

ALTERNATIVE 3

About Rail Vision

Rail Vision identifies cost-effective strategies to transform the Commuter Rail into a system that better supports improved mobility and economic competitiveness in Greater Boston. The Rail Vision team is evaluating the costs and benefits of 7 possible service alternatives.

Alternative 3: Regional Rail to Key Stations (Electric)



Regional Rail is high-frequency service to **key stations**.* This alternative uses self-powered electric trains known as electric multiple units (EMUs) that operate more like our current subway trains. Service to non-key stations would be equal to or better than current levels.

***Key stations** are in gateway cities, dense areas outside central Boston, and/or locations that provide regional access and transit connectivity.

Benefits

- **Faster, more frequent service:** EMUs accelerate and decelerate faster than diesel locomotives, so travel times between stations are shorter, and trains can run closer together
- **Reduced vehicle commutes:** People won't need to travel as far for access to fast, frequent, direct service to downtown Boston
- **Reduced emissions:** The current system relies on diesel locomotives, electrification reduces overall emissions

Trade-offs

- Service will not change at stations that aren't key stations, and those key stations may become more crowded
- Significant capital investment required for electrification
- System electrification requires removing trees alongside routes
- Electric trains may not be as reliable in inclement weather

Service Features

Frequency

- Every 15 minutes to and from key stations and downtown Boston, all day
- Every 30 minutes to and from non-key stations and downtown Boston during peak service
- Every hour to and from non-key stations during off-peak service

Connections

- On the Greenbush and Kingston lines, some trains would require a transfer at Braintree for service to downtown Boston
- More frequent connections between Fairmount and Franklin lines

Accessibility

All key stations would be fully accessible with **high-level boarding platforms**.*

***High-level platforms** enable level boarding at every door, which improves accessibility and reduces overall boarding time for all customers.

****Inner core stations** are located in dense urban environments up to 15 miles from downtown Boston. Kingston/Plymouth, Middleborough/Lakeville, and Greenbush lines do not receive urban rail service due to the nearby Red Line.

Electrification

All Commuter Rail lines would be electrified. EMUs would be in operation throughout the system, with shorter trains in the **inner core**** and longer trains for long-distance trips.

Expansion

- **South Station Expansion:** Allow for more trains at the station during the peak periods.
- **South Coast Rail Full Build:** Extend Stoughton Line to Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford
- Shuttle service every 15 minutes on the Grand Junction route (currently not in operation), connecting North Station to the future West Station through the MIT/Kendall neighborhood

Other Rail Vision Alternatives

Alternative 3 is just 1 of the 7 proposed futures for the Commuter Rail. Download the other alternatives below, or learn more at mbta.com/railvision.

Alternative 1

Alternative 4

Alternative 7

Alternative 2

Alternative 5

Alternative 3

Alternative 6