



GREEN LINE B BRANCH STATION CONSOLIDATION VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: January 28, 2021 at 6:00 PM via Zoom

GLT Program Team Senior Leadership

Angel Peña | *Chief of Green Line Transformation*

Desiree Patrice | *Deputy Chief of Green Line Transformation*

Tamieka Thibodeaux | *Sr. Director*

Benjamin Frison | *Sr. Director*

Leo Murphy | *Project Manager*

Sheri Warrington | *Outreach and Engagement Lead*

Nancy Farrell | *Community Engagement Lead*

Public Attendees

See Appendix A: Public Attendance

Purpose/Subject

The purpose of the public meeting was to introduce the B Branch Station Consolidation Project, which is scheduled to begin construction in February.

Format and Process

The virtual meeting included a **presentation**, and a **question and answer** session, where attendees could ask questions or make comments either by typing them in or “raising a hand” to speak verbally.

PRESENTATION¹

Nancy Farrell, Moderator, opened the meeting and provided an overview of how to participate in the virtual meeting, including how to access closed captions and ask questions. She noted that participants can always email the project team at GLT@mbta.com. Ms. Farrell introduced Benjamin Frison, Senior Director of Green Line Transformation (GLT).

Mr. Frison thanked participants for joining the meeting. He shared a safety moment, encouraging participants to use face coverings and maintain social distancing.

¹ The presentation and a recording of this meeting can be viewed on the website at www.mbta.com/GLBstations



Mr. Frison reviewed the meeting agenda. He highlighted GLT's Levels of Transformation, and how the B Branch Station Consolidation Project advances GLT's goals. This project will improve accessibility and safety for all riders, as well as the overall quality of service for the Green Line.

Mr. Frison presented what GLT has accomplished under the direction of Chief Angel Peña. GLT worked closely with municipal partners and colleagues across the MBTA to deliver important safety and reliability upgrades on all Green Line branches in 2019 and 2020, including:

- Replaced approximately **57,000 feet of track** systemwide
- Upgraded **45 Intersections/Crossings** on the B, C and E Branches
- Replaced **10 units of special trackwork** on the D and C Branches
- Installation of **flood protection doors** and gates at Fenway portal on the D Branch

Mr. Frison introduced Leo Murphy, GLT Project Manager.

Project Scope

Mr. Murphy presented an overview of the project scope, which includes consolidating four existing B Branch stations (Babcock Street with Pleasant Street and St Paul Street with BU West) into two fully accessible, brand new stations.

Mr. Murphy listed the design elements of the new stations, including:

- Equal passenger capacity as the four existing stations
- Longer platforms of 225 feet (to accommodate new Type 10 Supercar)
- 150 feet of canopies at each platform
- Accessible walkways
- Upgraded communications and safety/security systems
- New lighting, signage, benches and other station elements

Mr. Murphy presented a map of the project area and the locations of the two new stations. He noted Pleasant St. Station is the only existing station that will be merged with a new station, which means it will have to be closed at the beginning of construction so crews can build the new station at that same location.

Mr. Murphy presented the benefits to riders as a result of this project, including:

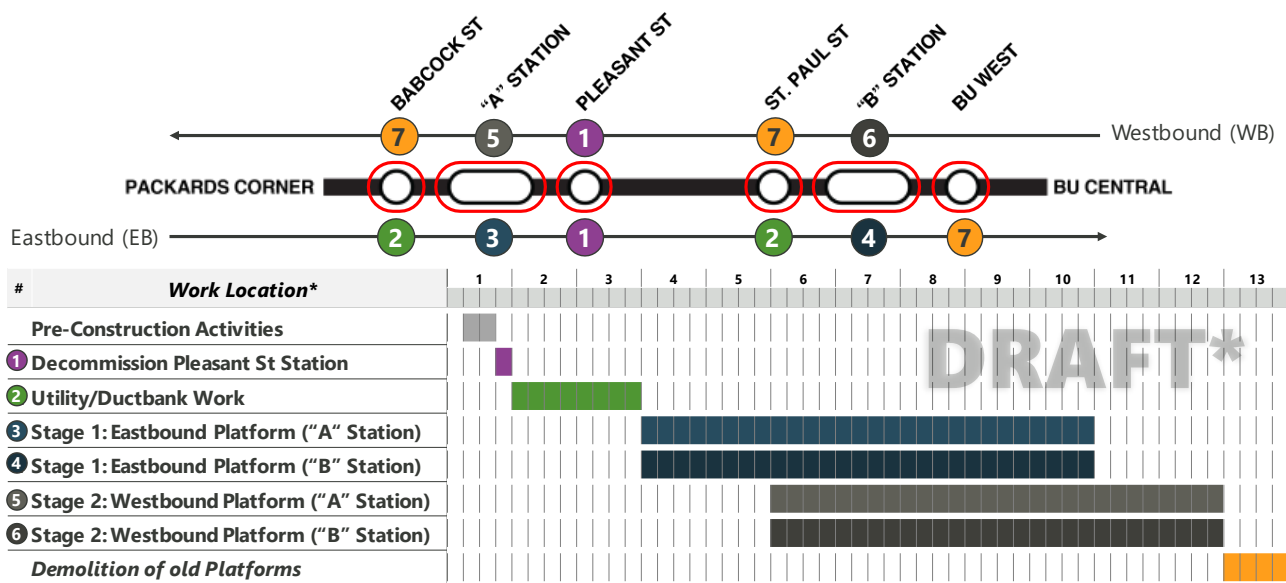
- a physical divider between the platform and traffic
- wider, raised, accessible platforms
- canopies
- two entrances per station
- windscreens and fencing
- lighting, seating, and access to emergency communication equipment
- overall trip time will be faster through this section of the Green Line

Construction Sequence

Mr. Murphy presented the construction sequence for the project, noting work is scheduled to begin on Monday, February 15.

Mr. Murphy reviewed what the public can expect throughout construction, reiterating that Pleasant St. Station will permanently close at the end of service on February 26. He noted train service will continue at Babcock Street, St. Paul St., and BU West stations on weekdays until 9:00 PM throughout construction. He said the current shuttle plans involve weeknight and weekend shuttles.

Mr. Murphy presented the anticipated sequence of construction over a 12-month timeline, noting GLT is looking for ways to accelerate the construction.



Mr. Murphy reviewed the plans for the demolition of Pleasant St. Station, which will be decommissioned on February 27-28. Riders will be directed to use St. Paul St. or Babcock St. stations, which are approximately a 2–5-minute walking distance from Pleasant St. Station.

Mr. Murphy explained that platform restoration work will occur at Babcock St. Station on March 6-7 and at St. Paul St. Station on March 13-14, for which both stations will be closed during each respective weekend and shuttles will operate.

Mr. Murphy reviewed the planned sequence of construction of the new station platforms in detail (Stages 1 and 2).

Traffic Management Plan

Mr. Murphy reviewed the project's traffic management plan, which includes road and lane closures during construction of the two new stations. He noted the work is planned overnight to minimize traffic impacts for drivers on Commonwealth Ave, and local traffic will be allowed access as well as buses and emergency vehicles. Pedestrian pathways will be clearly delineated.



Mr. Murphy explained that during the majority of construction, including weeknights after 9:00 PM and weekends, there will be single lane closures on Commonwealth Ave. that do not impact bus service or pedestrian access.

Making Connections During Construction

Tamieka Thibodeaux, GLT Senior Director, noted the MBTA will ensure riders are informed of transportation alternatives during construction. Ms. Thibodeaux reviewed what riders can expect when using alternative service, and the service impacts throughout construction:

- Train service will be available between Babcock St. and Boston College, and Kenmore eastbound
- Shuttles replace trains between Kenmore and Babcock St. on weeknights from 9:00 PM to 1:00 AM and during the weekends.
- Riders will be redirected to Route 57 bus stops to take the shuttle.

Ms. Thibodeaux said drivers are trained to assist riders and operate lifts when needed.

Stay Connected

Ms. Farrell shared how the public can receive the latest updates on the project, encouraging them to sign up for the GLT email list on the website, www.mbta.com/GLT.

Ms. Farrell said the project team realizes that construction causes inconvenience to riders and neighbours of the Green Line, and GLT appreciates their patience while important upgrades to the Green Line are implemented. She reviewed the noise mitigation procedures that will be in place and noted there is a construction hotline number for abutters to alert GLT to any noise issues: **508-646-4691**

Ms. Farrell opened the meeting to questions and comments (see pages 5-7).

She thanked participants for joining the meeting and thanked the MBTA's municipal partners, as well as Boston University and others for working with GLT to advance this important project and improve the quality of service for all Green Line riders.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SUMMARY

Verbal Question and Answer Summary

Representative Tommy Vitolo, MA House of Representatives, congratulated the GLT team on this project and noted the significant benefits this will bring to riders and everyone who lives in the neighborhood, including Brookline residents. He suggested that "St. Paul St." not be reused as a new station name since a St. Paul St. Station already exists on the C Line. He encouraged the new station on the western side be named 'Agganis Arena'. He thanked the GLT team for their work on this project. Ms. Farrell noted there is a station naming committee at the MBTA and the project team will share his suggestion. Mr. Frison added that GLT enjoyed working with Rep. Vitolo last year on track and intersection upgrades and thanked him for his continued support.

Jim Curley, Boston University, said the presentation was thorough and informative and he appreciates all the work GLT has done informing the BU community. He said it will be an exciting year of construction and he looks forward to working with GLT.

Matt Moran, Boston Transportation Department, said he is looking forward to the results of this project and appreciated the coordination and effort of GLT.

Stefan Wuensch, MBTA Rider Oversight Committee, said he is a former BU student and resident of Brighton. His number one concern is whether or not there is an opportunity to take some roadway space back to widen the new platforms, as the proximity of passing vehicles is frightening. Mr. Frison said the new stations will be ADA compliant with appropriate width and length to improve the experience for all riders. He added there will also be access at both ends of the platforms with clear pedestrian pathways to get to the stations, and barriers between passengers and vehicles. Mr. Frison noted there GLT's long-term vision of the B Branch includes working with Boston to appropriately size B Branch stations in the future.

Matthew Wong, a student at Lasell University, asked why the diversion plans for the March 6-7 closure of Babcock St. Station include busing from Washington St. to Kenmore, which cuts out many busy stops like Harvard Ave. and Packard's Corner. Ms. Thibodeaux explained the shuttles need to run to Washington St. because the contractors need to turn off overhead power to work safely. The crossover at Babcock St. will not be able to be utilized and the next available crossover is at Washington St, which is also an accessible station for customers.

Mr. Wuensch asked what existing stations most mirror the design of the new stations in terms of tactile strips, seating and other features. Ms. Thibodeaux said the closest stations are BU Central and BU East which both have canopies and benches.

Matthew Wong noted that the MTA in New York often reroutes trains when there is construction or something blocking the tracks rather than operating shuttle buses. He asked if it would be possible to run B Branch trains on the C Branch, noting this may not be feasible. Ms. Thibodeaux said there are no double tracks available on the MBTA system that would allow this to be feasible but the MBTA does run extra service when possible during diversions on other lines. She noted catching the C or D Branch by walking to Reservoir or Cleveland Circle is also possible. The MBTA Trip Planner tool is helpful as well.

Written Question and Answer Summary (Submitted in the Q+A Feature)²

Jack Halverson asked, *"Will there be off-board fare collection?"* Mr. Frison said there are two long-term initiatives regarding this, and one is a comprehensive upgrade to fare collection systems across the T to update the fair vending at stations, and the second is the new fleet of vehicles that will have an option to pay as you get on the train. There will not be fare vending at the new B Branch stations when they open.

Abby C asked, *"What is the 1-2-3 on the top axis of the timeline? Months from February?"* Mr. Murphy confirmed the numbers refer to months on slide 13 and it is anticipated to be a 13-month project. He noted GLT will be looking for opportunities to accelerate the timeline with daytime work. Mr. Frison added the schedule on this slide is a conservative estimate as there are unpredictable factors at play, mainly the impacts of COVID-19. He noted GLT accelerated multiple projects last year and will look for opportunities to do so again for this project.

Joel Brown asked, *"What is the process for renaming stations and is there public input?"* Ms. Farrell said there is a process, but she does not have that answer on hand and said the project team will look into this. She noted there is a MBTA station naming committee that oversees these decisions.

Chris K asked *"Thank you for the presentation. Two questions. 1.) Are the street light patterns going to change with the 2 consolidated platforms? 2.) When is the whole project supposed to be completed?"* Ms. Farrell noted Question 2 has been answered already. Mr. Frison said there is a separate initiative at the MBTA for Transit Signal Prioritization (TSP) to prioritize the Green Line vehicles over general traffic, however he does not know the specific timing.

Abby C said *"I am absolutely thrilled for these stations to be consolidated. The trip inbound down Comm Ave is brutal and I think this will help a lot, so thank you! Is there talk of consolidating others? For example, BU Central and BU East?"* Mr. Frison said there are no immediate plans for those stations, but GLT is taking a long-term look at the entire system and is exploring opportunities to optimize trips so that could be an option.

Anne Mazzola said *"Hi, I'm the Community Liaison for City Councilor Liz Breadon. Just want to say thank you. These consolidations make sense and look great and we appreciate your open communication. Future question would be getting handicapped access to the Warren Street stop to accommodate the Veterans going to the new facility/residence in that area."* Mr. Frison said Warren Street is one of a number of stations GLT is looking at. He said GLT is working with the City of Boston to design roadway and station improvements in that area, and estimated in about five to ten years that area will change considerably with the priority being to improve accessibility of those stations.

² The comments are transcribed and only fixed for typos and grammar.



Joel Brown asked, *"Will crosswalks change or will they continue to be at the intersections?"* Mr. Murphy said crosswalks are not going to change.

Joel Brown asked, *"Regarding the "width" of platforms is the footprint changing at all?"* Mr. Murphy said compared to the existing Pleasant St. Station the width will increase to be 8 feet wide.

Joel Brown asked, *"That 8 feet sounds at least 3 feet wider than current platforms - where's it coming from if not out of the roadway?"* Mr. Murphy said the width will be 8 feet from the edge of the tactile strip to the vehicle barrier, and when Commonwealth Ave. was reconstructed a couple years ago, that project planned for wider platforms in the new station locations.

Gretchen K Hartigan asked, *"I joined late so apologies if this was already answered. Will this Deck be available after the meeting?"* Ms. Farrell noted the presentation is already posted at www.mbta.com/GLBstations.

Mr. Wuensch said, *"(Not a question) THANK YOU! Excellent project work, and very well-run meeting this evening. Much appreciated!"* Ms. Farrell thanked him for his compliment.

Matthew Wong said, *"I appreciate the suggestion of walking down the hill at Chestnut Hill to transfer between branches... but I have been charged a double fare on more than one occasion when trying to do that."* Ms. Farrell said she is sorry to hear that and hopes he got where he was going.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

A total of **64** people attended: **63** signed in and **1** called in.

First Name	Last Name
Dennis	A Dunn
Barry	Abel
Daniel	Bass
Richard	Behrman
Joel	Brown
John	Buck
David	Burke
Johnny	C
Abby	C
Rob	Carvalho
Terrie	Chan
Damian	Cooper
Jim	Curley
Dino	DiFronzo Sr
Alicia	Gomes
Ashley	Greaves
Jack	Halverson
Martin	Hegen
Andy	Hernandez
Kathy	Hynes
Sarah's	Ipad
Chris	K
Gretchen	K Hartigan
Peter	Kamaru
Marla	Krauss
Stephanie	Le
Elizabeth	Leary
Anna	Leslie, ABHC
Mike	Lovett



First Name	Last Name
Nate	M
Anne	Mazzola
Roni	Milton MA
Zahra	Moghaddam
Matt	Moran
Etty	Padmodipoetro Urban Idea Lab
Jill	Pearson
Vince	Rangel
Stephanie	Renault
Victoria	Roehrich
Mark	Shamon GLT
Nicole	Singleton
Anna	Smith
Diane	Sokal
David	Trevvett
Jazmine	Villalona
Tommy	Vitolo, MA State Representative
Jacob	Wessel
Carol	Wolter-Gustafson
Matthew	Wong
Leng	Woo
Stefan	Wuensch (MBTA Rider Oversight Committee)
Tom	[no last name provided]
Austin	[no last name provided]
Jim	[no last name provided]
Kirsten	[no last name provided]
anonymous	[no last name provided]
David-Marc	[no last name provided]
LiuZ	[no last name provided]
Frank	[no last name provided]
GuiseC	[no last name provided]



First Name	Last Name
Tom	[no last name provided]
VK	[no last name provided]



Office of Green Line Transformation
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)