

Crosstown

Fairmount Indigo Line Service Improvements

Phase One: Increase the frequency and improve the payment systems

Project Score

- Access 1
- Safety 1
- Reliability
- Sustainability/Resiliency 1
- Sustainability/Resiliency 2
- Governance
- Access 2
- Safety 2
- Affordability

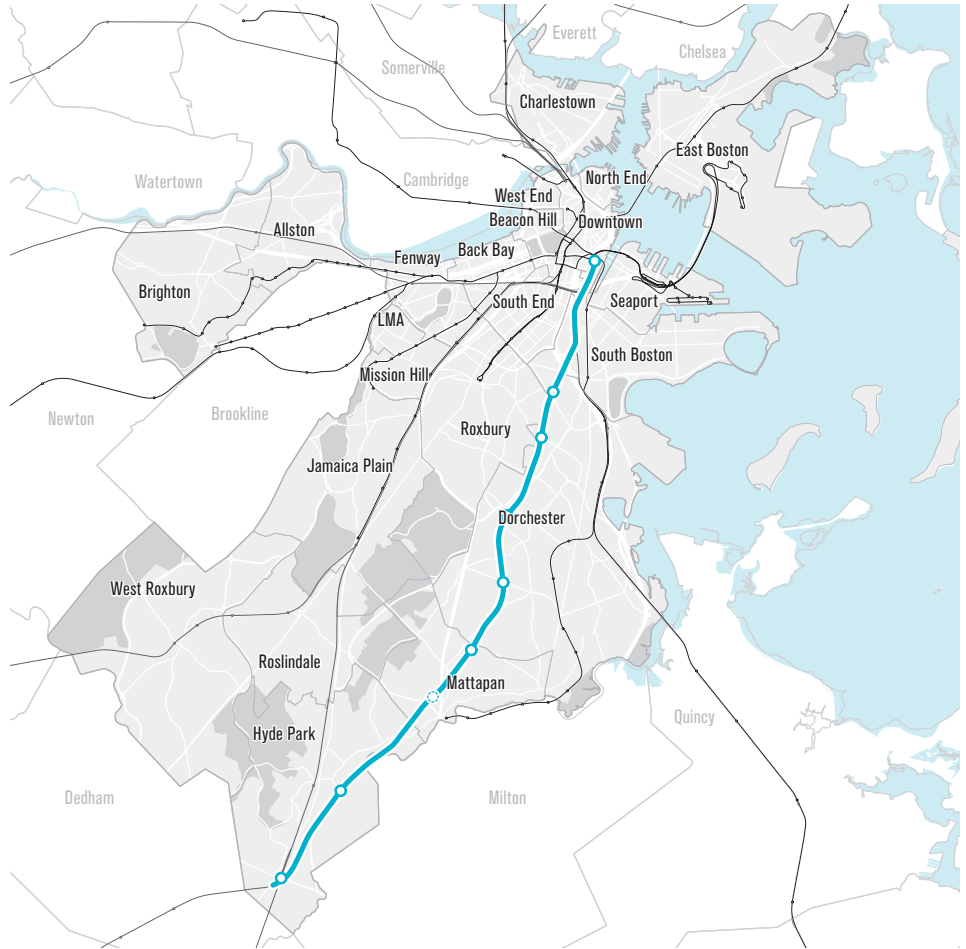
Identified on the ballot as an Early Action commitment

Project Description

With three new stations on the Fairmount Indigo Line recently completed—Four Corners/Geneva, Talbot Avenue, and Newmarket—neighborhoods are now being served by trains that previously passed them by. With the Blue Hill Avenue Station scheduled to be completed by 2021, an additional 1,200 households will have access to regular rail service within a 10-minute walk. Now, further efforts are proposed to improve walking and bicycling access to every station and as part of a first phase, provide a more subway-like schedule so that passengers can walk to the station and reliably expect train service in 15 or 20 minutes rather than every 45 to 60 minutes. Though fares are currently equivalent to the subway lines in the city, technology improvements should allow payments to be made with ordinary Charlie Cards so any rider wanting to pay with a monthly fare card or to make a free bus transfer can do so. In the future, integrating Charlie Card tapping or the next generation of payment technology will eliminate this transfer penalty and keep a linked trip affordable for riders. Other improvements are planned with the future conversion to *urban rail cars*.

Best Practices

In Ontario, Canada, GO Transit moved from hourly headways to half-hourly during off-peak times on its commuter rail network in 2013. Since then ridership has increased by 30%. www.tbtransportpolitic.com/2014/07/28/make-the-effort-and-commuter-rail-can-be-as-effective-as-rapid-transit/



Benefits and Issues Addressed

Providing rail service to Mattapan, Codman Square, Grove Hall, and South Bay makes a significant improvement in transit access to communities of color who have historically been underserved, but the current infrequency of trains and the issues with payment make it hard for residents to rely on this service, particularly if they need a combination of buses and trains to complete their journey. In order to effectively link these residents to more job opportunities, especially those working outside of the usual nine to five, operational changes such as those described above are needed along with the expansion of South Station and the purchase of additional trains. Future advancements—such as those included in the *Fairmount Urban Rail* project—will be necessary to truly improve transit access equitably.

Implementation

Approximate Cost: \$35 million in capital improvements and \$4 million per year for operations
Potential Funding Sources: MBTA
Who's responsible: BTS and MBTA
Time Frame: Within 5 to 15 years

Public Input

"You should be able to just use your Charlie Card—whether it has your monthly pass or is pay-as-you-go. The paper Charlie Ticket and mobile app are helpful, but make it harder to get on to ride the Fairmount Line."
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"Pilot projects to 'test the waters' increase service on the Fairmount Line."