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# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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**BRIAN P. MURPHY**

Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development

## Transit Advisory Committee Meeting

January 8, 2014 from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Avenue

### Final Agenda

- 5:30 PM      Committee updates
- Terry Smith has moved on from the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce so will no longer be an official member of the committee.
  - Miriam Cooper has resigned from the committee because of the need to attend to other commitments, though she indicated she is willing to continue to provide feedback to the committee's work.
  - The "Low income housing representative" position remains unfilled.
- Handouts: Current committee schedule
- 5:40 PM      Workshop: Developing planning objectives for Goal 3: Efficiency.  
Goal 3: Efficiency. Improve efficiency of transit trips, with travel times being equal to or less than driving.  
*Jeff Rosenblum, Environmental & Transportation Planning, CDD, Cambridge*
- 6:45 PM      Presentation: MBTA's Key Bus Route Improvement Program  
*Erik Scheier, Project Director for Operations, MBTA*  
The goal of the program is to improve the overall quality of service for customers on these Key Bus Routes by reducing trip times, enhancing customer comfort, convenience, safety and accessibility, and making the bus service more reliable and cost-effective. The 15 routes to be improved are: 1, 15, 22, 23, 28, 32, 39, 57, 66, 71, 73, 77, 111, 116, and 117.
- Enhance accessibility for all customers including seniors / persons with disabilities
  - Improve bus service reliability with reduced "bus bunching"
  - Enable faster service with fewer delays and reduced overall trip times
  - Provide better passenger amenities with shelters, benches, signage, trash barrels
- Handouts: [Key Bus Routes Map](#)  
Globe: "[MBTA to improve 15 heavily used bus routes.](#)" 6/18/2013  
[City Council Response re: #1 bus.](#) 09/18/2013
- 7:20 PM      Public comments
- 7:30 PM      ADJOURN

### Upcoming meetings (generally the first Wednesday of each month):

2014: Jan. 8\*, Feb. 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4, Sept 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5, Dec. 3

\* indicates a deviation from the first Wednesday of the month.

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# Transit Advisory Committee Schedule updated 12/2/2013

Objectives will be developed over the next seven months in collaboration with the Advisory Committee. The dates below indicate tentative dates the Advisory Committee will focus on developing objectives for each goal. Objectives are specific actions that support attainment of the associated goal. Objectives should be tangible, measurable, and shorter-term.

Meeting date	<b>Goal:</b> What general actions and intentions do we want to take? These should be relatively general and are outcomes we want to see as a result of our efforts.
<i>December 4, 2013</i>	<b>Goal 5: Usability.</b> Improve access, including interconnectivity between transit and other modes (e.g., walking and biking), accessibility for persons with disabilities or mobility impairments, safety, convenience, human-centered designed, wayfinding, and real-time service information.
<i>January 8, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 3: Efficiency.</b> Improve efficiency of transit trips, with travel times being equal to or less than driving.
<i>February 5, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 1: Mobility.</b> Ensure that the transit system provides for the mobility needs of those who live, work, and play in Cambridge, including origin/destination work trips, school trips, all other trip purposes, and the future regional growth vision and development potential.
<i>March 5, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 4: Expansion.</b> Expand the capacity of transit, including more capacity and frequency on existing routes as well as the addition of new routes.
<i>April 2, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 2: Funding.</b> Ensure that state and regional planning ensures that our transit system is adequately funded, is affordable, and has the regional common good at its core.
<i>May 7, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 6: Marketing for Mode Shift.</b> Use marketing with a focus on “social marketing,” such as CitySmart, to achieve mode shift in many demographics across Cambridge.
<i>June 4, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 7: Resiliency.</b> Ensure the transit system is resilient to the effects of climate change. Transit also plays a role in reducing transportation’s contributions to climate change.
<i>September 3, 2014</i>	<b>Goal 8: Public Participation and Support.</b> Engage the public in the planning process, inform the public about the issues, and gain support from the public for better transit service.

# MBTA to improve 15 heavily used bus routes

By Matt Rocheleau | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JUNE 18, 2013



The MBTA says it will make its 15 busiest bus routes faster, more reliable, and more accessible through a series of changes this summer, which include relocating some stops and eliminating others.

Construction on some routes will begin this week, and upgrades on all affected routes are expected to be made by the end of August, officials said Monday.

Buses on the routes carry about 40 percent of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's bus passengers. Buses on those routes run more often than those on other routes to serve high-density corridors, primarily in Boston but also stretching to Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Newton, Revere, and Watertown.

The T hopes to make trips on each route 10 to 15 percent faster by moving some stops and closing others. The goal is for there to be a stop every 750 to 1,320 feet, or four to seven stops per mile. Currently, many stops are as close as 200 feet apart.

The authority also hopes to run more reliable bus service by better adhering to scheduling and trying to reduce "bunching," when two or more buses travel too close to each other.

More amenities, including new bus shelters at 85 stops, as well as benches and trash barrels, will be installed. Some sidewalks will be improved, and some curb extensions will be built.

New signs and pavement markings will be installed to provide better information about the route and to keep drivers from stopping or parking at bus stops, officials said.

Traffic-signal improvements are expected on some routes.

The work will include bringing bus stops into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act to improve accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities. In some cases, that will mean lengthening the bus stop area

Funding includes about \$7 million in federal stimulus money and \$3 million from the US Department of Transportation.

Over the past two years, more than 50 public meetings were held about the bus route improvement plan.

"The MBTA is looking forward to improving the quality of amenities and service on some of our most utilized services," general manager Beverly Scott said in a statement Monday. "This aggressive and ambitious project will reduce trip times, enhance customer comfort, accessibility, convenience and safety, and make service more reliable and cost-effective."

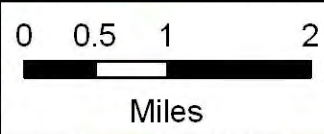
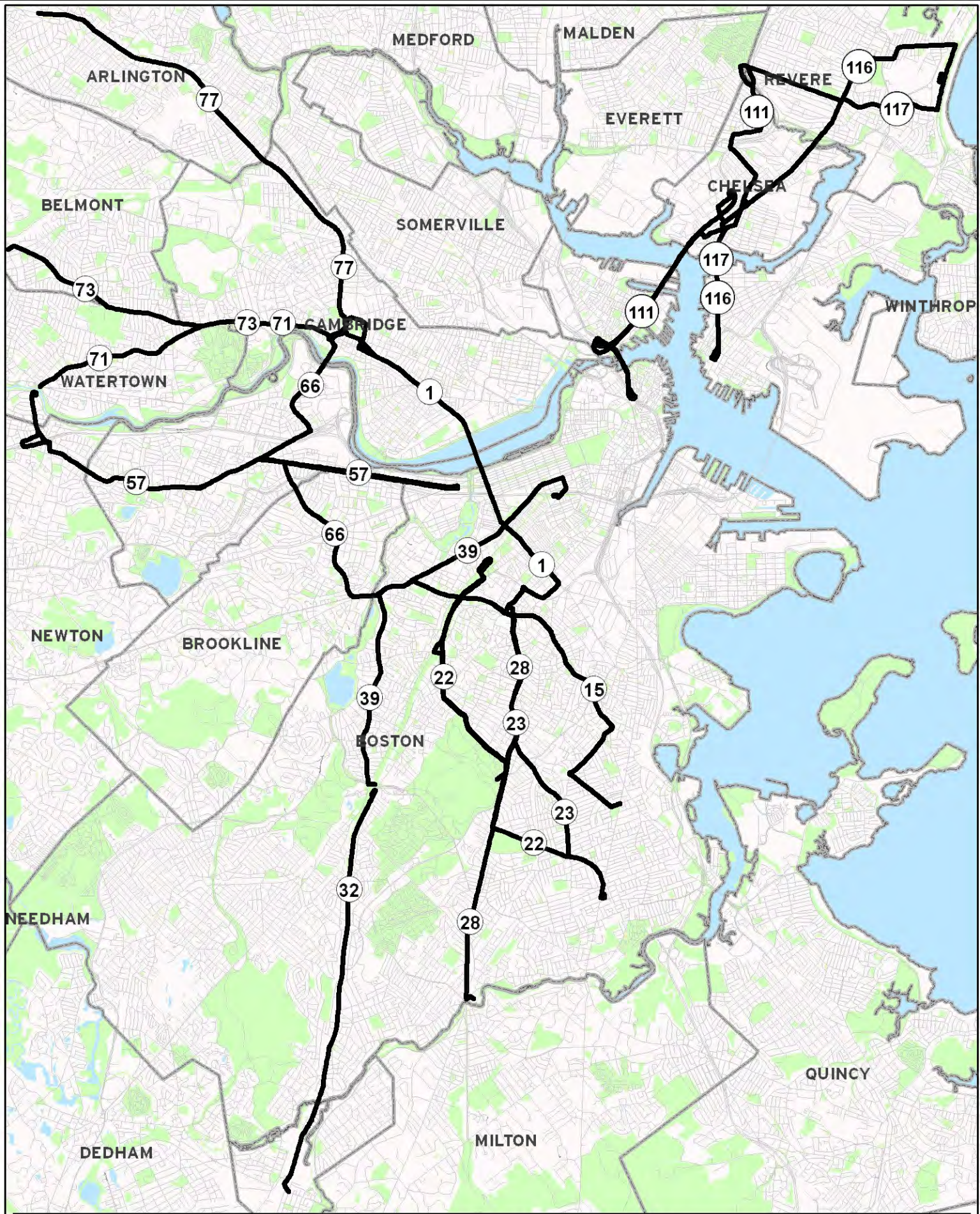
A list of the 15 routes and projected timelines for construction are as follows. The schedules are subject to change, T officials said.

Route 1 – July 1st – July 25th  
 Route 15 – June 24th – July 12th  
 Route 22 – June 17th – July 17th  
 Route 23 – June 17th – July  
 Route 28 – June 17th – August 30th

Route 32 – June 24th – August 8th  
 Route 39 – July – August  
 Route 57 – July 15th – August 30th  
 Route 66 – June 24th – August 1st  
 Route 71 – August 1st – August 30th

Route 73 – August 1st – August 30th  
 Route 77 – July 25th – August 26th  
 Route 111 – August 9th – August 30th  
 Route 116 – July 19th – August 30th  
 Route 117 – July 19th – August 30th

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# MBTA Key Bus Route Improvement Program



**HNTB**



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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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BRIAN MURPHY  
Assistant  
City Manager for  
Community Development

To: Richard C. Rossi, City Manager

From: Brian Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development  
Department

Date: September 18, 2013

Re: Council Order O-21 dated July 29, 2013 regarding MBTA Number 1 bus.

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Public transit is critical to the livability and economic vitality of Cambridge. 27% of all Cambridge residents rely on transit as their primary means of commuting to work. There are 26 bus routes that are in or pass through Cambridge, carrying about 85,000 riders per typical weekday. The #1 is the fourth most utilized MBTA bus route in the entire system and serves as a vital link between places of interest in Cambridge and Boston including workplaces, schools, health centers, libraries, religious institutions and retail. A strong multi-modal transportation network makes jobs more accessible and labor markets more flexible for companies seeking workers with specialized skills as well as reduces traffic congestion and air pollutants including greenhouse gases.

Launched in January 2011, the MBTA's Key Bus Route Improvement Program seeks to improve the quality of service for customers using the 15 busiest bus routes, including the #1 bus. The program identifies opportunities to enhance reliability and customer satisfaction through the use of bus stop consolidation, curb extensions, accessibility enhancements, improved bus stop amenities, and potentially transit signal priority. Bus stop consolidation shortens trip times, improves service reliability, minimizes "stop & go," allows the MBTA to focus on making the remaining stops accessible and comfortable using shelters, benches, signage and trash receptacles, and provides for additional parking spaces. The City of Cambridge has been a partner with the MBTA in this program.

The MBTA recommends having four to seven bus stops per mile, which is equivalent to one stop every 750 to 1,320 feet. The average walking time for this distance is four to six minutes. The MBTA recommendation is commensurate with the minimum stop spacing guidelines set by other major cities in the US. Over the course of many decades, additional bus stops in the MBTA system have been added to routes one by one without taking into consideration the entire route. The Key Bus Route Improvement Program provides us with the opportunity to take a holistic look at an entire bus line to determine more optimal location and spacing of stops, and to improve amenities and accessibility at the stops.

The MBTA engaged in a public process to engage stakeholders about the program and solicit feedback. In 2011, public meetings about the #1 bus were held in Cambridge on January 18 and June 14 and in Boston on January 24, March 7, and

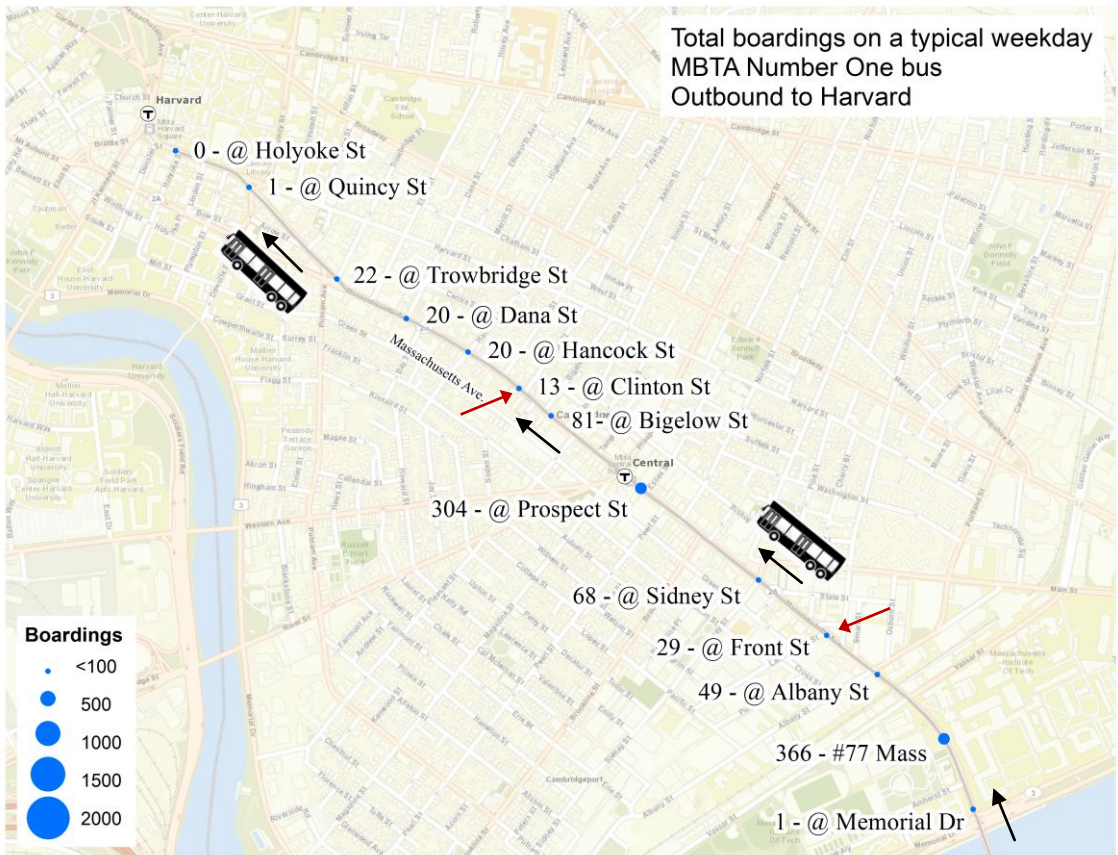
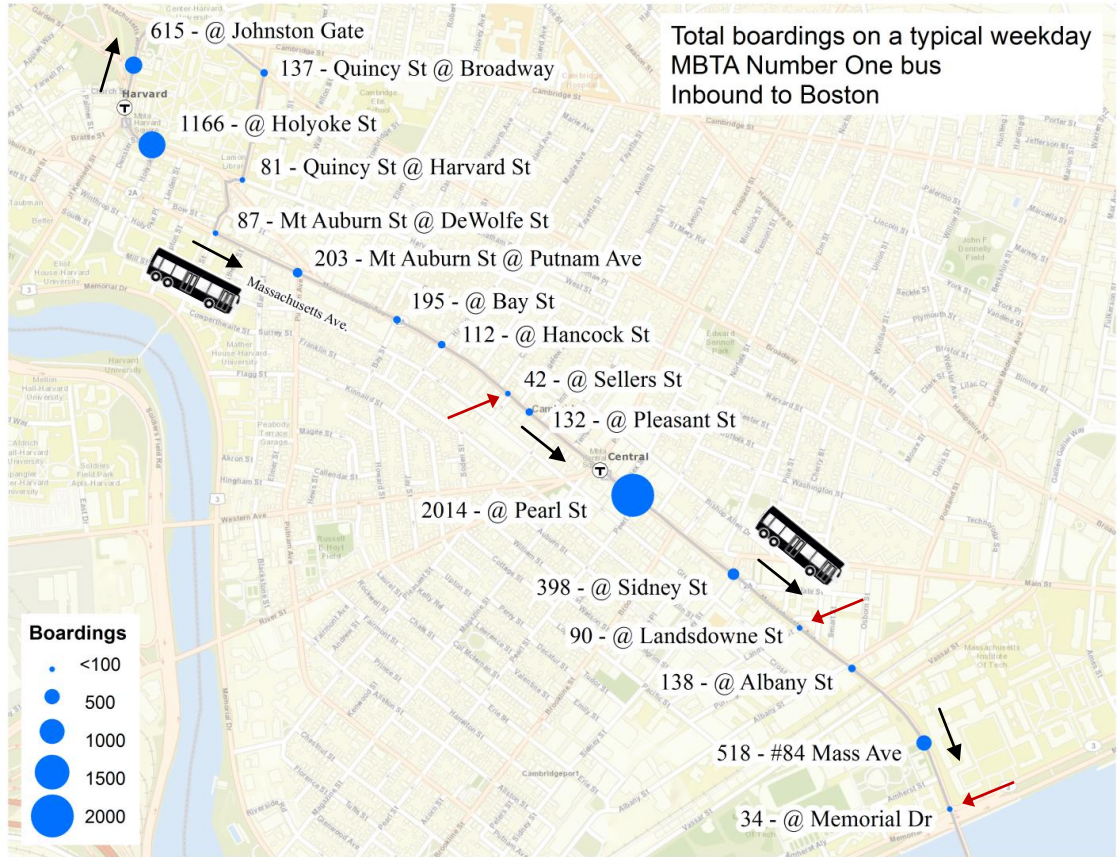
June 13. After consulting riders, community representatives and other stakeholders, the MBTA developed an improvement plan for the #1 bus that includes the elimination of six stops in Cambridge. In addition, a shelter, three benches, three trash receptacles, and 14 front and rear signs to stops will be added along the route in Cambridge. Subsequently, as a result of a more in-depth demographic analysis conducted on the stops being proposed for elimination, it was determined that the out-bound stop at Dana Street would remain because of the 83-bed Cambridge Rehabilitation & Nursing Center located around the corner. The other five stops will still be removed.

Attached are maps showing current #1 stop locations in Cambridge in the inbound and outbound directions and the number of boardings and people getting off on a typical weekday at each stop. The dot size shows the relative boardings visually. The stops planned for elimination are shown with red arrows and have among the lowest number of boardings per day, one of them serving only 13 riders per day. Ridership data shown is from 2009 and estimated to be increasing at 2% per year.

As an example of suboptimal stop spacing, the #1 bus traveling inbound toward Boston currently has bus stop locations along Massachusetts Ave. both at Sellers St. and at Pleasant St., which are only 260 feet apart (a walking time of less than one minute). Eliminating one of these stops decreases trip times by reducing time merging in and out of traffic. By removing unnecessary stops along the full route, the MBTA expects to see a 5-15% reduction in overall trip time. Four other stops that are being eliminated in Cambridge are: inbound: Mass. Ave. at Landsdowne St. and Mass. Ave. at Memorial Dr.; outbound: Mass. Ave. at Front St., Mass. Ave. at Clinton St. With these stops removed, the average distance between stops in Cambridge will be 925 feet, with no bus stops further than 1,350 feet apart. The additional walk time for each affected customer will be at most three minutes, and in most cases less.

In addition to the distance between stops, there are other important factors that influence the decision to move or eliminate a stop: ridership, proximity to places of interest, access for more vulnerable and transit dependent riders, traffic congestion, parking impacts, and potential to add amenities. Because the #1 is such an integral part of the public transit network of Cambridge, care must be taken to make sure that it is fully accessible to all people who use it, especially those who may have limited mobility, such as the elderly or disabled.

Thousands of riders in Cambridge and Boston rely on the #1 bus daily. These riders depend on the #1 to be accessible, predictable, safe and comfortable. The MBTA has been working closely with the City of Cambridge to ensure that stops are consolidated in a way that balances the needs of all constituencies, improving the overall quality of service, serving the needs of our existing customers, and also attracting new transit riders. The city of Cambridge is in full support of these final recommendations of the Key Bus Route Improvement Program.



IN CITY COUNCIL

July 29, 2013

COUNCILLOR REEVES

- WHEREAS: The #1 MBTA bus is a very important route connecting Harvard Square with Boston; and
- WHEREAS: Many elderly and disabled people rely on this bus for daily transportation, including picking up necessities such as food, medical appointments, and prescriptions; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby requested to set up a committee to work with the MBTA to ensure that the MBTA will continue to use all of the stops along the route and not eliminate any stops.

In City Council July 29, 2013  
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.  
Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-  
Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk