



Better  
**Bus**  
Project

Making transit  
better together

# Bus Network Redesign (BNR) Update to the Cambridge Transit Advisory Council

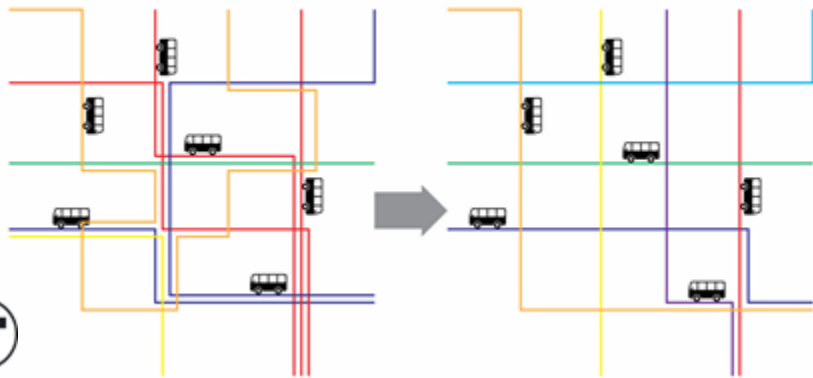
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May 2, 2024



## What is Bus Network Redesign?

A complete re-imagining of the MBTA's bus network to better reflect the travel needs of the region and create a better experience for current and future bus riders.



## Why are we doing this?

The region has changed.

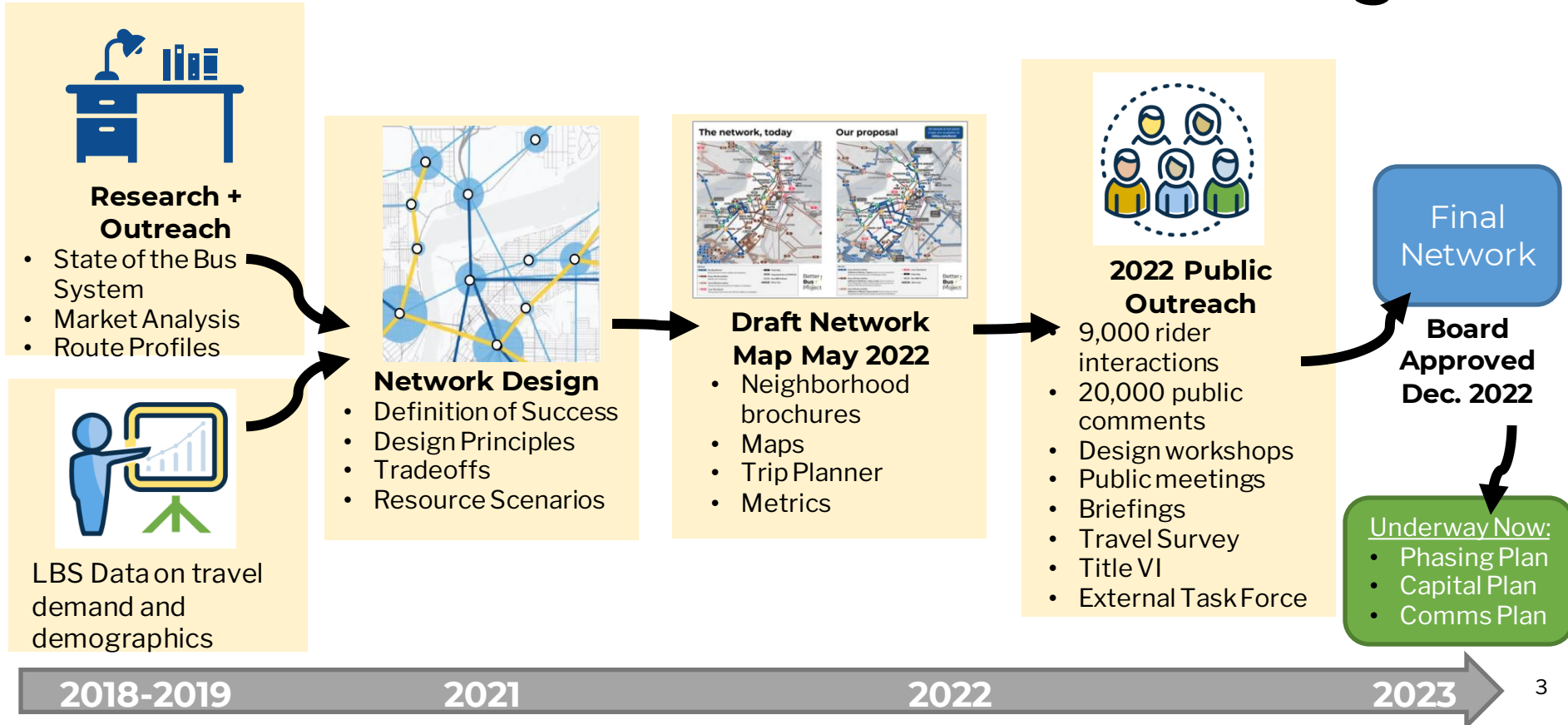
But our bus network has not changed with it.

Transit is essential to the region's economy. And the bus serves our most transit-dependent populations.

However, there isn't enough frequent service when people need it, and the network is difficult to understand due to route variations/deviations.

**So it's essential that our bus network changes.**

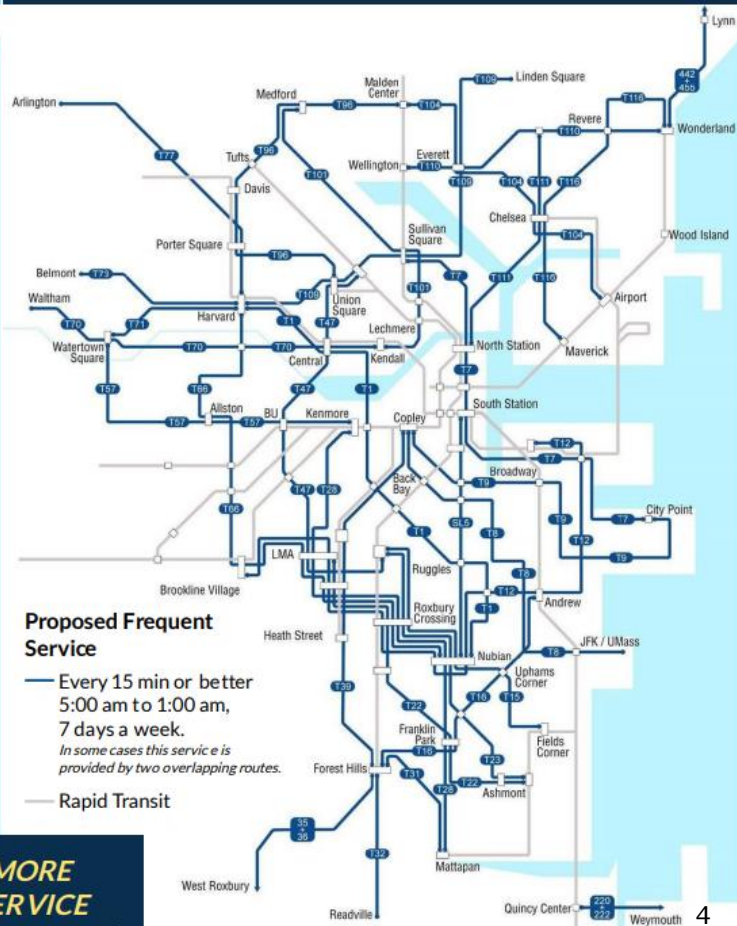
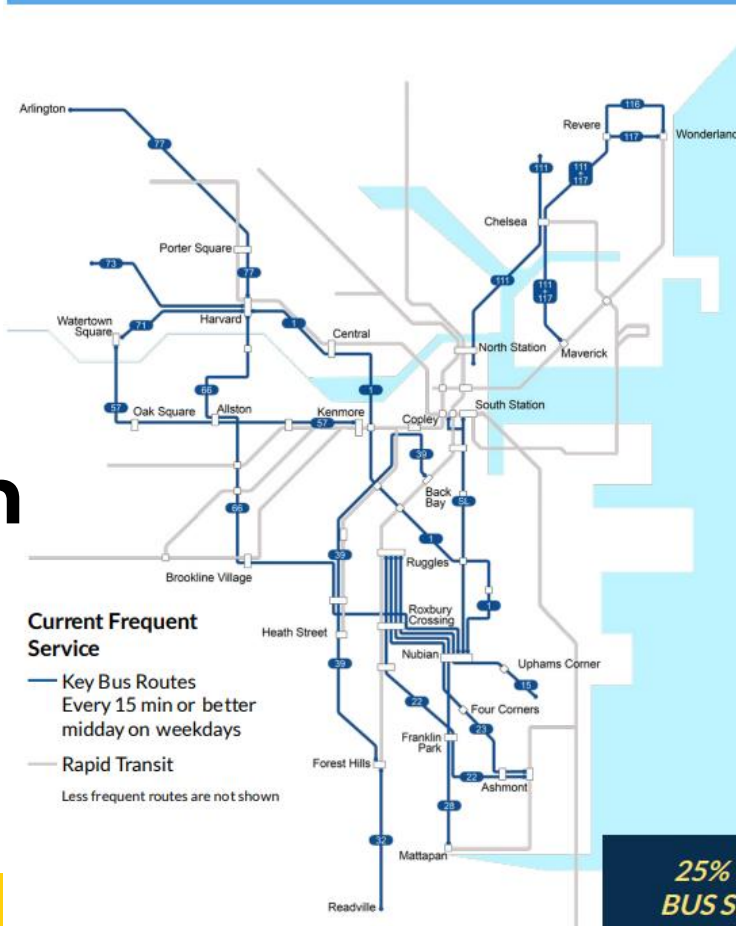
# What Went Into Bus Network Redesign



## CURRENT HIGH FREQUENCY NETWORK

## NEW HIGH FREQUENCY NETWORK

# Bus Network Redesign



**25% MORE  
BUS SERVICE  
across the network**

*Only frequent service shown*

# Preparations Underway to Improve Bus Service

## Tactical Plans



Created Transit Priority Vision



Mapped All Capital Needs



Wrote Communications Playbook

## Signage + Maps



Replacing Outdated Signs



Designing Better Signs + Maps

## Facilities



Surveying Bus Stop Conditions



Building Operator Restrooms



Expanding Layover Locations



Partnering with Municipalities

# Bus Operator Headcount Is Still Trending Positively

## GOALS



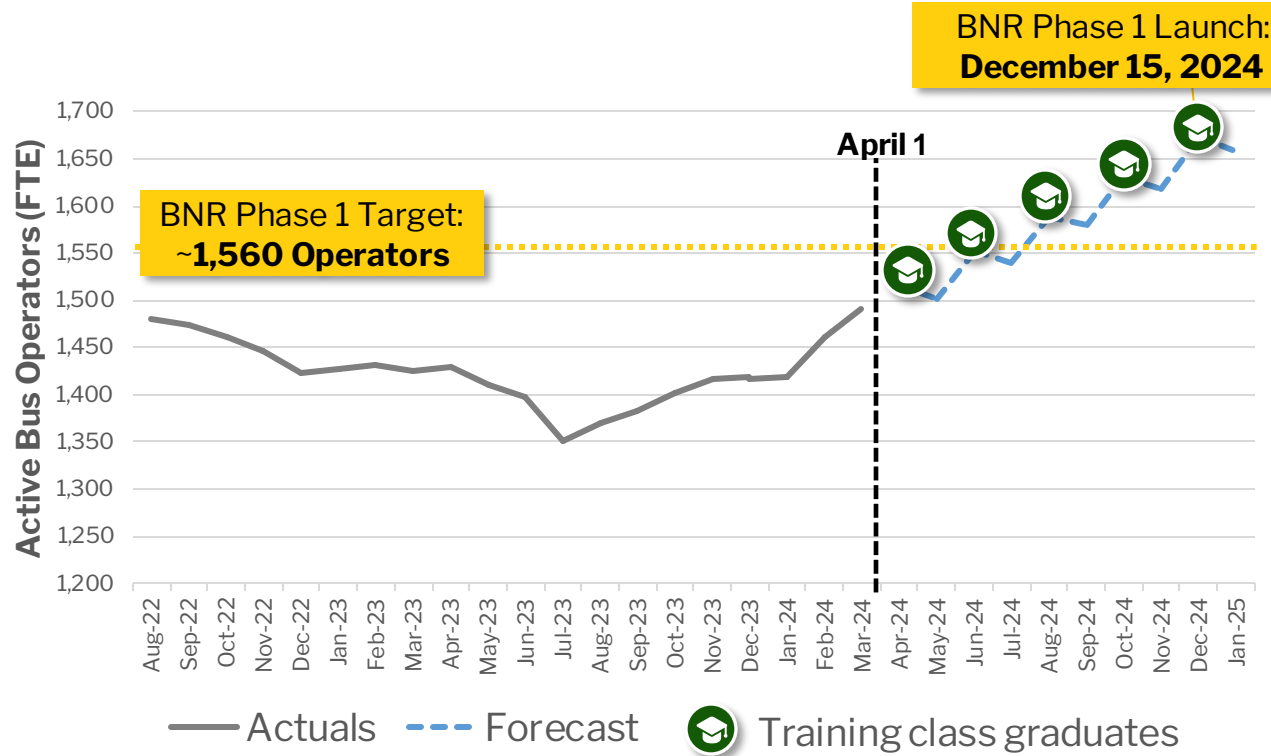
Rebuild  
extraboard



Restore  
service



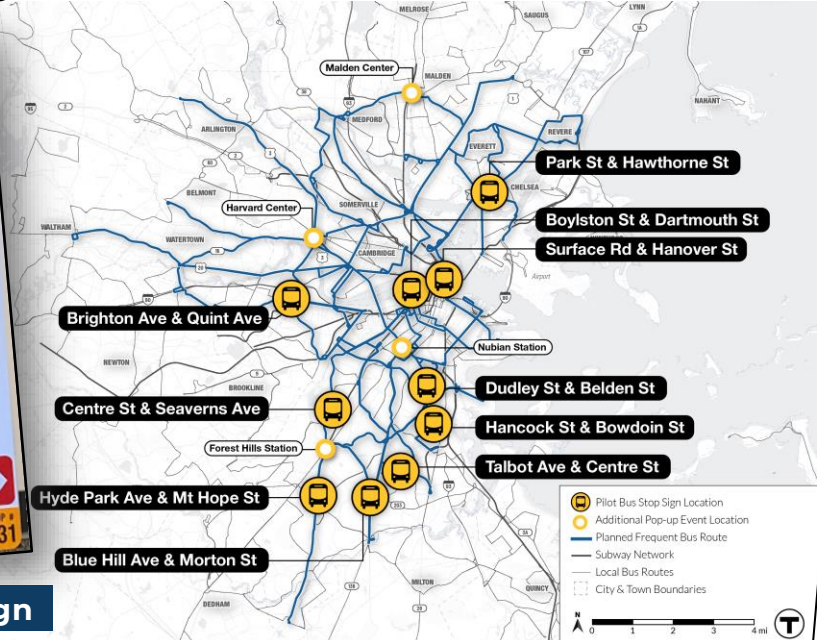
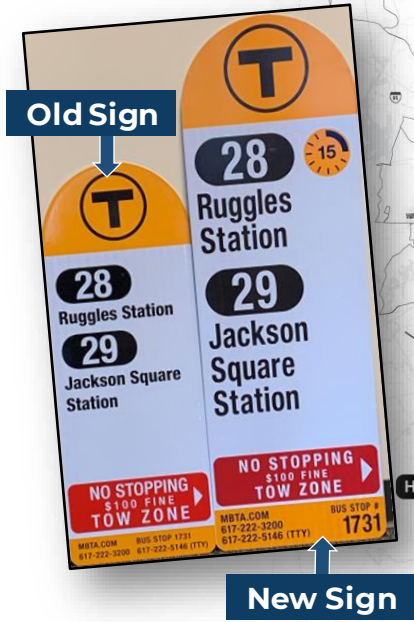
Decrease  
dropped trips





# We Are Piloting New Signs

Launch: Spring 2024



Multilingual survey open through May 3!

**Better Bus Project**  
Making transit better together

## Bus Stop Sign Design Pilot

**We're testing a new bus stop sign design!**  
 As part of the Bus Network Redesign, the MBTA is testing a new bus stop sign design at various locations. The new signs are wider and double sided with larger text and numbers to make them easier to read. Additionally, they feature a yellow clock symbol next to frequent bus routes that run every 15 minutes or better.

**Here's what is changing:**

- ← New symbol for frequent bus routes
- ← Larger, easier-to-read text sizes (2")
- ← Wider sign (14")
- ← Double-sided

**We want your feedback!**  
 Tell us what you think by taking a quick survey between April 8 and May 3. Your input will help us finalize the design. For questions or comments, email [publicengagement@mbta.com](mailto:publicengagement@mbta.com).

**Take the survey now!**  
[bit.ly/bussignsurvey](https://bit.ly/bussignsurvey)  
 or text "Bus" to 781-916-8067

Learn more at [mbta.com/bussigns](https://mbta.com/bussigns) and check out other Better Bus Project initiatives at [mbta.com/betterbus](https://mbta.com/betterbus)

**Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority**

# Schedule for Phase 2+ is in the Works

## Phase 2

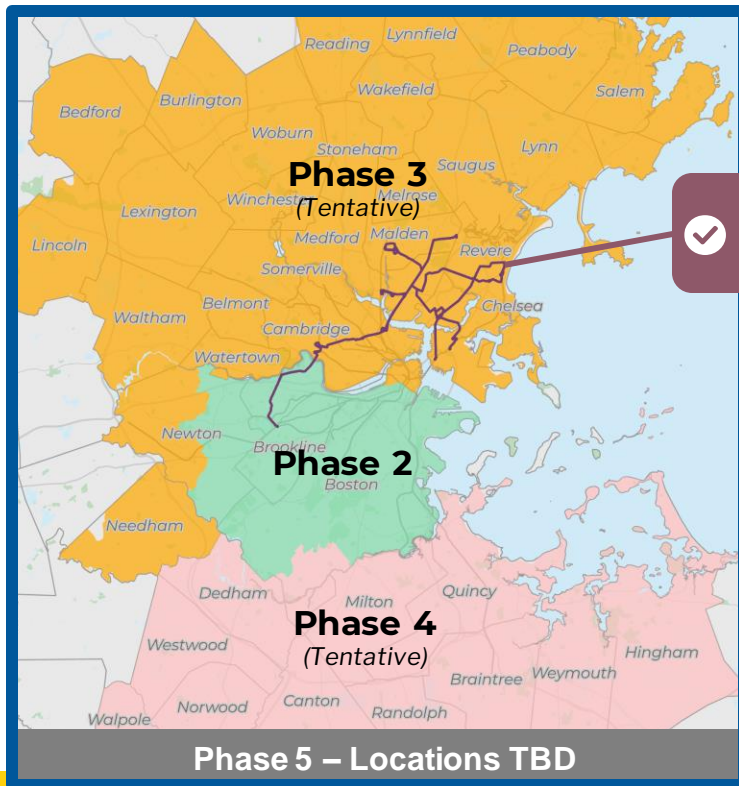
**Location:** Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and surrounding neighborhoods.

**Status:** Identifying capital needs for Phase 2, and bundling based on geography and service dependencies.

## Phases 3-5

**Location:** Very conceptual, with intent to alternate north/south sides. Some changes depend on infrastructure changes by others.

**Status:** Preliminary planning.







✓ Phase 1 routes

Launching December 2024

Phase 5 – Locations TBD



# Communications Playbook Timeline

|  6-9 Months Ahead<br><b>Planning</b>   |  3-6 Months Ahead<br><b>Awareness</b>  |  1-3 Months Ahead<br><b>Pre-Launch</b>  |  1 Month Before & After<br><b>Launch</b>  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Coordination with MBTA stakeholders</p> <p>Solicit outreach strategies from community and grassroots partners</p> <p>Development of community partner inventory</p> <p>Creation of messaging guidelines and templates</p> | <p>Website information available</p> <p>Community partner engagement</p> <p>Prepare materials for outreach</p> <p>Finalize schedule of in-person meetings and outreach</p> <p>Begin social media and external marketing</p> | <p>Distribute community information toolkits</p> <p>Continue coordination with community partners</p> <p>Station and bus stop signage installation</p> <p>Begin operator engagement and education</p> <p>Provide information and present at community meetings</p> | <p>Complete signage installation at stops and stations</p> <p>Service advisory installation</p> <p>Begin digital communication directly to riders</p> <p>Continue community meetings</p> <p>On-street and station outreach</p> |

**Internal framework for consistent communication to riders, operators, and communities about each phase**

- Community-Based Organization Engagement
- Community Meeting & Events
- Bus Operator In-reach
- Street Team Ambassadors
- "Look and Feel," common vocabulary
- Communicating "Frequent Routes" across all touchpoints and channels

# BNR Phase 1 Set to Begin December 2024

## 4 new Frequent routes, all day, every day

- **60% increase** in service over today on five routes\*
- More consistent schedules
- Expanding snow removal



✓ New connections from Malden and Everett to Airport and Harvard

✓ 6 new fully accessible bus stop pairs

✓ Better bus stop signs and a new bus network map

✓ Easy transfer experience on Broadway in Revere

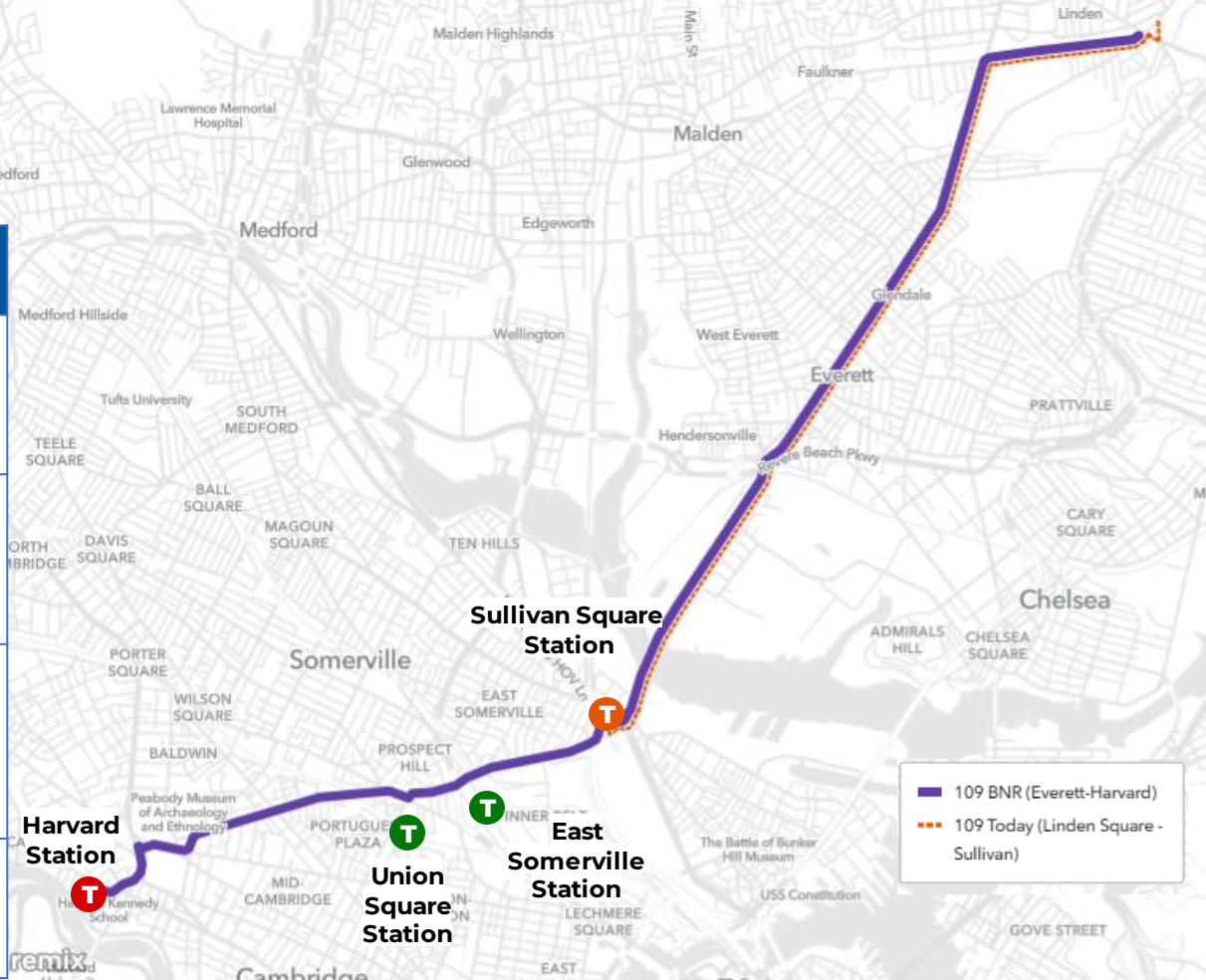
✓ Expanding operator restroom access

✓ Improving operator schedules

\* Approximate change vs. Winter 2023, subject to change as runtimes are refined

# Route 109

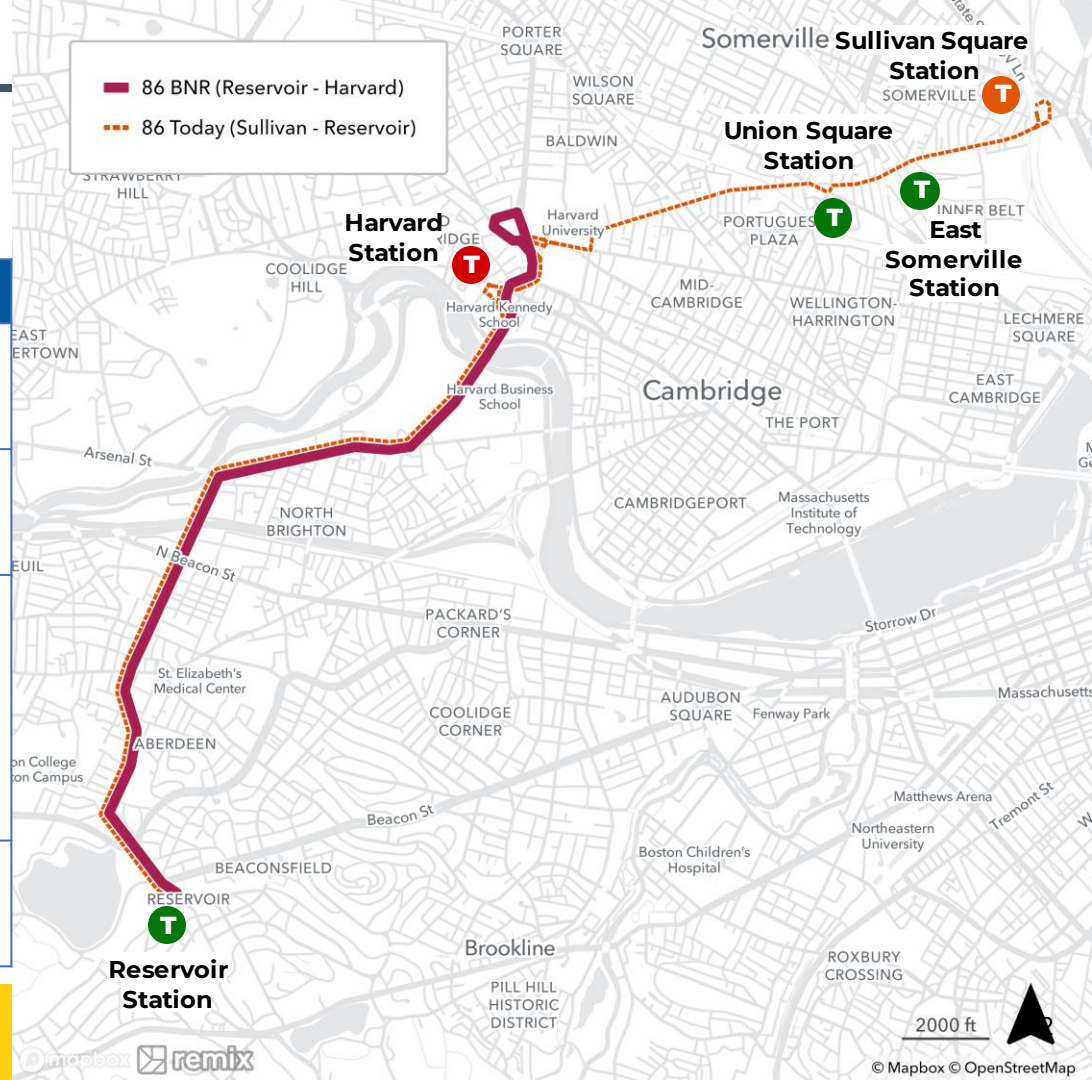
|                                 | 109 Today                               | 109 BNR   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Frequency</b>                | 20 mins (peak)<br>30-45 mins (off-peak) | <u>15 mins or better</u> ,<br>7 days a week                               |
| <b>Rail Connections</b>         | Orange Line                             | Orange Line,<br>Green Line,<br>Red Line                                   |
| <b>Cities Served</b>            | Malden,<br>Everett,<br>Boston           | Malden,<br>Everett,<br>Boston,<br><u>Cambridge</u> ,<br><u>Somerville</u> |
| <b>Change in Service-Hours*</b> | N/A                                     | <u>+234%</u>  |



\* Approximate change vs. Fall 2023, subject to change as schedules are refined to address crowding or on-time performance.

# Route 86

|                                 | 86 Today   | 86 BNR   |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Frequency</b>                | 12 mins (peak)<br>30-45 mins (off-peak)  | 16 mins (peak)<br><u>22-29 mins (off-peak)</u>       |
| <b>Rail Connections</b>         | <u>Orange Line</u> ,<br>Green Line, Red Line   | Green Line, Red Line                                 |
| <b>Cities Served</b>            | Boston ( <u>Charlestown</u> , Allston, Brighton), <u>Somerville</u> , Cambridge, Brookline | Boston (Allston, Brighton), Cambridge, Brookline     |
| <b>Change in Service-Hours*</b> | N/A  | <u>-31%</u><br>(Service hours per mile: <u>+9%</u> ) |



\* Approximate change vs. Fall 2023, subject to change as schedules are refined to address crowding or on-time performance.

# What it takes to deliver new Frequent service

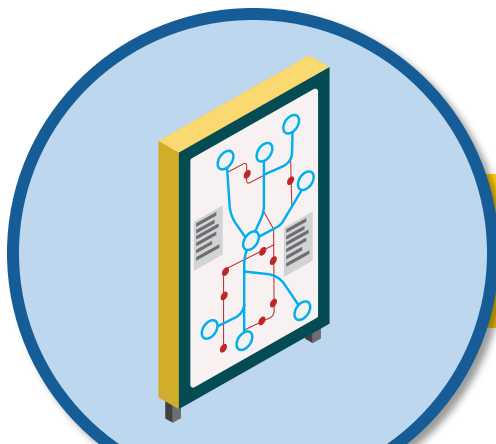
The Basics



Support Functions



Enhanced Speed & Reliability



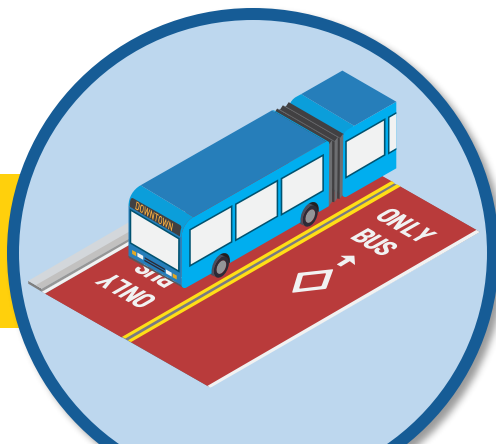
## Service Changes

Bus Operators  
New Route | New Schedule



## Capital Projects

Passenger Transfer Facilities  
Layover Facilities | New Stops  
Berthing | Operator Restrooms

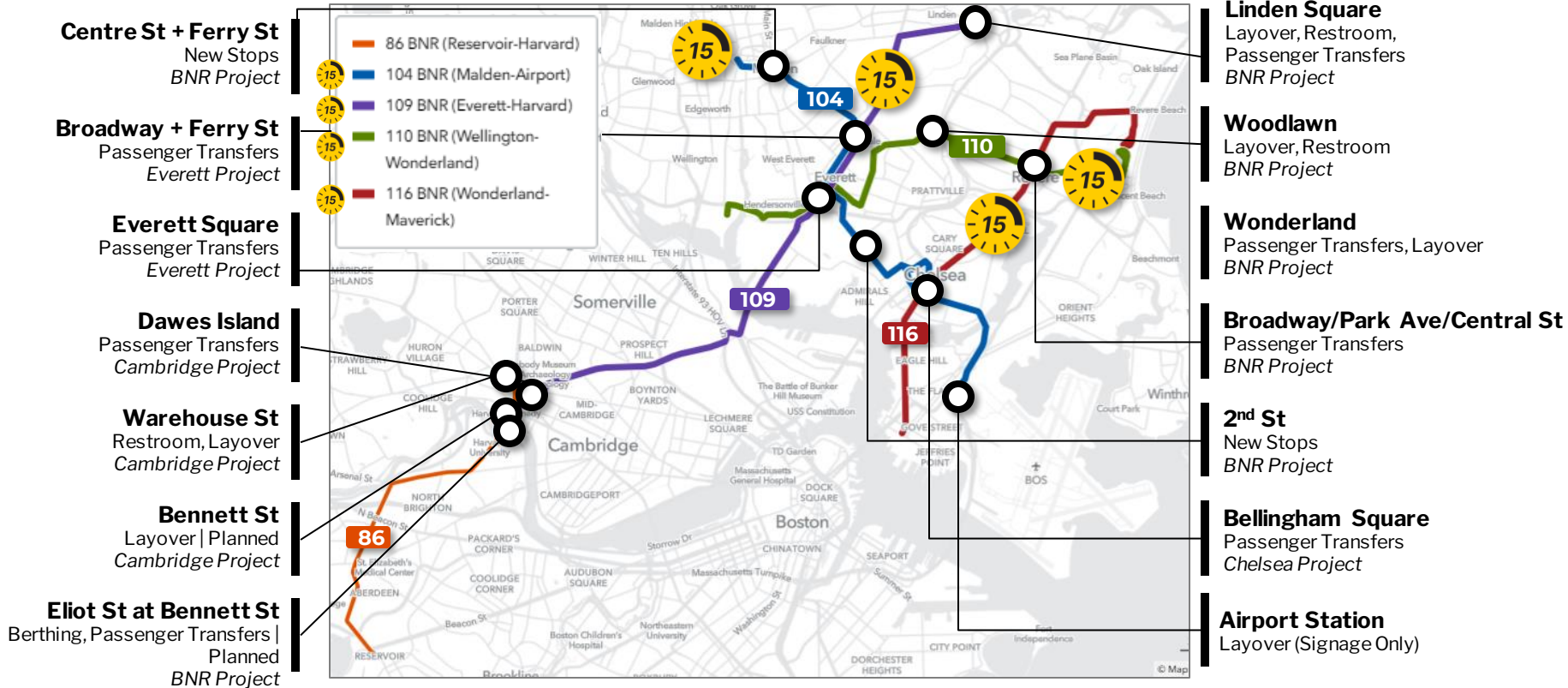


## Transit Priority

Dedicated Bus Lanes  
Shared Bus-Bike Lanes  
Transit Signal Priority



# Capital Changes Supporting BNR Phase 1



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# Thank you

## Contact

- For other questions and comments related to Bus Network Redesign, please email [BetterBusProject@mbta.com](mailto:BetterBusProject@mbta.com)

## For more information

- Bus Network Redesign: [mbta.com/bnr](http://mbta.com/bnr)
- Better Bus Newsletter: [sign up here](#)

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# Q&A and Feedback