

Usability through Accessibility at the MBTA



*Cambridge Transit
Advisory Committee
12/4/13*



Agenda

- **BCIL Class Action Lawsuit**
 - **MBTA/BCIL Settlement Agreement**
- **Key Settlement Commitments
& Progress**
- **Moving Forward**

MBTA/BCIL Settlement Agreement

“ This agreement is based on a shared vision between plaintiffs and the MBTA to make the MBTA a model transit system accessible to all. There is a mutual commitment and desire to comply not only with the letter but also the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act, with the complete understanding that all people with disabilities must have every opportunity to be fully participating members of our community and that fundamental to this opportunity is the right and ability to use public transportation in an equal, effective, and dignified manner.”

Reference: C.A. No. 02 CV 11504 MEL, preamble, dated April 10, 2006

Creation of Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA)

- Under the direction of an AGM
 - Reports directly to General Manager
- Clearinghouse of information and subject matter expertise regarding access-related issues, projects and initiatives
- Reviews all project plans and policies
- Internal Access Monitoring Program
- Tasked to drive change where necessary throughout the MBTA

Fixed-Route Bus Service

- **Bus fleet 100% accessible as of 2006**
 - **Consists of both low floor ramp equipped and high floor lift equipped buses**
 - 97% of active fleet is low-floor today. Goal: by 2015, 100% low-floor
- **Improved focus by Bus Operations on bus inspection and maintenance**
 - **Increased reliability and availability of accessibility features**
- **Key Bus Routes Improvement Program**
 - **15 highest ridership routes**
 - **Changes aimed at improving safety, usability and reliability**

Fixed-Route Bus Service

- **Legislation: No Parking In Bus Stops**
 - Signed into law by Governor Patrick; effective April 2009
 - Tickets issued by MBTA Police to date
 - 290 issued in 2008 before new law
 - Between 2010-2012, 2065 tickets issued each year on average
- **Bus Operators Recertification Programs**
 - Developed jointly by Bus Operations and System-Wide Accessibility
 - Success of Bus Operators Recertification Program used as starting point for all other MBTA training programs related to access

Station Accessibility

Past Elevator Contract Performance

- **Contract Type: Repair Contract**
- **Contract Period: 2001-2005**

Percentage of Time Stations were Accessible by Elevator

Station Name	Elevator	2003	2004	2005
Harvard Square	821	92.94%	95.09%	28.01%
Park Street	808/892	89.00%	87.39%	44.44%
Downtown Crossing	892	93.45%	92.35%	45.74%
Porter Square	818/820	93.72%	91.05%	85.41%
State Street	802/803	98.31%	95.21%	85.80%

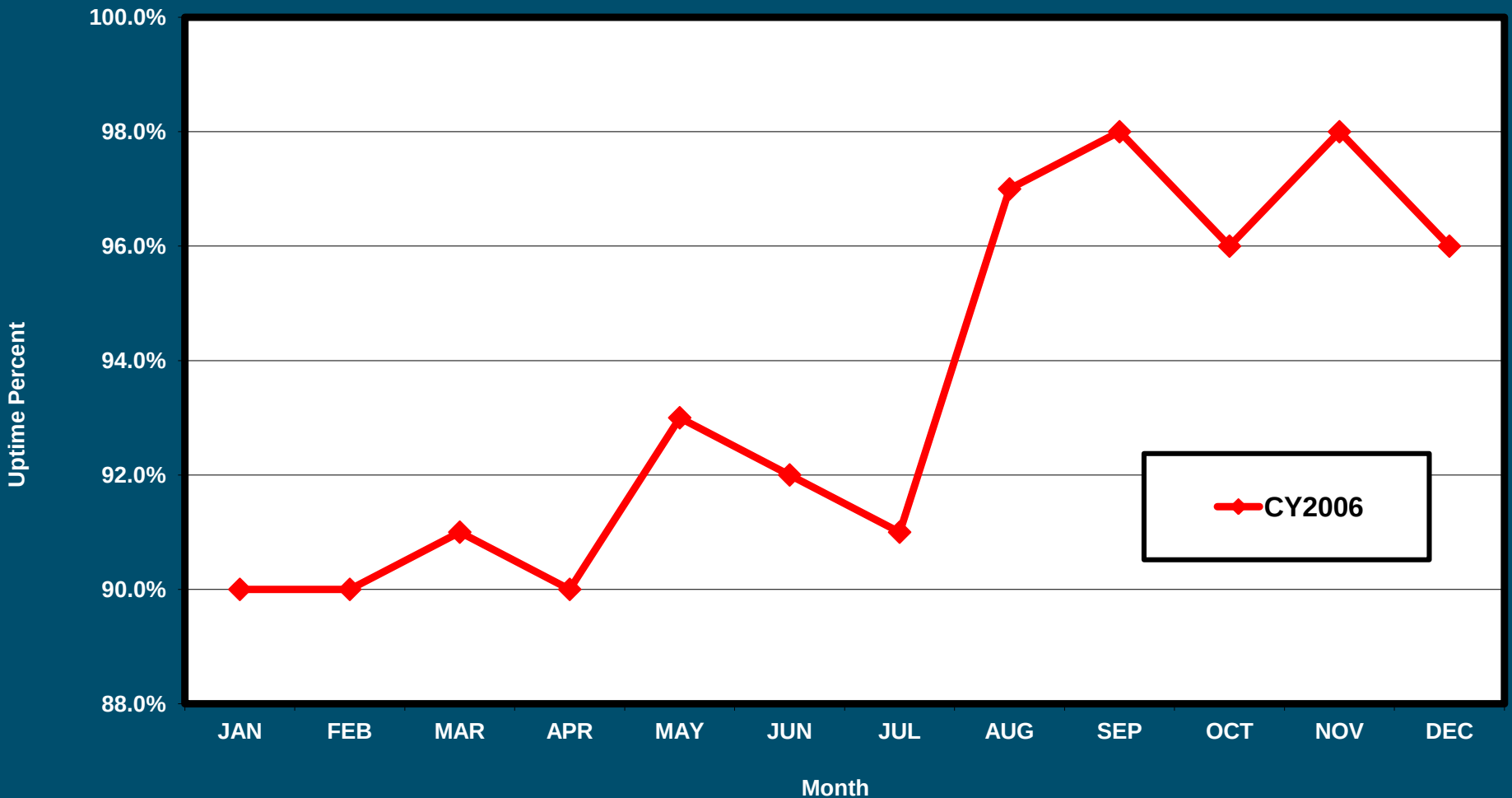
Table Reference: Civil Action No. 2 CV 11504 MEL – Analysis of Elevator Incident Data

Station Accessibility

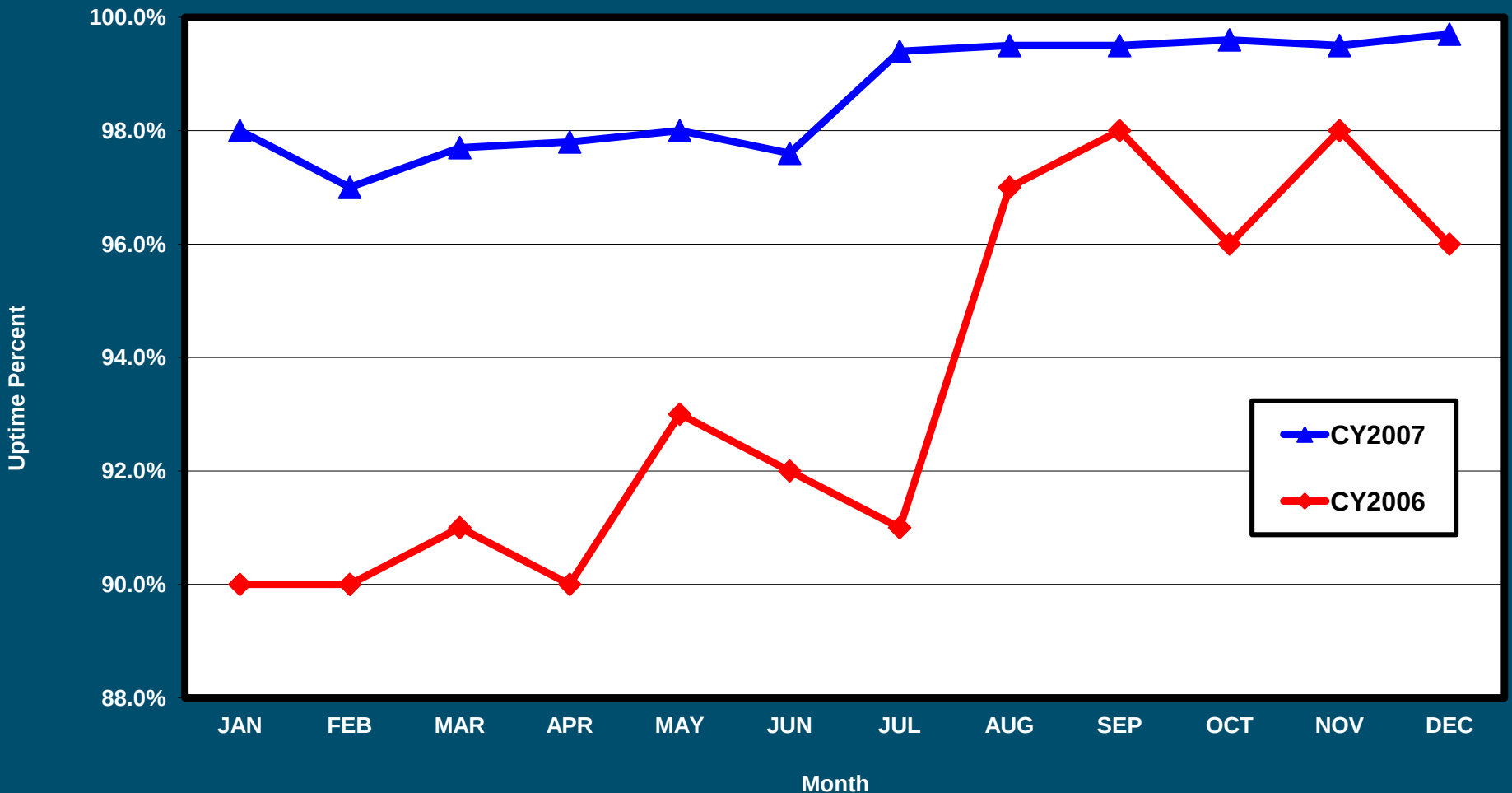
Current Elevator Contract

- **Contract Period: 2005-2011, renewed in 2011**
- **Contract Type: Preventative Maintenance**
 - Major emphasis on maintaining elevators in good working order to ensure optimum accessibility
 - Increase in elevator support staff
 - Reduction in elevator repair response time

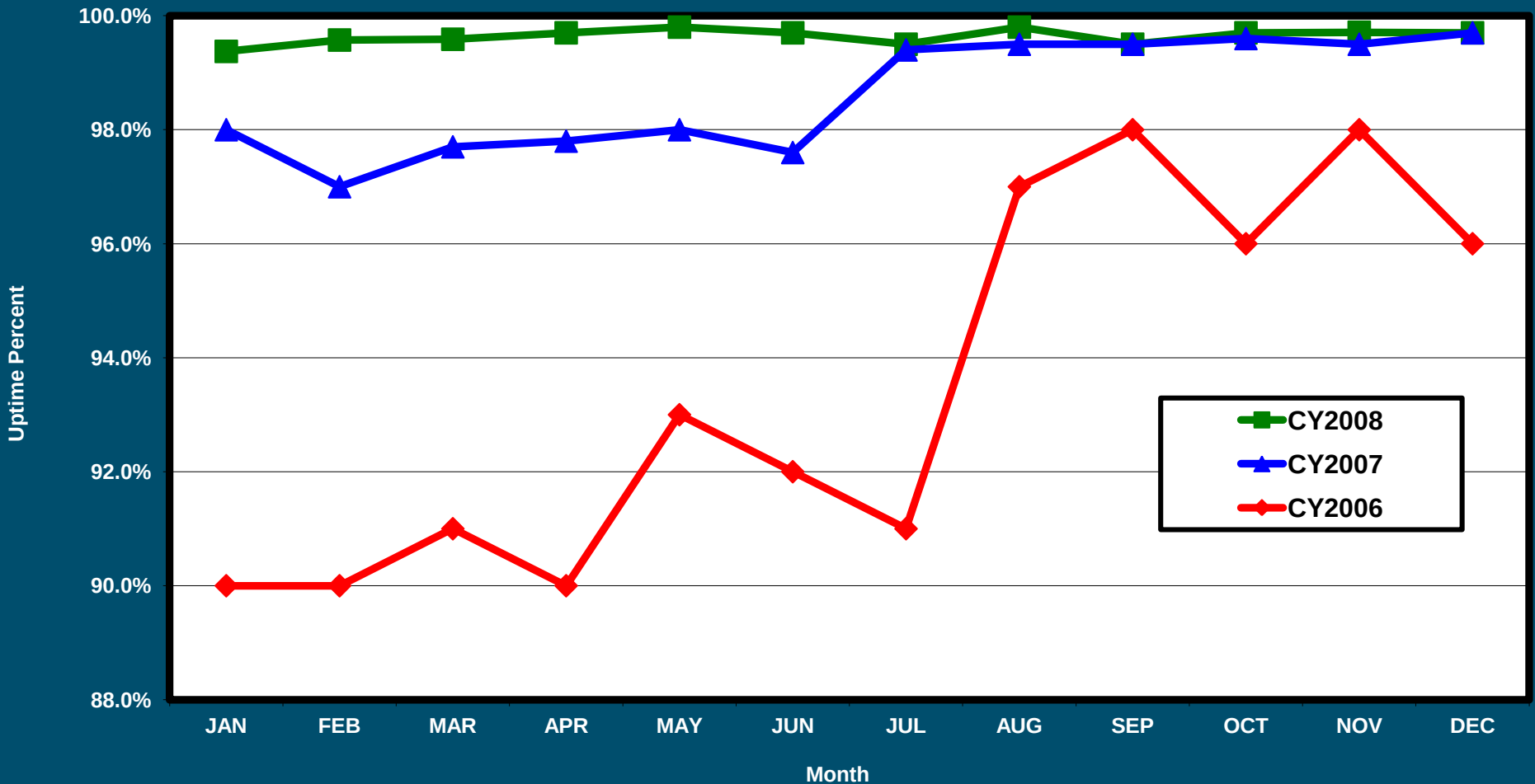
Positive Impact of Current Contract: System-Wide Elevator Performance



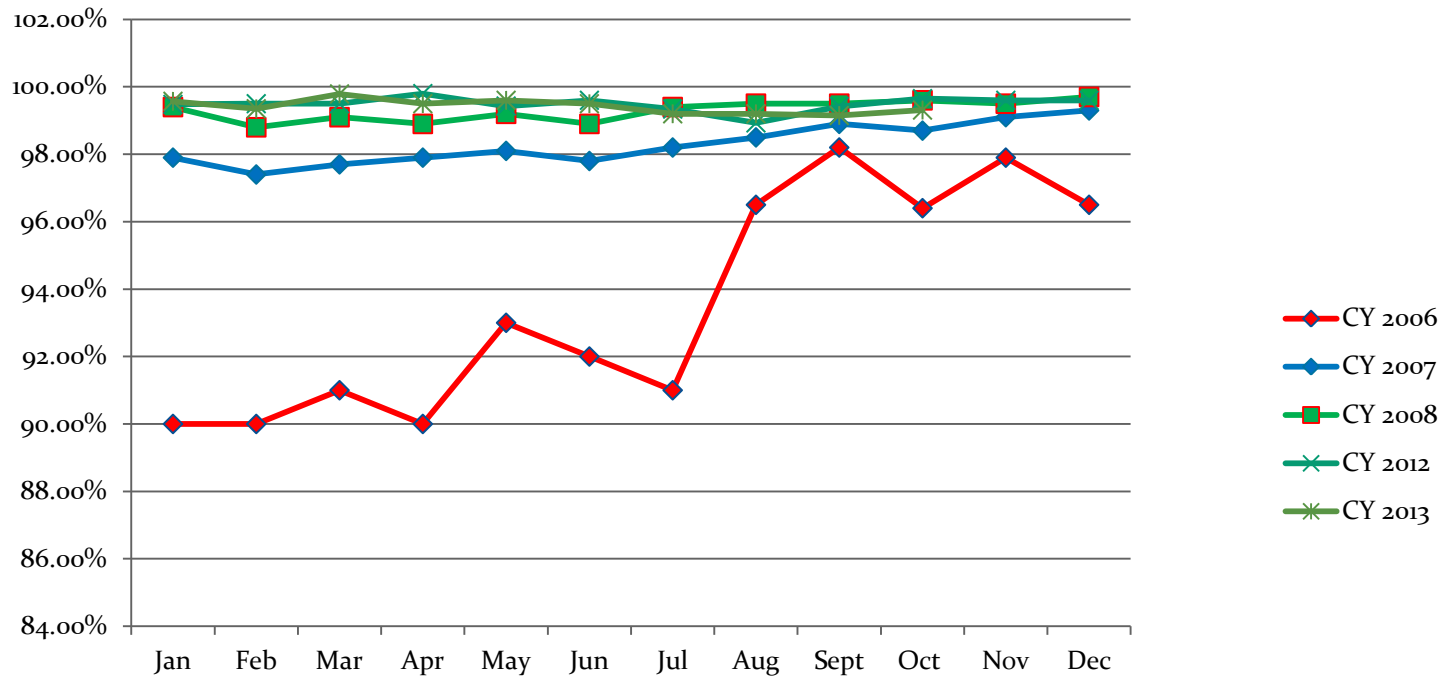
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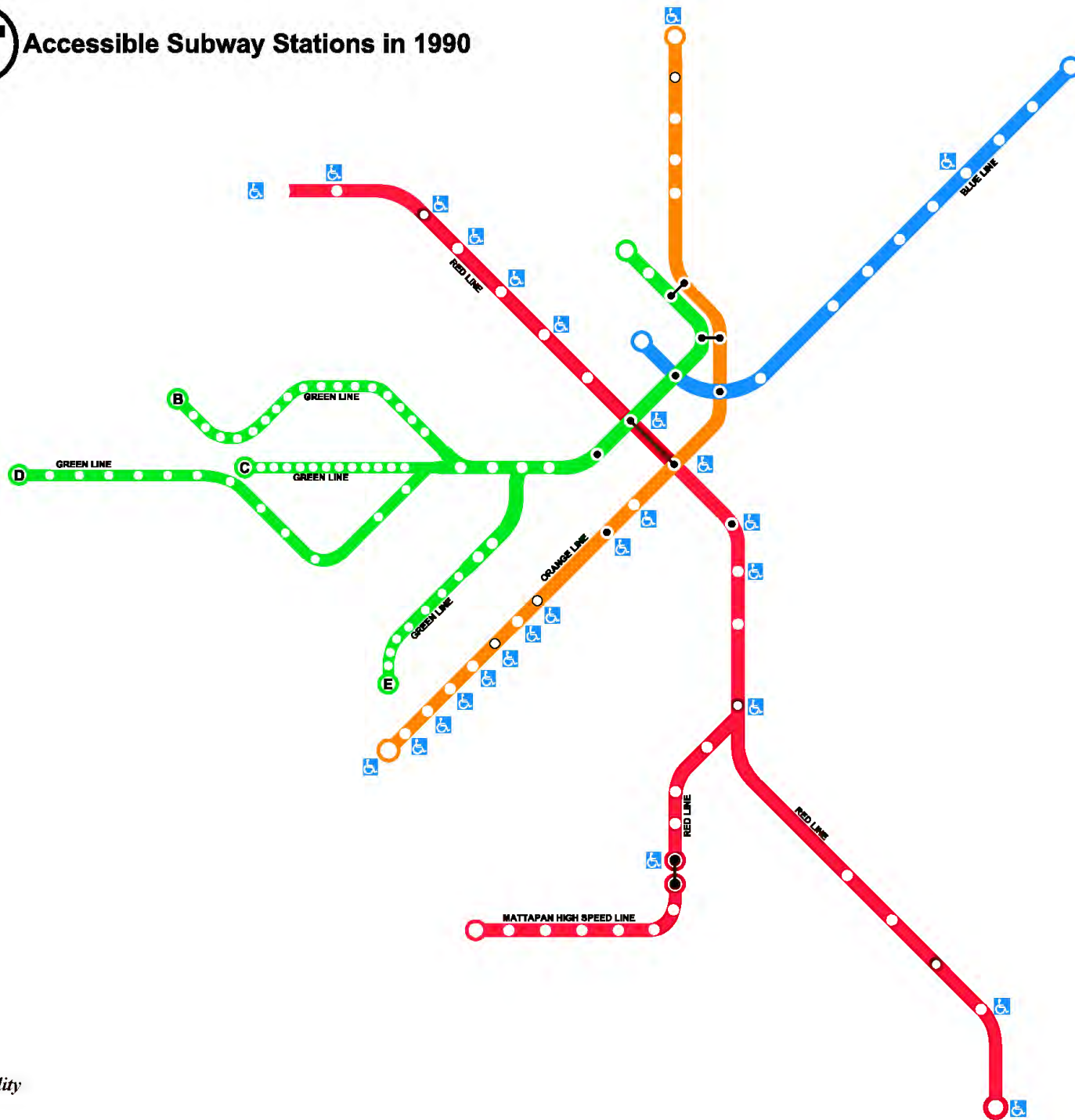


Replacement Elevator Update

- **MBTA/BCIL Settlement Agreement requires the creation of the replacement elevator program**
 - Design and Construction to manage the project
- **Strategic plan to identify elevators with the highest priority for replacement and upgrade**
 - Entire system mapped out for future replacement and upgrade
 - Cost and timing targets under development
 - First 17 replacement elevators identified
- **New MBTA Elevator Standard is applied to each elevator to the greatest extent feasible**

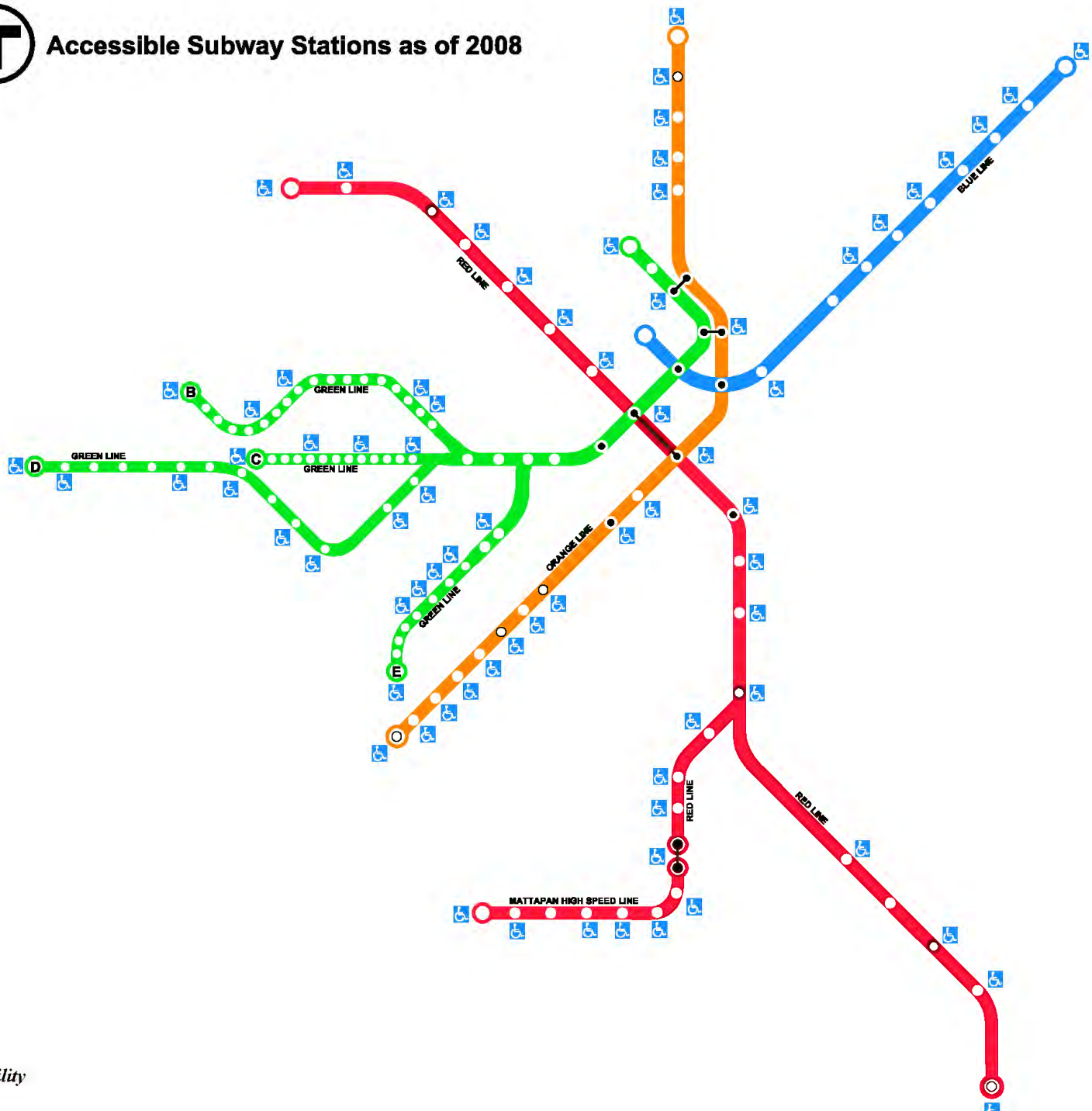


Accessible Subway Stations in 1990



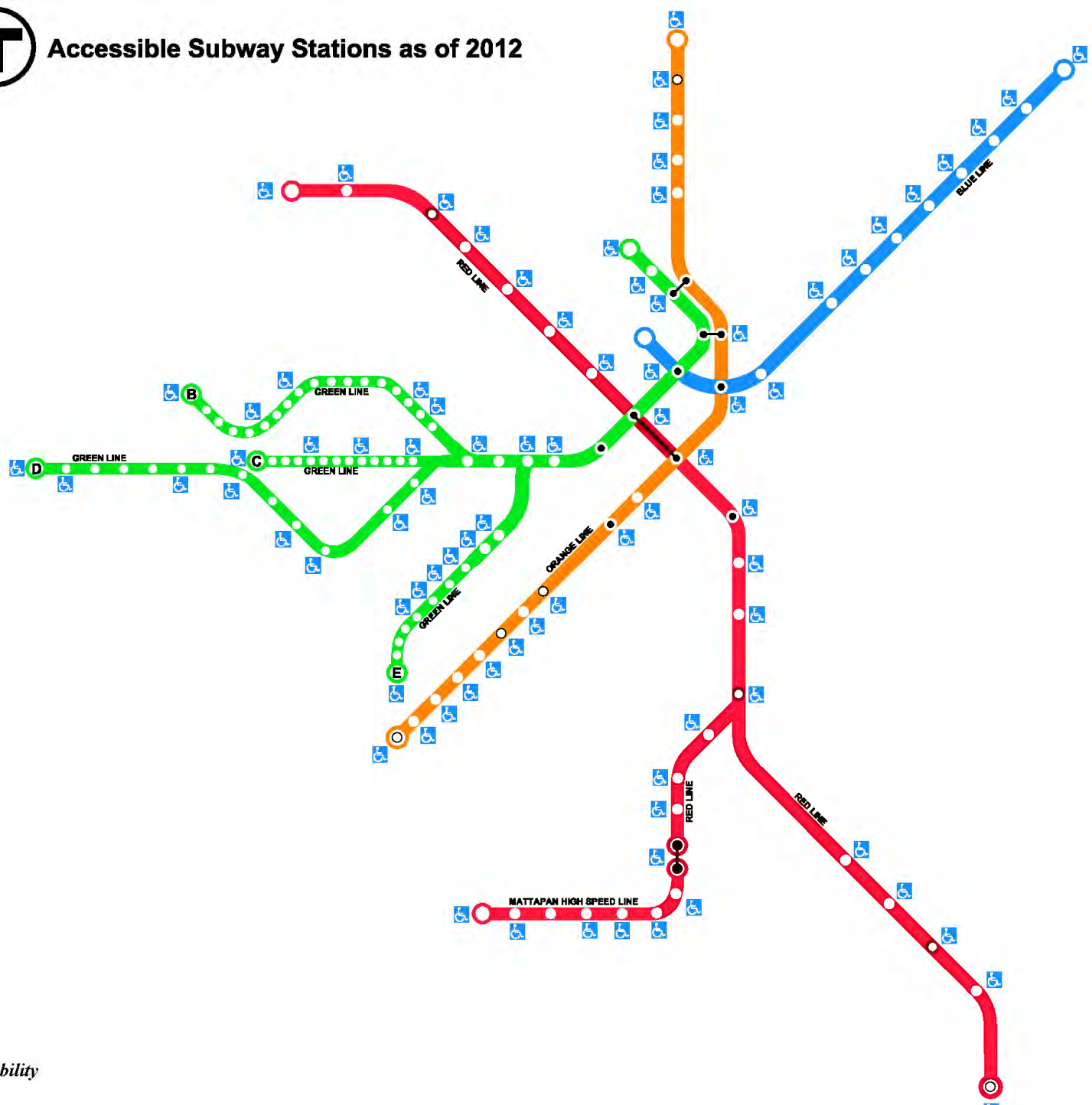


Accessible Subway Stations as of 2008





Accessible Subway Stations as of 2012



Platform Gap Reduction Initiative

- Measurements of horizontal and vertical gaps between rail cars and platforms are taken at each heavy rail station on quarterly basis
- Realignment of tracks and platforms as necessary to reduce the gaps
- Rail cars evaluated for potential repair (wheels, suspensions, etc.) to minimize remaining gap

Redundant Elevators

- MBTA/BCIL Settlement Agreement requires the creation of the redundant elevator program
- Quantity of elevators is increased in critical stations establishing redundant paths of travel for improved vertical access

Station Name	Elevators
Harvard	1
State	1
Park	2
Porter	2
Downtown	4

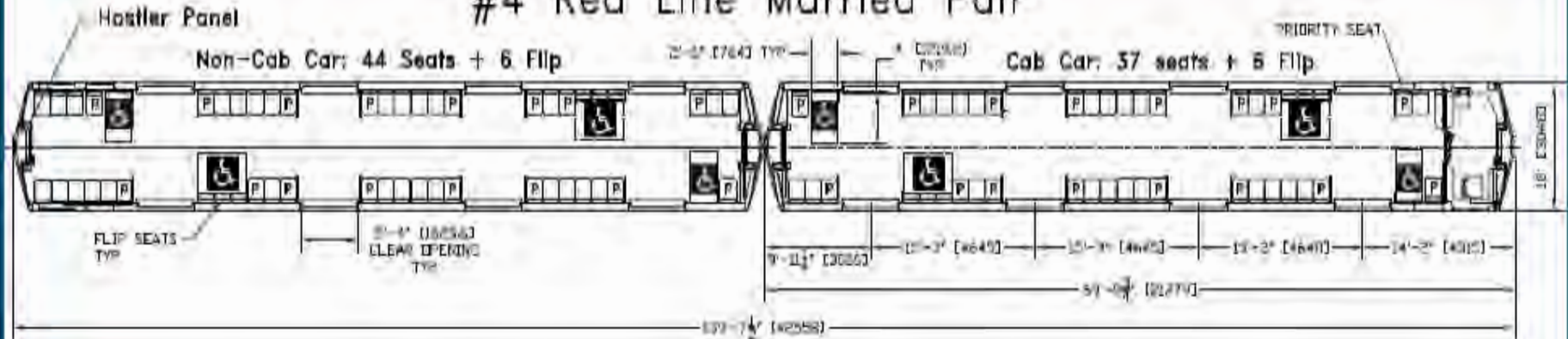
Future Vehicle Enhancements

- Vehicle design opportunities to enhance accessibility
 - Draft accessibility design specifications developed jointly by SWA and Vehicle Engineering
- Upcoming Vehicle Procurements
 - Red Line
 - Replacement of Series 1 rail car
 - Orange Line
 - Replacement of Series 12 rail car
 - Goal: 4 minute headway
 - Green Line
 - Next generation rail car (Type 9)

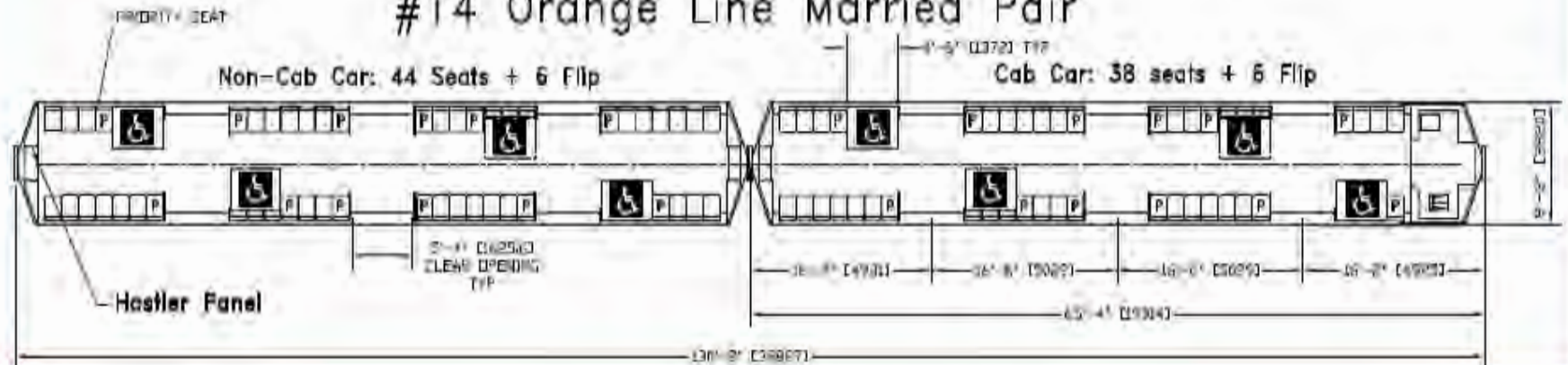
New Red & Orange Line Vehicles

- 32 inch wide clearance per open side door leaf.
- Between car barriers.
- 30 inch wide emergency egress end doors and folding evacuation chair.
- Visual and audible door open and door closing warnings.
- Synchronized automatic audio and visual station announcements.
- Contrasting stanchions and handholds.
- Priority seating throughout each car and companion seating at each accessible area.
- Passenger Emergency Intercoms with Braille located near wheelchair locations at accessible heights.
- Gap Fillers / Bridging Mechanism.

#4 Red Line Married Pair



#14 Orange Line Married Pair



Effective Communication

- **Ensure equal access to information provided by the MBTA**
 - Benefits all customers including those who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Blind/Visually Impaired
 - Public meetings, online at MBTA.com, etc.
- **Dual-Mode Technology**
 - Providing information in both audio and visual formats
 - In vehicles, stations and at bus stops
- **Tactile/Braille signage used to supplement standard visual signage to ensure effective communication with customers who are Blind/Visually Impaired**

Additional Initiatives

- **Wayfinding Program**
- **Platform Gap Reduction**
- **Improved Customer Complaint Process**
- **Improved Website**
- **Customer Trainings**

Moving Forward

- **Continue to pursue the goal of making the MBTA the global benchmark for accessible and inclusive public transportation**
 - Influence and leverage both the Capital Investment Plan (CIP, 5 year plan), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP, 25 year plan), *MassDOT*, etc.
 - Pursue innovative strategies and technologies to further enhance accessibility for all customers
 - Prioritization of Inaccessible Infrastructure
- **Continue internal compliance oversight and external monitoring per the Settlement Agreement**
 - Monitor the results received and make changes necessary to improve system-wide accessibility for all customers