Council of Carpenters (Walpole and Foxborough Residents)<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Similar language was included in four letters of support submitted by members of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters. Two of the members submitting letters of support are Walpole residents and two are Foxborough residents.



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# Opportunities for Service Pilot

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# Employment Opportunities

Provided by Foxborough Commuter Rail Service

- Commuter rail service would connect Fairmount Line communities to opportunities in Foxborough.
  - **Access to jobs in large and expanding employment center** within the “Economic Development Area” per the Stadium Act of 1999, the “Foxborough Growth District” by EOHEd, and within a region experiencing strong and sustained growth.
  - Existing employment (4,100 FTEs) in over 3M square feet of mixed-use development in corridor – the **largest economic driver in the region.**
  - **Potential last-mile shuttle** coordinated by the Town of Foxborough would connect Foxboro Station to other opportunities throughout the Town.
- Potential to connect employers to strong Boston employee base.
  - According to John Eva, Senior Vice President of Global Pursuits for Schneider Electric, **Schneider Electric requires commuter rail service and is in full support of the Service Pilot.** Schneider anticipates hiring 500-700 new employees within next decade due to mass retirement. **Commuter rail service to Foxborough is critical to attracting future employees.**



# Economic Development Opportunities

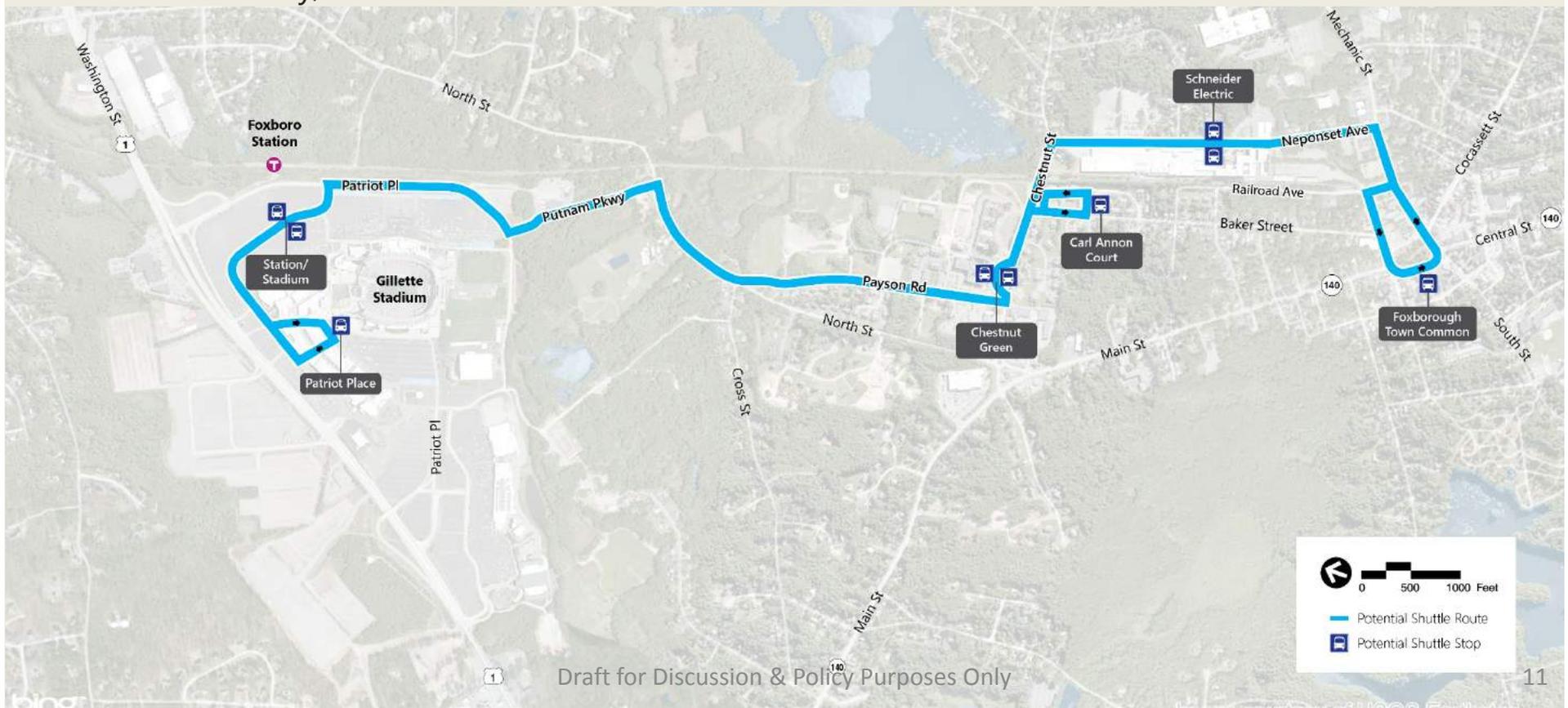
Supported by Available Rail Service

- Since 1999, the Route 1 Corridor has been a priority of the State and Town for economic development:
  - Economic Overlay District established in Foxboro in 1999.
  - Route 1 Corridor designated Growth District by State in 2008.
  - MAPC Foxborough Route 1 Economic Development Study in 2015 stated that it is critical to pursue daily commuter rail service to Foxboro Station, with recommended introduction by the end of 2016.
- *"Foxboro[ugh] represents a significant regional economic development opportunity... **This opportunity is unique in Southeastern Massachusetts, and it is immediate.**"*
  - Secretary Jay Ash, Testimony to FMCB (February 27, 2017)
- **3M square feet** of new development (with additional employment potential of up to **12,000 additional FTEs** in the region and **\$41 million in additional annual state taxes**) is projected if rail access is made available.

# Last-Mile Connection

## Potential Shuttle Route through Town of Foxborough

- Town of Foxborough developing **last-mile shuttle route** coordinated with trains to connect to additional opportunities throughout the Town.
  - Will coordinate with Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA): *“GATRA will be in a position to initiate a local public transit service approved by the Town to connect the commuter rail station with downtown and important developments along Route 1.”*  
– Francis J. Gay, GATRA Administrator



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# Public Support

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# Regional and Municipal Support

- **Supported by area municipalities and regional groups:**
  - Town of Foxborough
  - Town of Mansfield
  - Town of Sharon
  - Town of Franklin
  - GATRA
  - 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership
  - Neponset Valley TMA
  - Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- **750+ individuals supported a petition** posted by the Tri-Town Chamber of Commerce calling on FMCB to approve the Service Pilot.
- Surveys conducted show **strong support for rail service in Foxborough:**
  - 67% (of 250 surveyed residents) support frequent train service to Foxborough (12/31/14).
  - 75% of respondents agree that “adding commuter train service would add convenience and promote economic development in that area” (10/18/11).
  - 75% of 327 responders voted yes to the question “Should the MBTA proceed with a pilot plan for daily commuter rail service to Gillette Stadium?” (Boston Globe South, 12/30/16).

# Business Support

- **Supported by business groups:**

- Foxborough Economic Development Committee
- Foxborough Route 1 Business Association
- Wrentham Economic Development Commission
- Tri-Town Chamber of Commerce
- Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce
- United Regional Chamber of Commerce

- **Supported by area employers:**

- Christmas Tree Shops
- Colwen Hotels / XSS Hotels
- Davio's Northern Italian Steakhouse
- Dorel Juvenile Group
- Dunkin Donuts
- Renaissance
- Schneider Electric
- The Kraft Group
- Toby Keith's
- Waste Management of Mass, Inc.



- **Supported by trade unions:**

- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 103
- New England Regional Council of Carpenters
- International Association of Iron Workers

- **Private contributions during Service Pilot:**

- Use of 500 privately owned and operated parking spaces
- Maintain existing average commuter rail operating subsidy per passenger
- Maintenance of parking and Foxboro Station
- Marketing by Town and businesses prior to initiation of Service Pilot to generate ridership early in the Service Pilot

# Coordination Efforts

- Local
  - Foxborough Board of Selectmen voted **4-1 to support the Service Pilot.**
  - Foxborough Economic Development Committee voted **9-0 to support the Service Pilot.**
  - During Foxborough's 2014 Master Plan effort, **67%** of the weekly poll respondents **avored increasing train service to Foxborough.** Through the ongoing Master Planning process, it was determined that many Foxborough residents view Route 1 as an **opportunity to strengthen the Town's tax base.**
- Regional
  - Coordinated with Walpole, Mansfield, Sharon, City of Boston, and Fairmount Indigo Transit Coalition to understand how service can be most beneficial to region.
  - Can continue to coordinate with regional groups prior to and during Service Pilot.
- Findings
  - Service supported by regions that would benefit from the service.
  - Potential for access to jobs and services was considered a benefit.
  - The Town of Walpole expressed concerns about the increased volume of trains in Walpole.
  - Concerns were expressed by Fairmount Line Corridor and City of Boston groups related to the long-standing desire to increase service frequency and reliability of the line.

Proposed Foxborough Service Pilot

# Summary of Benefits



# Summary of Service Pilot Benefits

- Utilizes **existing rail and station infrastructure** to support Service Pilot and provides additional transportation options in the region.
- **Provides 500 parking spaces** to alleviate parking capacity constraints at area stations and diverts commuters from cars to rail.
- Increases **access to employment** and other opportunities (including through last-mile connections).
- Supports **economic development** and growth in Foxborough and the region.
- Provides **private contributions** to maintain existing operating subsidy per passenger for period of Service Pilot.

