

**Regional**

# I-90 Newton Urban Rail

Subway-like service paralleling the Mass Pike from Newton to South Station

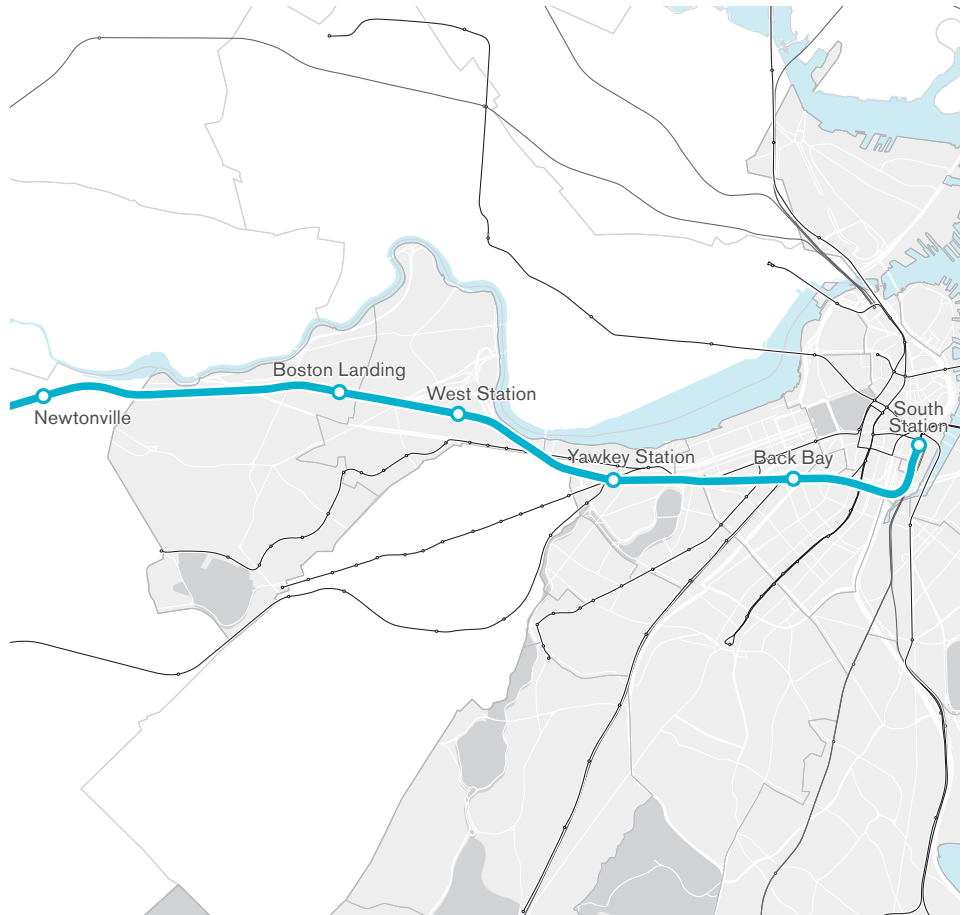
**Project Score**

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

#11 in public voting

## Project Description

The Worcester/Framingham Line currently provides service structured to accommodate suburban commutes into three Boston stations (Yawkey, Back Bay and South Station) that serve key employment districts. Trains arrive with 20 to 30 minute headways during peak commuting periods and less frequently during the middle of the day. This project would use advanced train scheduling technology to run smaller urban railcars in between the less-frequent commuter rail trains to provide subway-like service between several neighborhoods of Boston and Newton, including new connections at Boston Landing and West Station, in addition to the existing stations. With an expanded South Station, this kind of rapid turnaround becomes more reasonable. Alternately, service could be interlined with the Fairmount Line to connect to Newmarket and beyond.



## Benefits and Issues Addressed

With the recent completion of the Yawkey Commuter Rail station in the Fenway to access jobs in the LMA, the upcoming completion of Boston Landing Station in Allston in a rapidly growing jobs hub, and the planned construction of West Station in the new neighborhood and university areas planned for the I-90 straightening project, the I-90 Urban Rail is intended to supplement Framingham/Worcester Line services between Newton and South Station to support travel needs of some of Boston's future growth areas. An urban rail line with regular service similar to the Red or Orange Line coupled with an affordable fare structure will provide service that employees and residents can rely on. It will also incentivize new transit-oriented development in these districts. The new line will provide a high-quality transit alternative to driving and relieve pressure on the Mass Pike, as well as on city streets surrounding these growing districts.

## Best Practices

Both NJTransit's RiverLine and Denton County Transportation Company (Texas) have diesel-multiple units in service. These Stadler cars provide an experience similar to light-rail for the rider, but can operate on heavy rail tracks. One major difference between these and commuter rail cars is that instead of having a separate locomotive, the trains are "self-propelled" by an engine in a passenger vehicle. Although cars can be more expensive up front, their operating cost is lower than traditional commuter rail.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit will open TEXrail in 2018 using similar vehicles.  
[www.texrail.com/about/overview/](http://www.texrail.com/about/overview/)

## Implementation

**Approximate Cost:** \$100 million for stations and rail cars; \$5 million annually to operate  
**Potential Funding Sources:** MBTA/MassDOT  
**Who's responsible:** MBTA/MassDOT  
**Time Frame:** 15+ years

## Public Input

"Boston should take a page or three from Paris or San Francisco's books, and build a regional rapid transit network connecting communities like Hyde Park, Mattapan, Quincy, Chelsea, Revere, Lynn, Salem, Waltham, and Newton to the downtown and the city core."  
 —02122