

**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

# Forging Ahead: Scenario and Service Planning

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Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee

October 7, 2020

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# Agenda

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- Introduction: Forging Ahead
- Essential services analysis and trade-offs by mode
- Public engagement plan



# Forging Ahead: Introduction

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- MBTA is facing a financial crisis from pandemic, low ridership, lost fare revenues.
- FY22 budget is projecting a \$300 million budget deficit. Response to this may involve some combination of the following:
  - Capital reallocation: slow, stop, or scale down projects and reallocate to preventative maintenance on the operating budget
  - Cost controls: tighten controls, reduce expenditures
  - Service changes: Preserve essential service for high-ridership modes, routes, and lines and transit-critical populations when making any targeted reductions



# Defining Our Essential Services

Based on two analyses:

- Where are the trips made by transit critical populations
- Where we have high ridership now or are likely to in the next year or two

	Serving high transit critical population	Serving low transit critical population
Higher ridership (current or propensity)	Preserve service / access at SDP standards <i>(though individual trips may still be affected)</i>	Consider trade-offs depending on budget availability
Lower ridership (current or propensity)	Consider trade-offs depending on budget availability	Most likely to reduce service levels

This process is designed to create an equitable network that preserves access and quality of service available to transit critical populations (low-income, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, and no to low vehicle households).

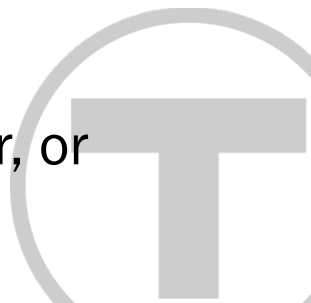


# Overview of Essential Service analysis

Mode	Highly Transit Critical	Less Transit Critical
High Ridership Potential FY22	Blue Line, Orange Line, Red Line, Green Line (trunk), Mattapan line, most bus routes, Fairmount CR line, Charlestown ferry*	Some bus routes
Low Ridership Potential FY22	Some bus routes, some Commuter Rail lines	Hingham/Hull ferry, some bus routes, some Commuter Rail lines

\*Incomplete data

- Most of the variation is in commuter rail and bus; trade-off decisions will be based on characteristics of routes/lines/corridors
- Analysis included evaluation for transit propensity based on pre-COVID rider demographics; the routes that retained a high proportion of ridership were overwhelmingly those with above system-average of low-income riders, riders of color, or riders from zero- or low-vehicle households



# Heavy and Light Rail

Heavy and Light Rail	Highly Transit Critical	Less Transit Critical
High Ridership Potential FY22	Orange, Blue, Red, Green Line (trunk), Mattapan	--
Low Ridership Potential FY22	--	--

- All lines fall into essential services, but service levels within Service Delivery Policy standards will vary based on demand on each line
- Green Line branches data are incomplete, service levels will vary based on demand by branch

**Heavy rail and GL trunk: ~120,000 gate entries on weekdays, 24% pre-COVID (weekdays September 2020 vs September 2019)**

## Possible Levers:

- Reduce headways to Service Delivery Policy
- End service at 12 AM

	Service Delivery Policy	Rapid Transit
Headways (frequency)	AM & PM Peak	Every 10 minutes
	All other weekday periods	Every 15 minutes
	Saturday	Every 15 minutes
	Sunday	Every 15 minutes
Span of Service	Weekday	6:00 AM - midnight
	Saturday	6:00 AM – midnight
	Sunday	7:00 AM – midnight

# Ferry

Ferry	Highly Transit Critical	Less Transit Critical
High Ridership Potential FY22	Charlestown* <i>(30% of 2019 Ferry service hours)</i>	--
Low Ridership Potential FY22	--	Hingham/Hull <i>(70% of 2019 Ferry service hours)</i>

\*Incomplete data for the Charlestown ferry, analysis will continue

## Possible Levers:

- Eliminate routes
- Reduce frequency

**Ferry: ~775 trips on weekdays, 11% of Pre-COVID (weekdays September 2020 vs September 2019)**



# Commuter Rail

Commuter Rail	Highly Transit Critical	Less Transit Critical
High Ridership Potential FY22	Fairmount Line <i>(4% of 2019 CR service hours)</i>	(0%)
Low Ridership Potential FY22	Newburyport/Rockport, Middleborough/Lakeville, Providence/Stoughton <i>(34% of 2019 CR service hours)</i>	All others <i>(62% of 2019 CR service hours)</i>

- Next step is additional analysis at the corridor and station level

**Commuter Rail: ~14,500 trips on weekdays, 12% pre-COVID (weekdays September 2020 vs manual counts Spring 2018)**

## Possible levers:

- Eliminate weekend service on some or all lines
- End weekday service after 9 PM
- Reduce or eliminate midday frequency
- Reduce peak frequency
- Station closures



# Bus

Bus	Highly Transit Critical	Less Transit Critical
High Ridership Potential FY22	Majority of routes <i>(65% of 2019 Bus service hours)</i>	e.g. 350, 225, 77, 73 <i>(20% of 2019 Bus service hours)</i>
Low Ridership Potential FY22	e.g. 4, 7, 18, 43, 55 <i>(8% of 2019 Bus service hours)</i>	e.g. 553, 554, 351, 52 <i>(7% of 2019 Bus service hours)</i>

- Bus at the route level has the most variation
- Route level changes in all quadrants will consider usage data by people with disabilities and senior cardholders
- Bus routes suspended during COVID or with significant changes during COVID will be evaluated outside of this framework

## Possible Levers:

- Reduce frequency & span to Service Delivery Policy for essential routes (top left box)
- Reduce frequency & span below Service Delivery Policy for non-essential routes
- Route eliminations & consolidations for non-essential routes

**Bus: 171,000 trips on weekdays, 41% pre-COVID (weekdays September 2020 vs September 2019)**

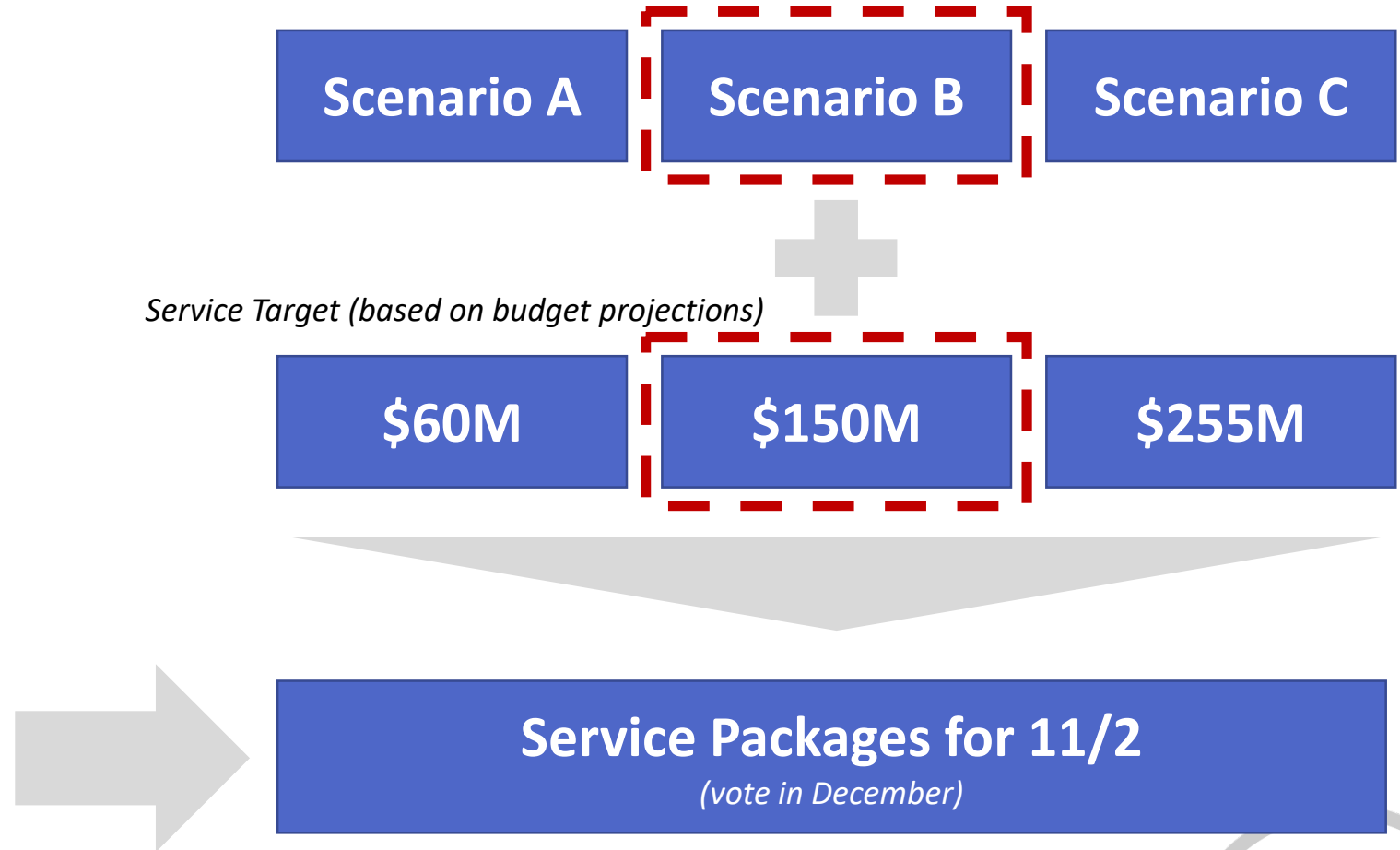


# Service Packages for November 2nd

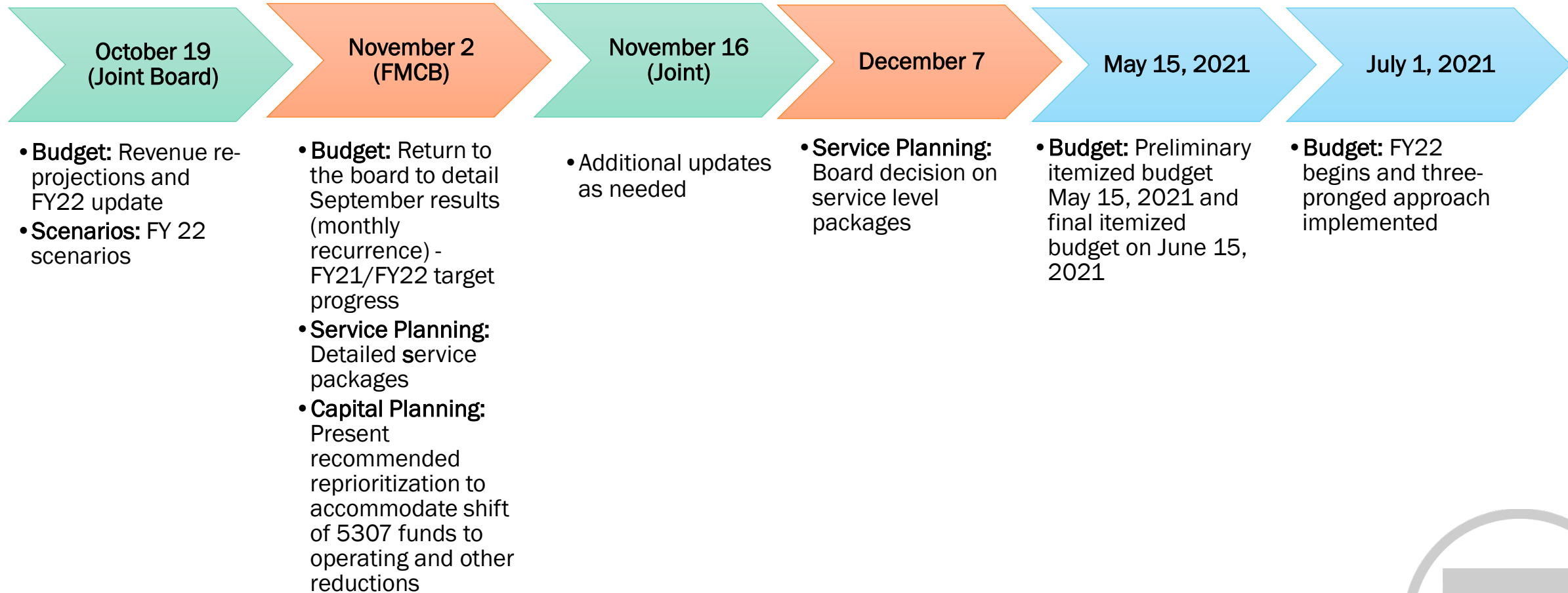
## Service Packages

- **Commuter Rail** span, weekend service, and line-specific changes
- **Ferry** lines operating
- **Heavy Rail** headways & span
- **Light Rail** headways & span
- Major **Bus** changes
- Any **RIDE** implications

*Will include detail as possible about any fare or accessibility implications for riders*



# Timeline for Service, Budget, and Capital Decisions



# Forging Ahead External Engagement

- We will be launching a public engagement process for the weeks following today's presentation to engage and seek input from riders and community members on service scenarios.
- The engagement process for Forging Ahead will be:
  - **Transparent** – we will share all information needed to provide input
  - **Proactive** – we will reach out to impacted communities
  - **Iterative** – we will return to communities when we have more information
  - **Accessible** – we will ensure language access and access to persons with disabilities
- Engagement Strategy:
  - Virtual public meetings
  - Proactive, non-virtual engagement with communities
  - Online feedback tools at [www.mbta.com/forgingahead](http://www.mbta.com/forgingahead)

All engagement will be in accordance with the MBTA Public Engagement Plan.



# Forging Ahead Engagement Audiences

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Multipronged coordinated strategy for external and internal audiences

- Internal
  - MBTA workforce and unions
- External
  - Riders
  - Advocates
  - Business community
  - Elected officials
  - Municipal partners



# Two Phases of Engagement

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## **Phase 1 Essential Services: October 5- October 30**

- Focus on explaining our process to prioritize essential services
- Reaching out to advocates, business community, elected officials to provide briefings and get feedback
- Feedback report back to the FMCB on November 2nd

## **Phase 2 Service Packages: November 2- December 4**

- Virtual public meetings, including an official public hearing
- Outreach directly to community organizations and the public
- Online feedback tools
- Feedback report back to the FMCB on December 6th



# Forging Ahead Online Feedback + Public Outreach

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## **Online Feedback**

- Online tools will also be made available for riders to give the MBTA direct feedback on Forging Ahead service scenarios.
- Feedback from these online tools will be provided directly to MBTA leadership and decision-makers

## **Public Outreach**

- We will use various tools at our disposal to notify riders of these opportunities to provide feedback:
  - Digital station screens
  - On-vehicle and in-station print media
  - Newspaper ads
  - Website and social media
  - Community partners (community groups, transportation advocates, accessibility organizations, municipal partners)

