Better Bus Project

Making transit better together

Welcome!

This is the first Public Meeting on the Bus Network Redesign.

Please settle in!

The meeting will start shortly.

How To Use Zoom
Interpretation

- Select the language you would like to hear by clicking the Interpretation feature and selecting a language from the list provided.
- To hear the interpreted language only, click Mute Original Audio.
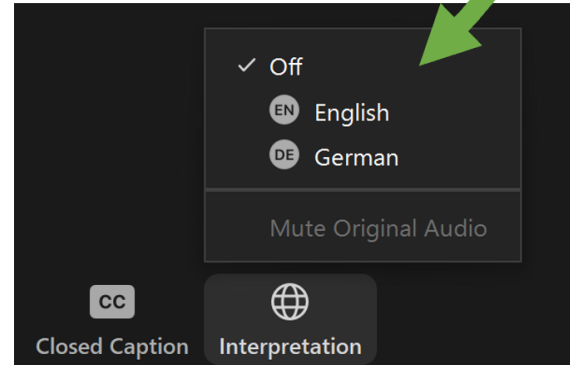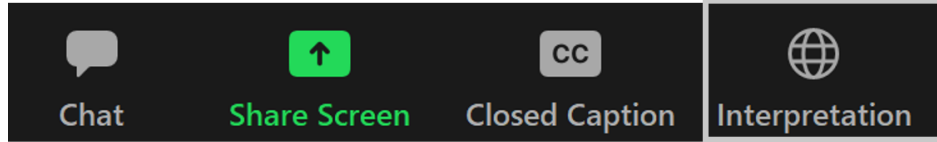
How To Use Zoom
Captioning

- You can view closed captions by clicking the Closed Captions feature and selecting from the options shown.
- Show Subtitle will display a caption at the bottom of the screen.
- View Full Transcript will display the meeting's audio transcription in a window to the right.
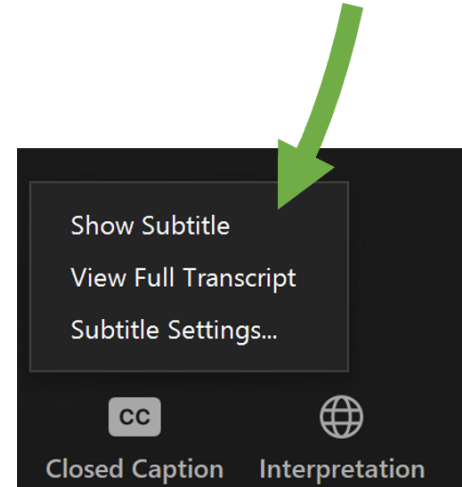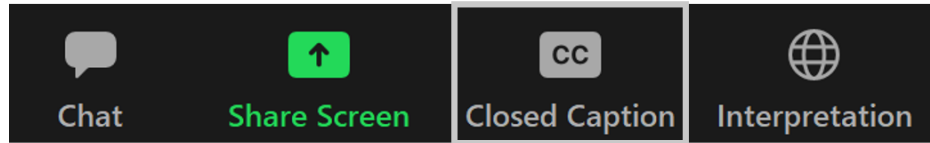
How To Use Zoom View Presentation

- If you're on a computer, toggle Speaker View to see the presentation prominently.
- If you're on a smartphone, swipe to change views.
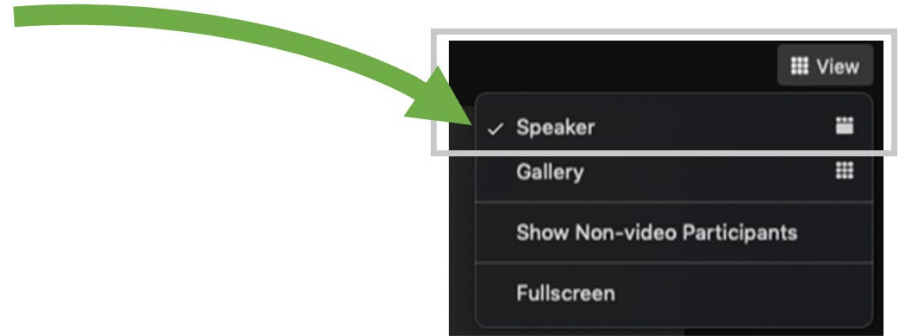
How To Use Zoom Chat

- You may use the Chat button to submit a typed question or comment at any point during the meeting.
- If you have a technical problem, please share your issue in the Chat feature at any point during the meeting, and we will respond as quickly as possible.
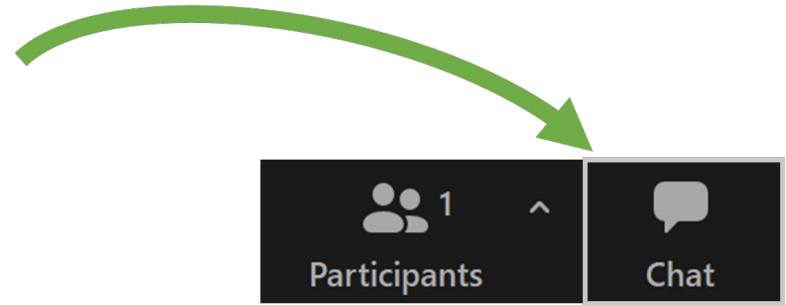
Agenda

Better Bus Project — Making transit better together
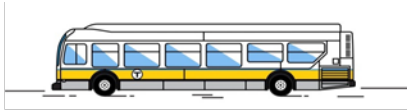
6:05 PM Introductions

6:10 PM Presentation

6:45 PM Breakout Sessions

7:10 PM Return to Plenary for Q&A

7:30 PM Meeting wrap-up

The Better Bus Project

How Does the Initiative Improve My Experience?

What Is the Initiative?

Initiative	Frequent	Fast	Reliable	Connects Key Destinations	Walkable	Easy to Use	Comfortable	Accessible
Bus Transit Priority	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
Bus Network Redesign	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○
2019 Route Changes	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	●
Bus Stops: Accessibility Improvements, Shelters, and Amenities	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
Bus Modernization: Fleet and Facilities	●	○	●	○	○	○	●	●
Improved Passenger Information: E-Ink Signs	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○
Bus Operations: Skate—Mobile Dispatching	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	○

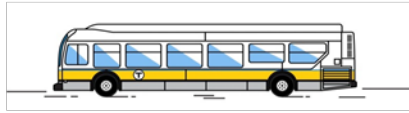# The Bus Network Redesign

How Does the Initiative Improve My Experience?
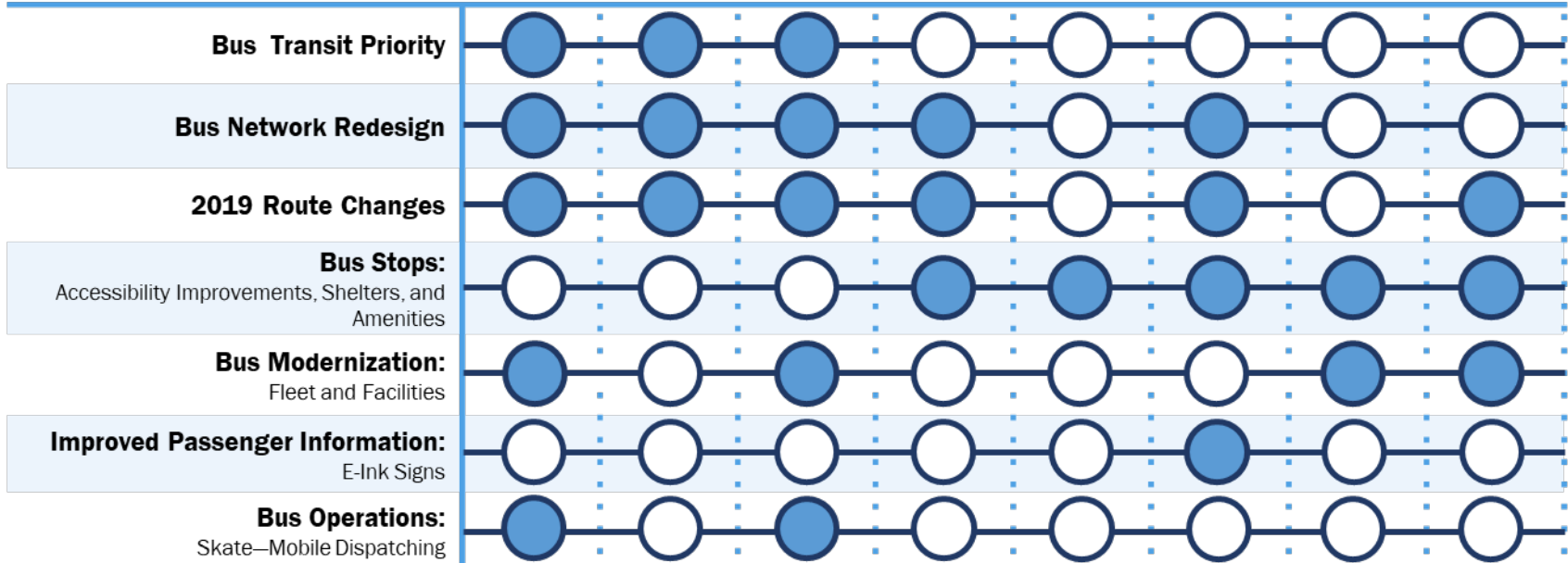
	Frequent	Fast	Reliable	Connects Key Destinations	Walkable	Easy to Use	Comfortable	Accessible
What Is the Initiative?								
Bus Network Redesign	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○

A complete re-imagining of the MBTA's bus network to better reflect the travel needs of the region and create a better experience for current and future bus riders.

Greater Boston has experienced significant changes in recent years, while the bus network has stayed largely the same.

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New employment districts have emerged, demographics have shifted, congestion has increased, and **travel patterns have changed.**

There are also more people and more cars

Boston population

7% increase

from 2012 to 2017

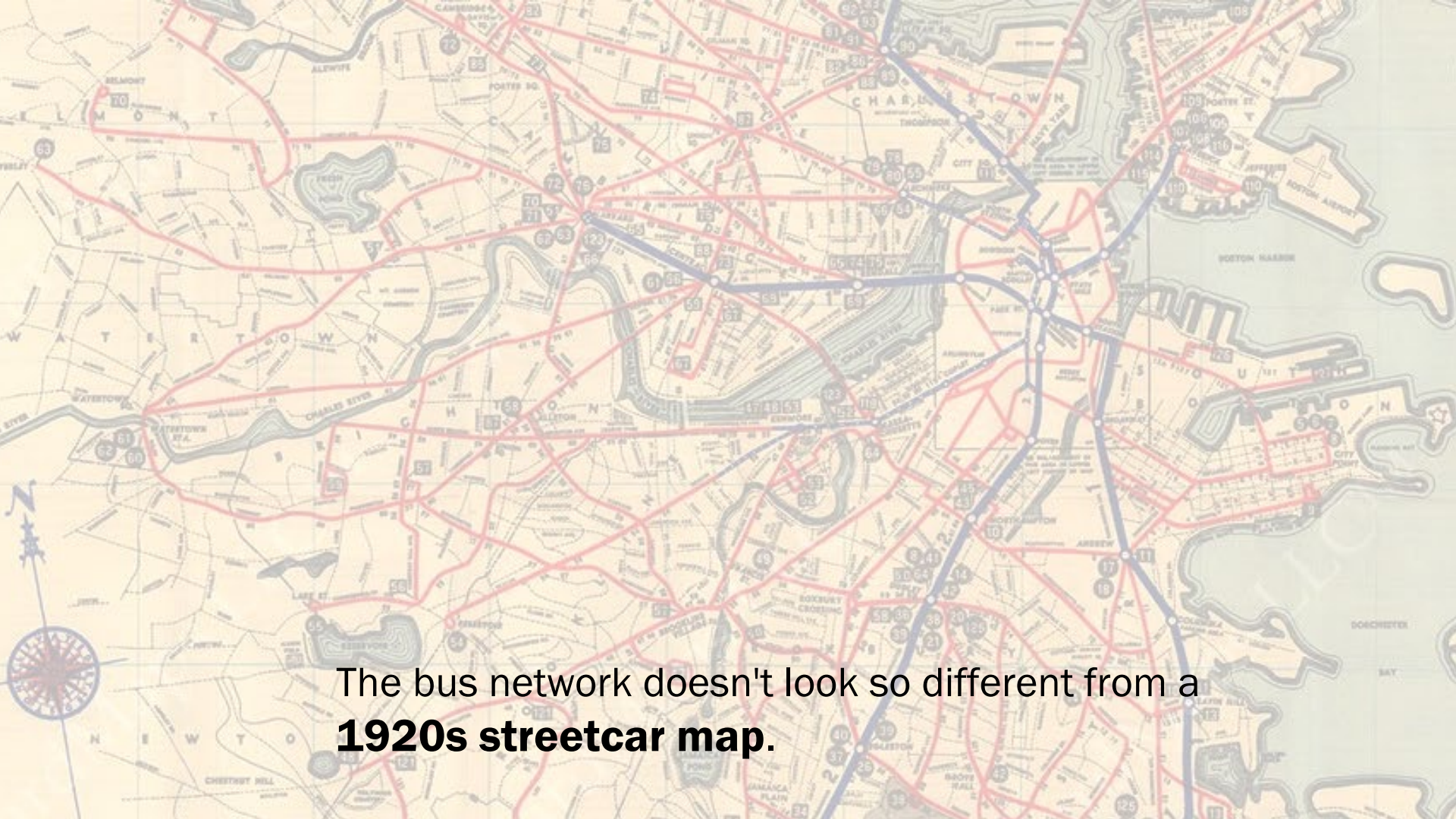**Households owning vehicles**

15% increase

from 2012 to 2017

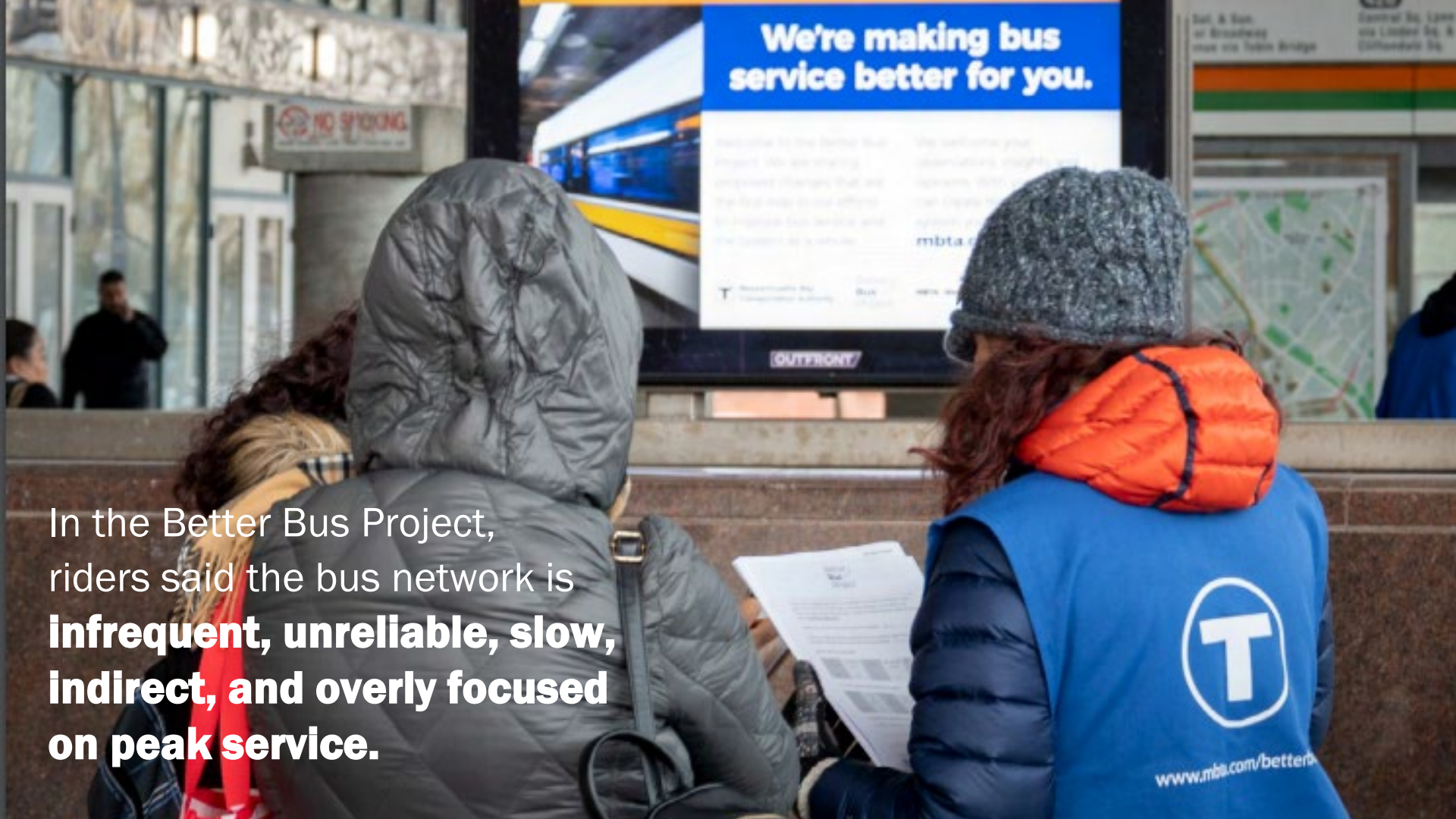**The average trip during peak hours took**

20% longer

In 2019 than it did in 2006

The bus network doesn't look so different from a **1920s streetcar map.**

Riders tell us the network does not work for them.

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In the Better Bus Project, riders said the bus network is **infrequent, unreliable, slow, indirect, and overly focused on peak service.**

This is a once-in-a-generation attempt to transform the network for the people who depend on it.

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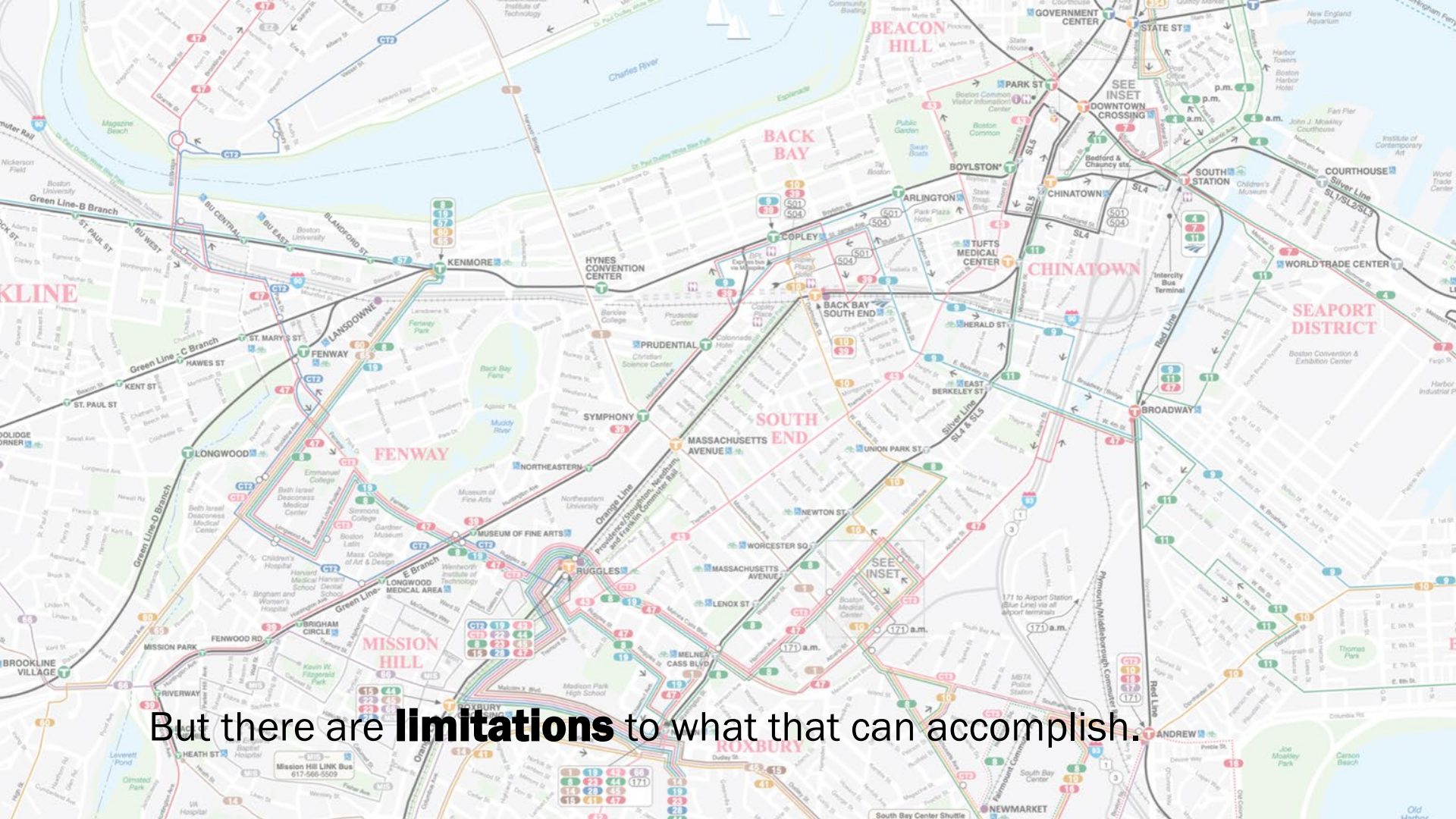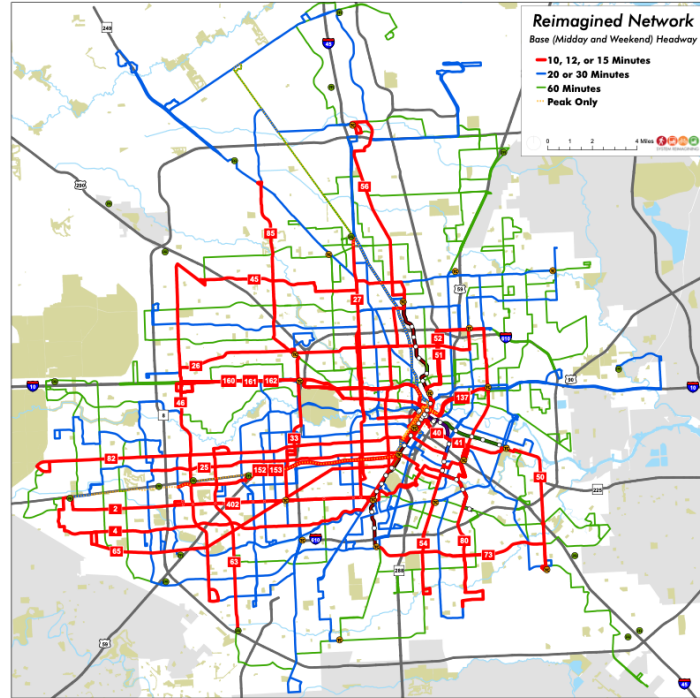Greater Boston needs **better bus service.**

We can make bus service better with **bus lanes.**

We can make bus service better by **redesigning individual routes.**

52
Dedham Mall, Charles Rvr Loop

57
Kenmore Station

502
Copley Square

502
Watertown Yard

504
Downtown

504
Watertown Yard

553
Downtown

553
Roberts

554
Downtown

554
Waverley

But there are **limitations** to what that can accomplish.

Existing Network — Weekday Midday Headway
- 10 to 15 Minutes
- 16 to 30 Minutes
- 31 to 80 Minutes

Reimagined Network — Base (Midday and Weekend) Headway
- 10, 12, or 15 Minutes
- 20 or 30 Minutes
- 60 Minutes
- Peak Only
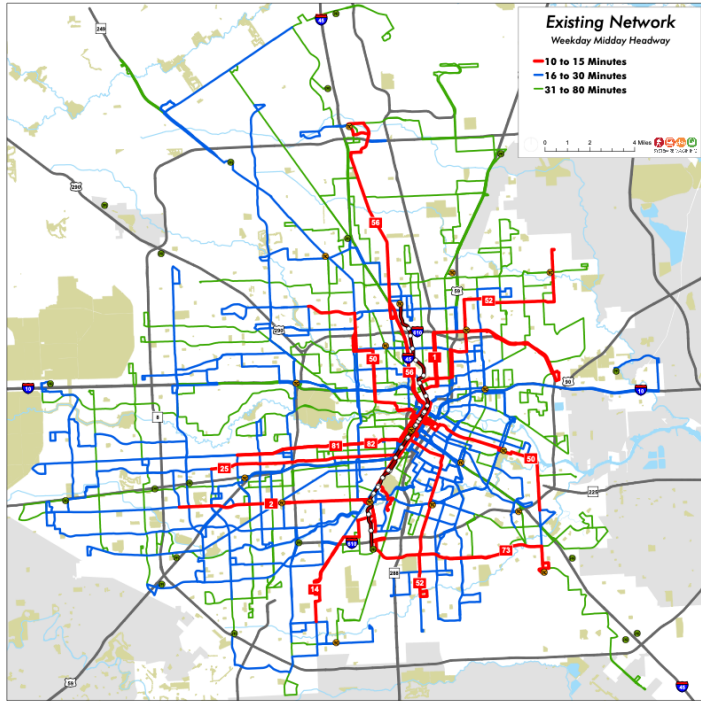
There are some things that only a **redesign** can do.
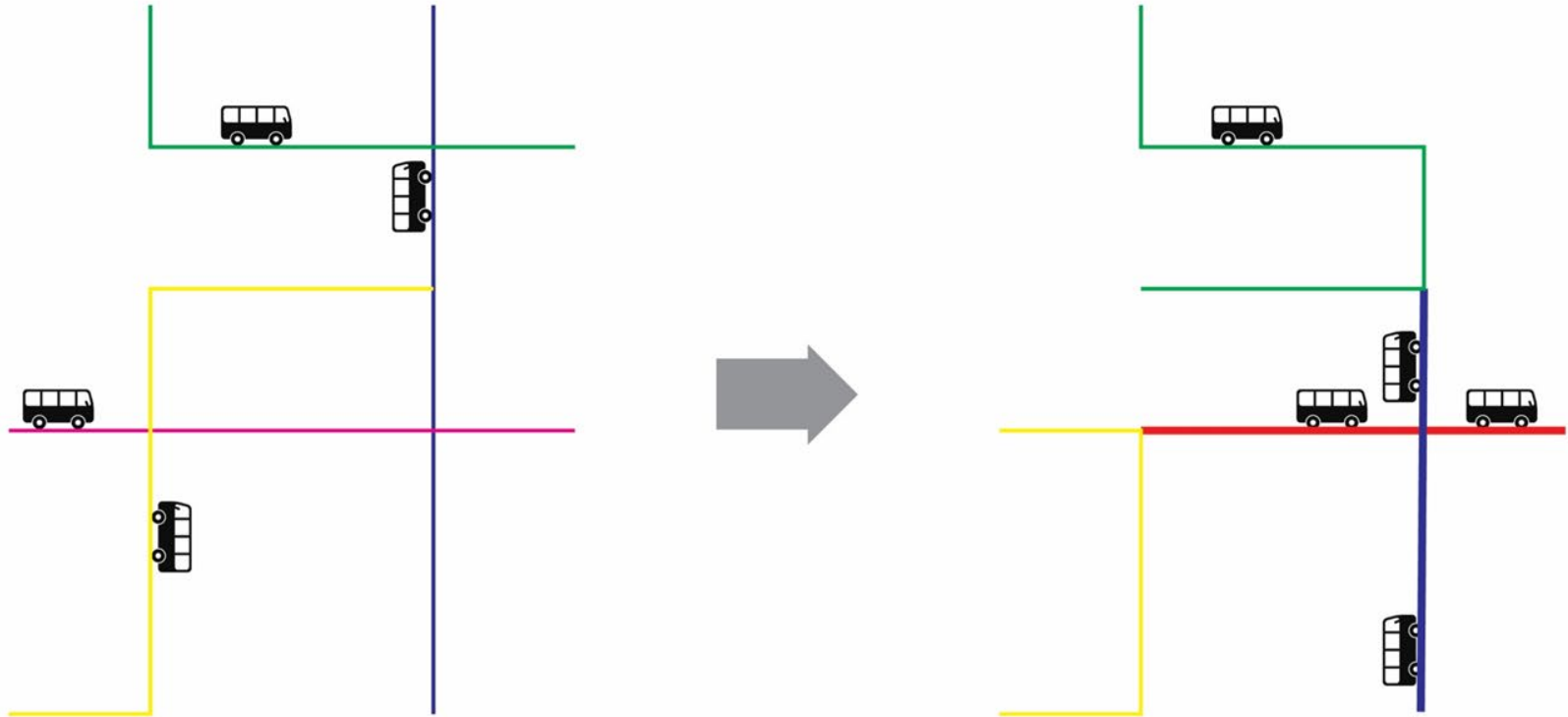
A network redesign can **focus service into core areas.**
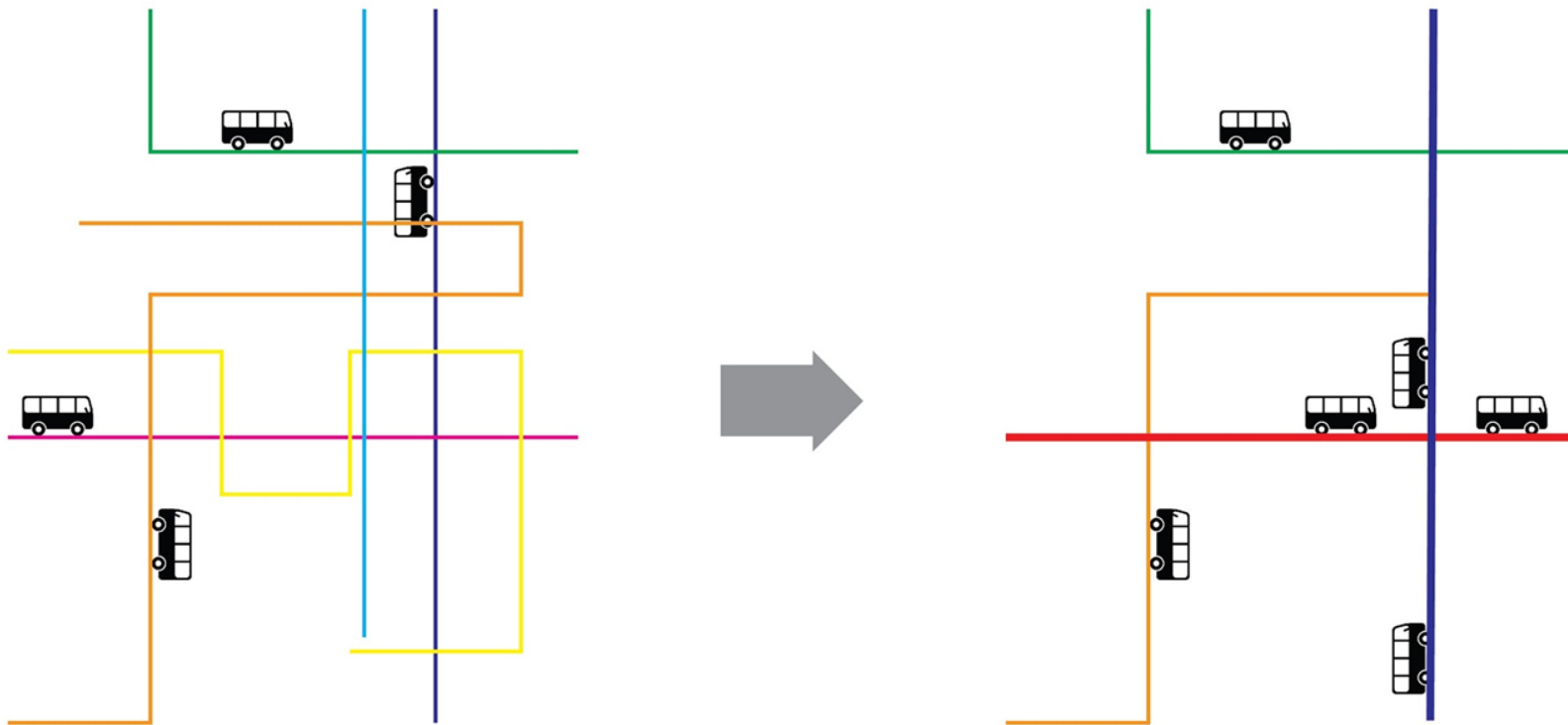
A network redesign can **focus service into corridors.**
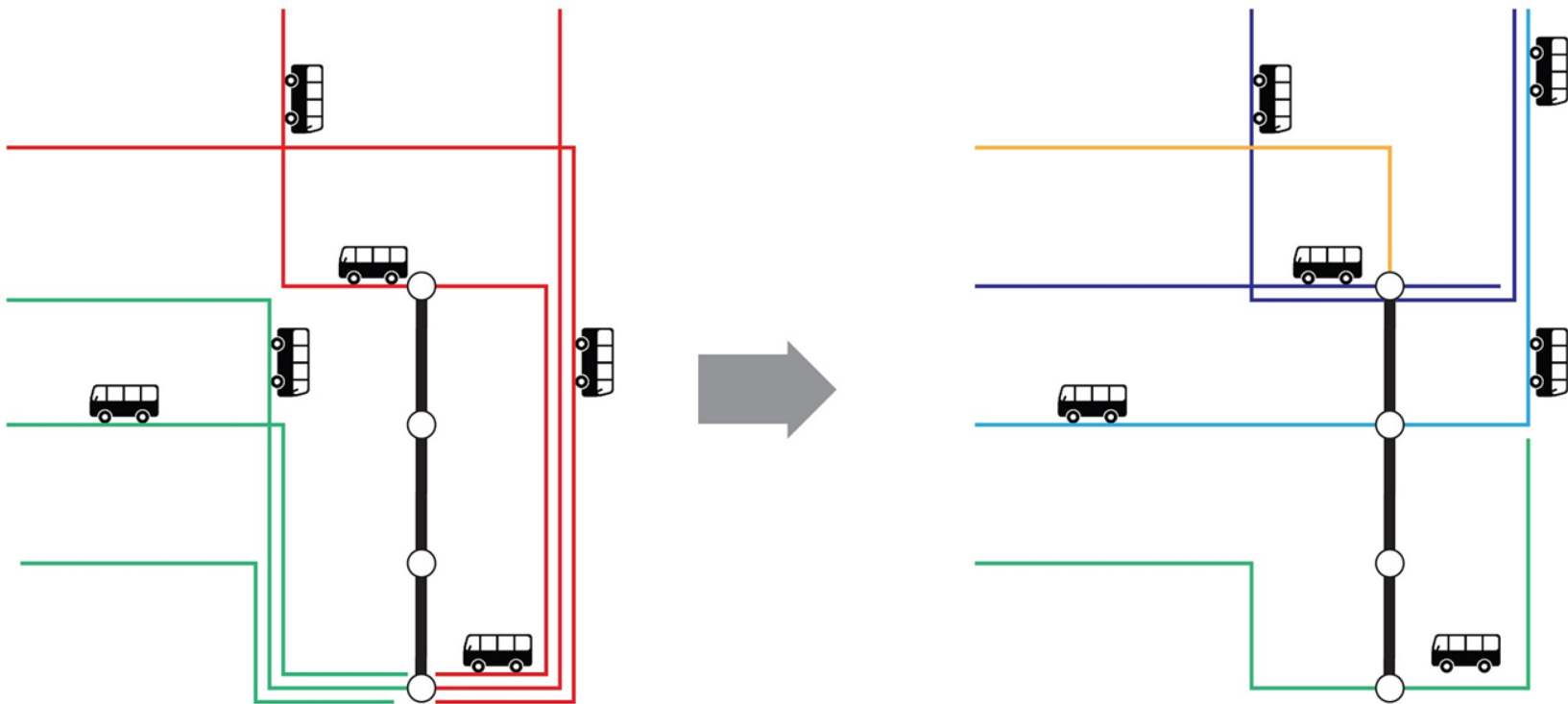
A network redesign can **connect more riders to rapid transit.**
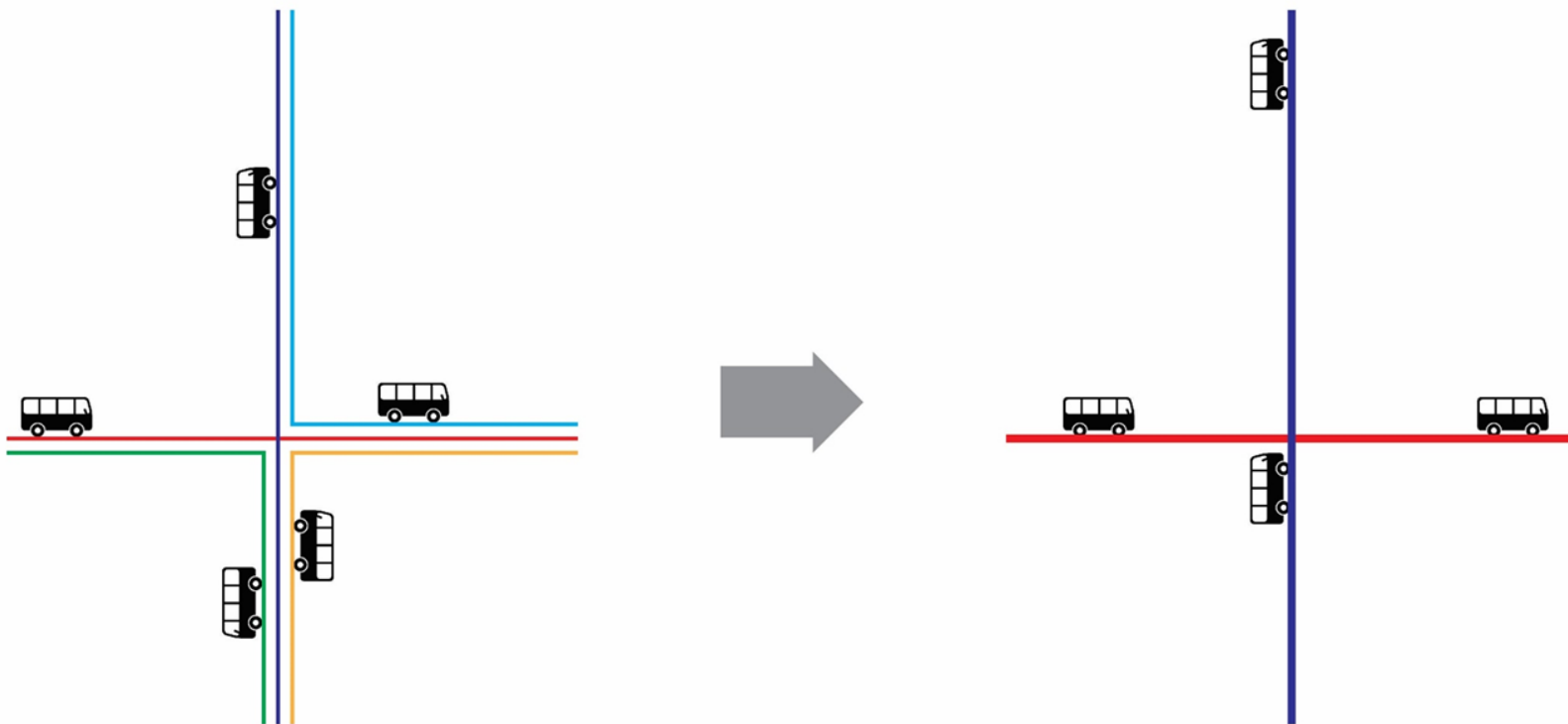
A network redesign can **increase frequency.**
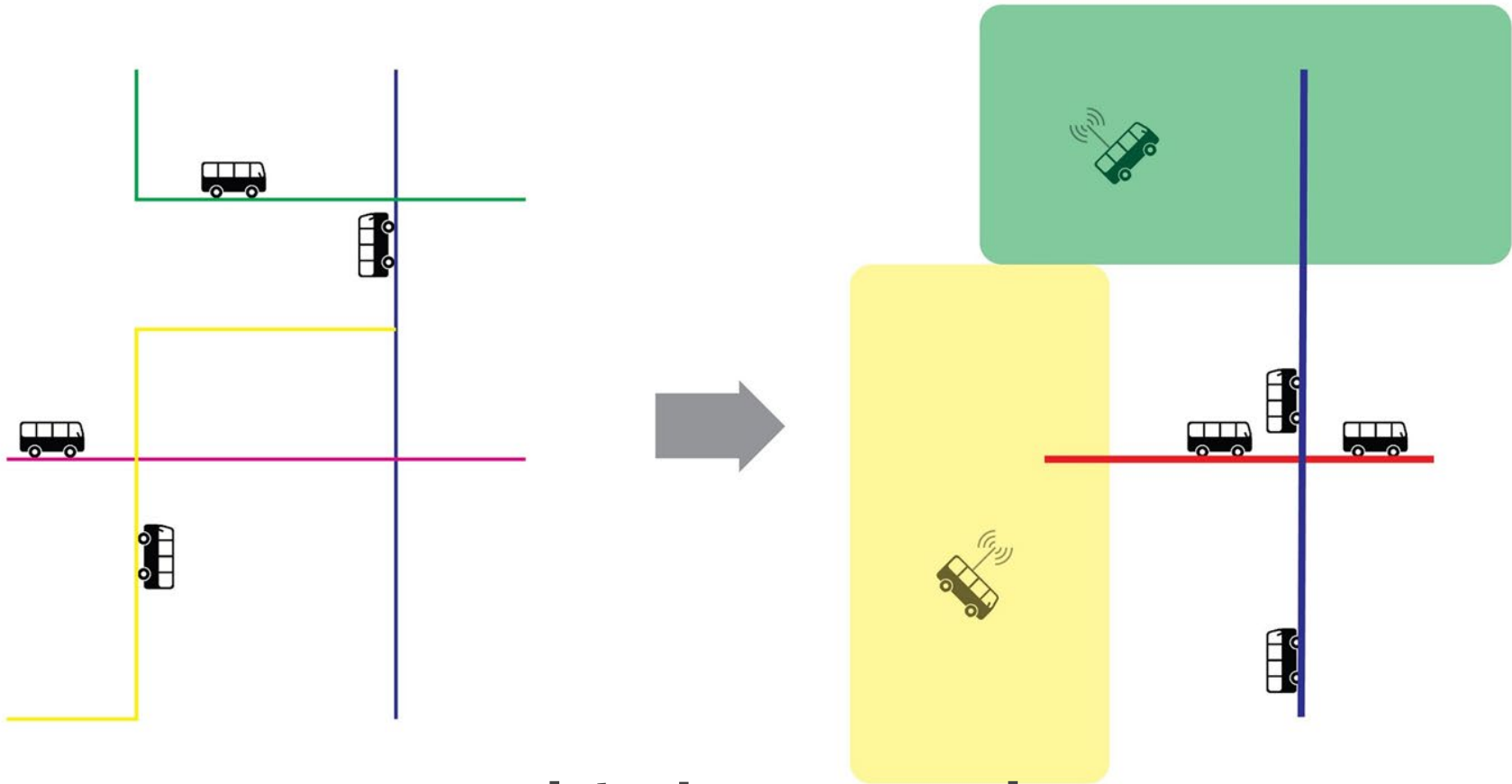
A network redesign can **introduce new services.**
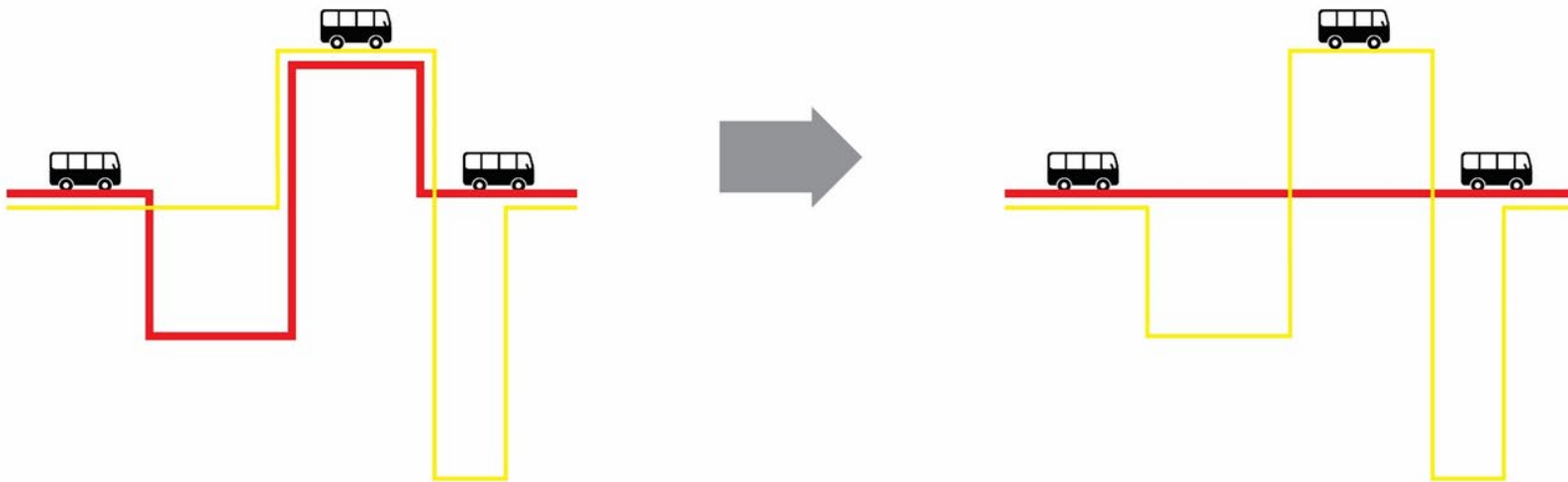
A network redesign can **straighten routes.**
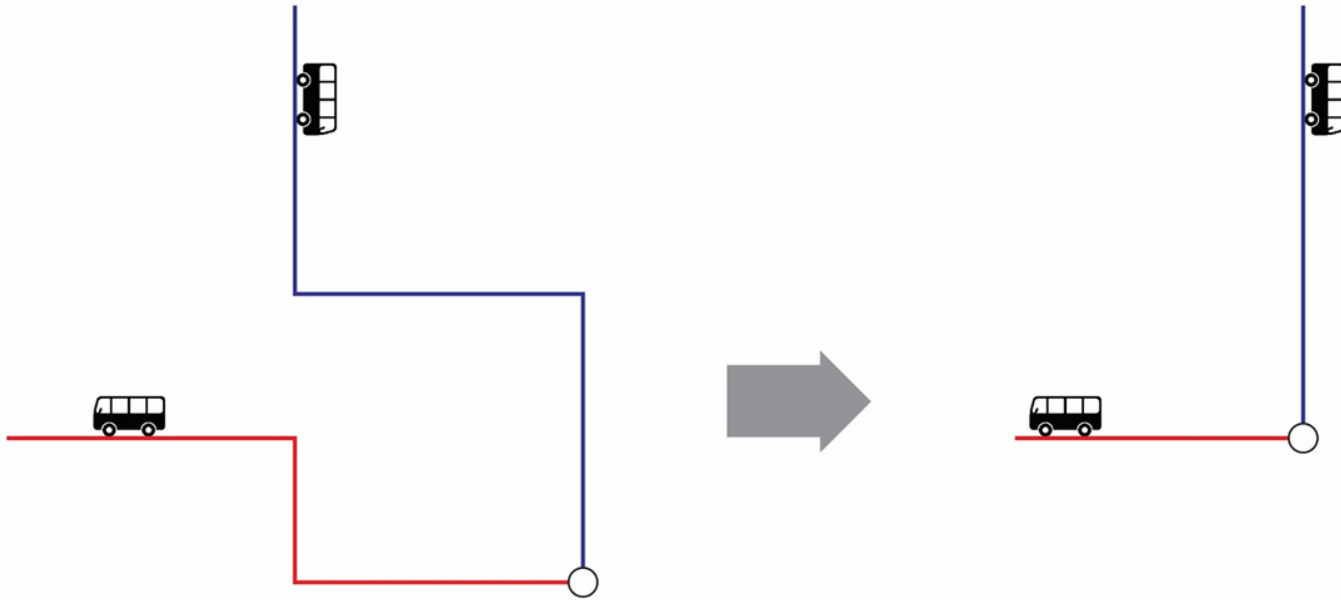
A network redesign can make trips **more direct.**
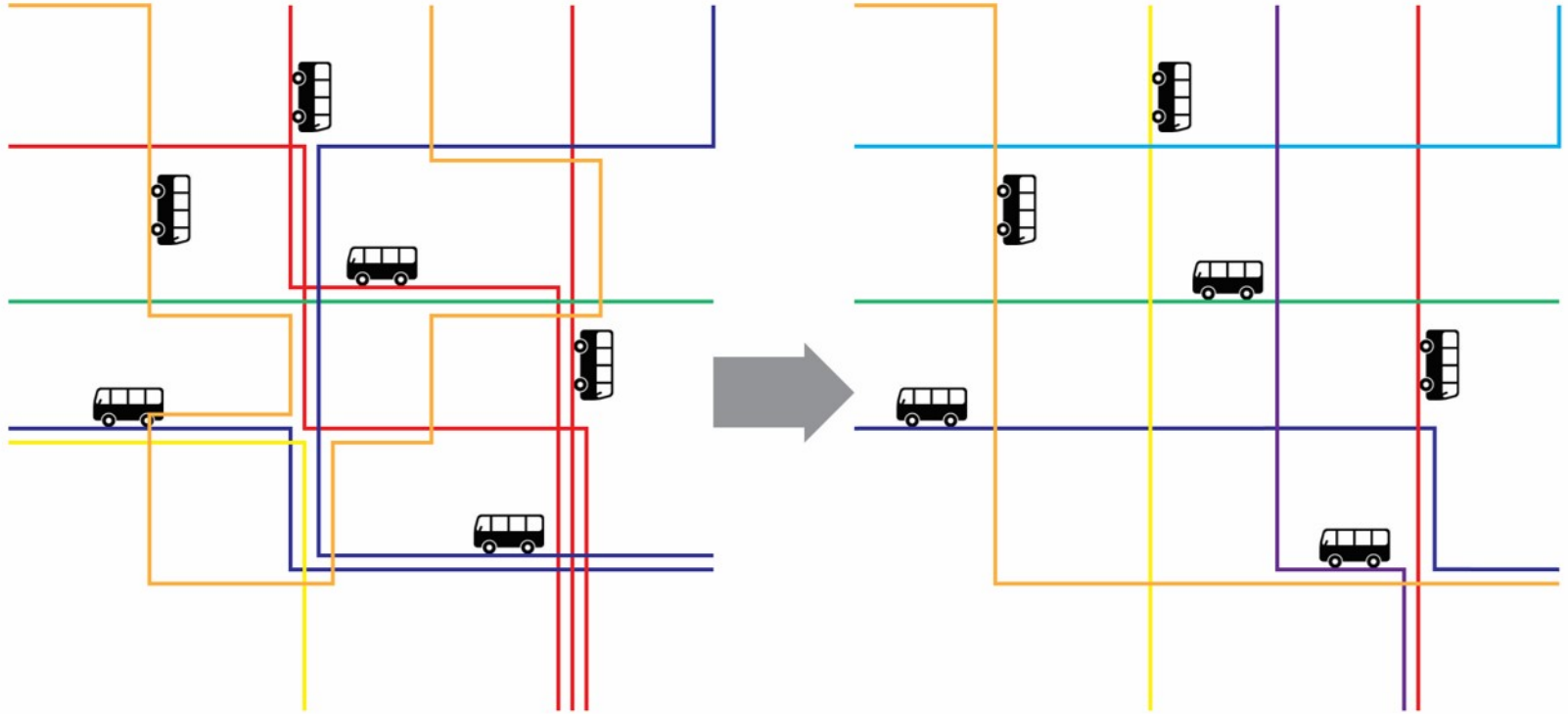
A network redesign can **make the system more legible.**

Pre-pandemic, the MBTA Bus network served nearly 450,000 trips on a single weekday, **more than a third of all MBTA trips**.

Many MBTA bus riders are lower-income, people of color, seniors, or people who live in households with no vehicles. During the pandemic, bus **retained up to 4x more of its riders** than commuter rail or ferry.

A redesign can create a network that's **better for riders.**

How do we do this right?

We're not just restoring – we're transforming

- Going back to the pre-COVID network is not good enough
- We want to build a *better and more equitable network* than what we had pre-COVID
- Better transit is essential to economic recovery
- The redesign is based on pre-COVID service hours
- The redesign will also show where we can add more service when we have the resources

The network should change to reflect the changing travel needs of the region.

We're redesigning the entire network

- A blank slate redesign – data-driven but confirmed with stakeholder engagement

- Based on everything we've heard from riders since the Better Bus Project started

- Using travel data to capture all the trips people are taking to understand the needs of the region

Demand **Corridors** **Roadways** **Routes**

● Destinations — High Frequency — Medium Frequency — Low Frequency
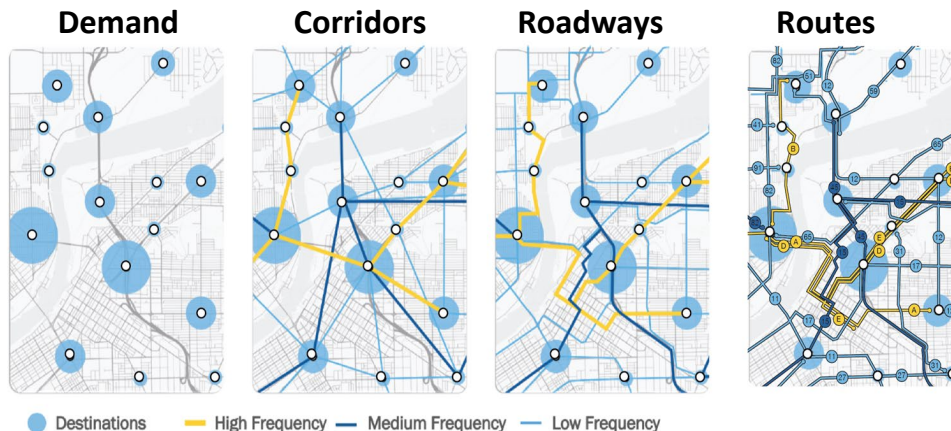
How are we measuring travel demand?

Location-Based Services (LBS) data

- Describes trips (origin-destination pairs) made on **all modes** (not just transit).

- This data captures and is representative of **all types of trips**.

- Is anonymized and unlinked from cell phone numbers and individuals to preserve privacy.
  - Able to make inferences about which trips are made by low-income, people of color, and people in zero and low vehicle households

LBS data allows us to identify places that we don't currently serve but that have high travel demand.

General Travel Patterns Exhibited from the LBS Data
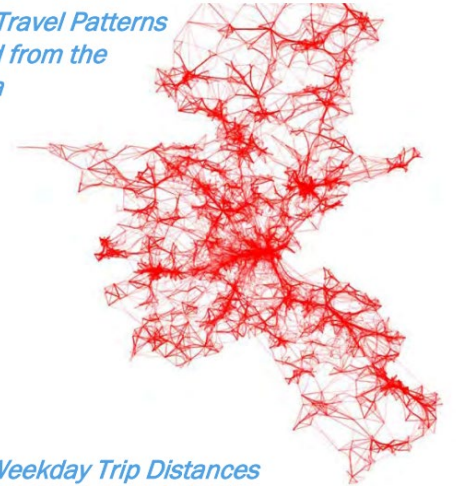
f Average Weekday Trip Distances

Measuring success

Is the MBTA providing transit critical populations with equitable transit service?

Is the MBTA connecting people to the places that are most important to them?

Is the MBTA a good choice for making these trips?

EQUITY

ACCESS

COMPETITIVENESS

Transit-critical populations: low-income populations, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, or people who live in households with few or no vehicles

How are we evaluating competitiveness?

Understanding what makes service competitive relative to driving

WALK DISTANCE
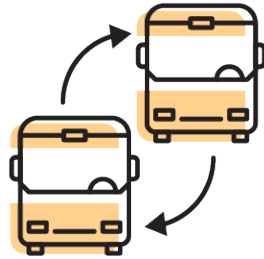
TRAVEL TIME

TRANSFERS
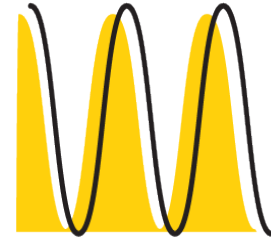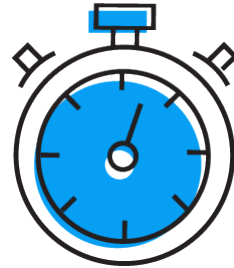
FREQUENCY

☐ Back Bay	MORE INFO
☐ Beacon Hill/MGH	MORE INFO
☐ Central Square, Cambridge	MORE INFO
☐ Central Square, Lynn	MORE INFO
☐ Chinatown, Boston	MORE INFO
☐ Fenway-Kenmore	MORE INFO
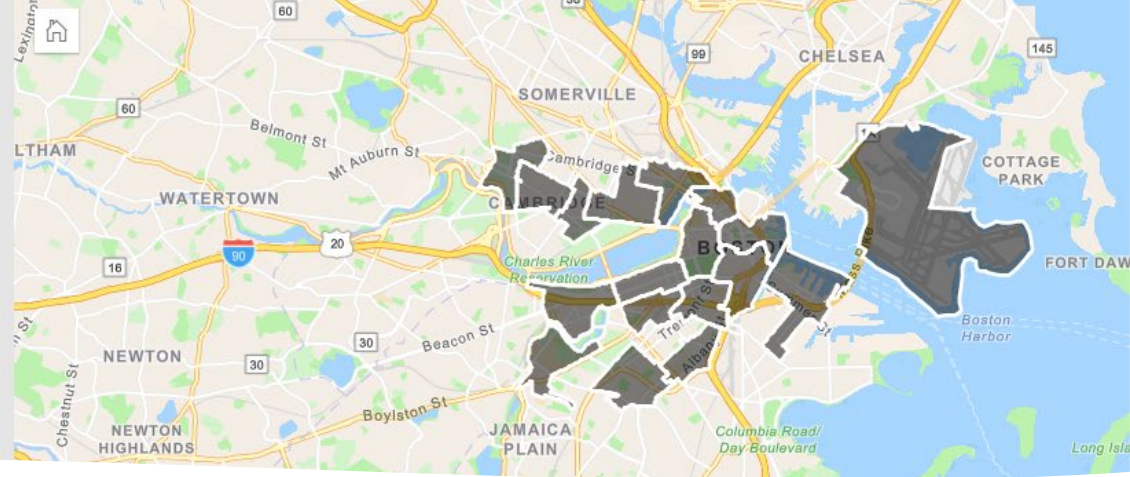
Survey Engagement

- First, we will ask you about what places you consider **Local Destinations**, or areas that are important for someone who lives in your residential area to be able to access.

- Second, we will ask you about what types of places you consider **Regional Destinations**, or areas that are important for all residents of the region to be able to access.

- Third, we will ask you about **Competitiveness**, or what makes public transit a good option for a trip.

Survey will be on our website next week: www.mbta.com/busnetworkredesign

What can you expect?

Many of the MBTA's bus routes **will change,** but neighborhoods that have service today will still have service, and today's heavily traveled corridors will still be important routes.
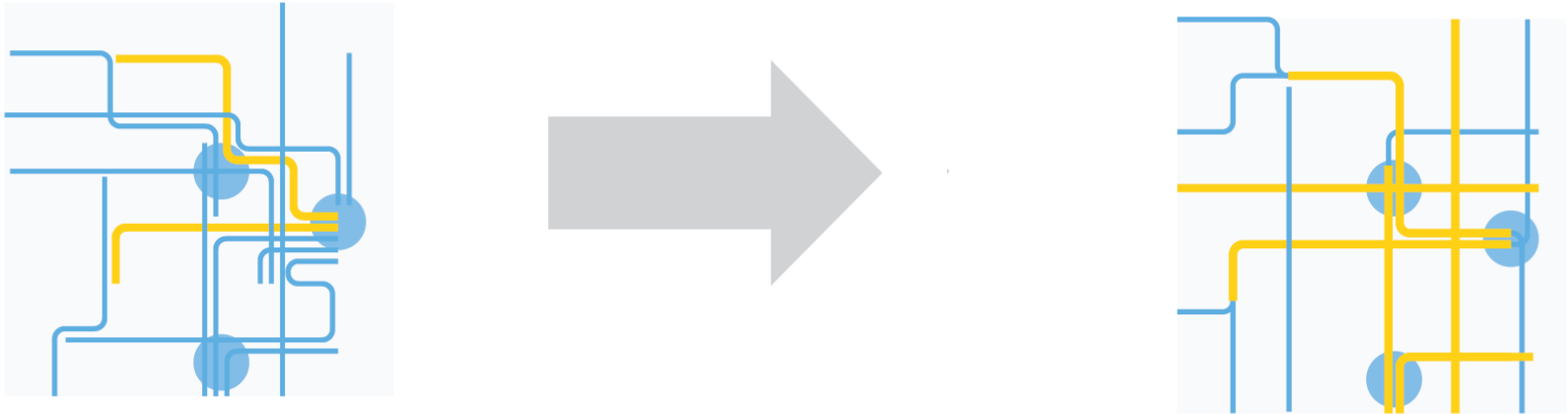
A network that's **simpler and easier to understand.**
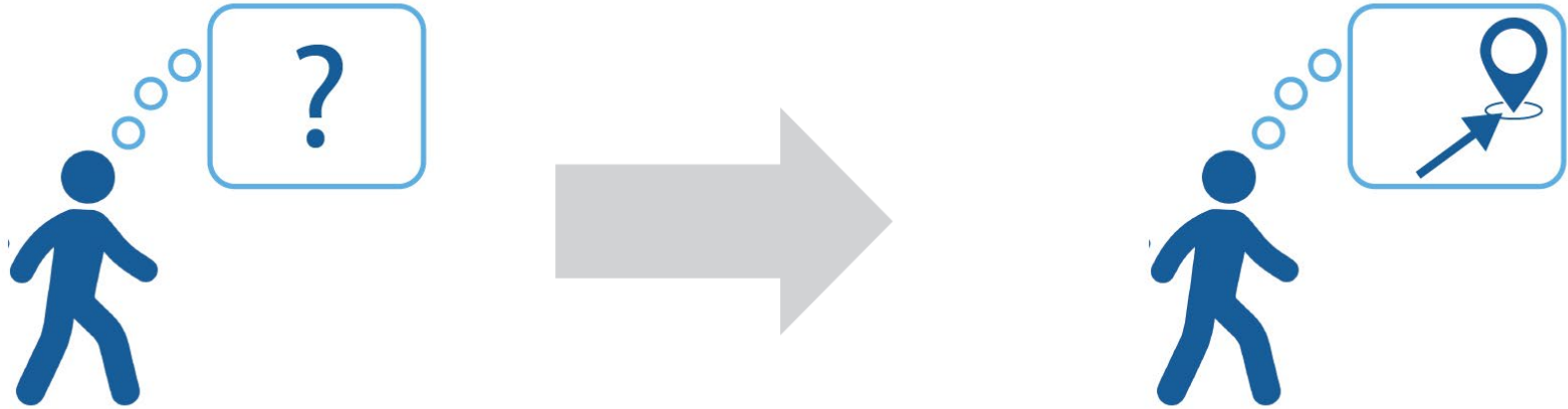
More **high frequency corridors.**
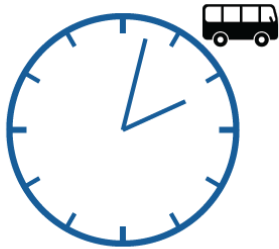
Better **connections** to major local and regional destinations.
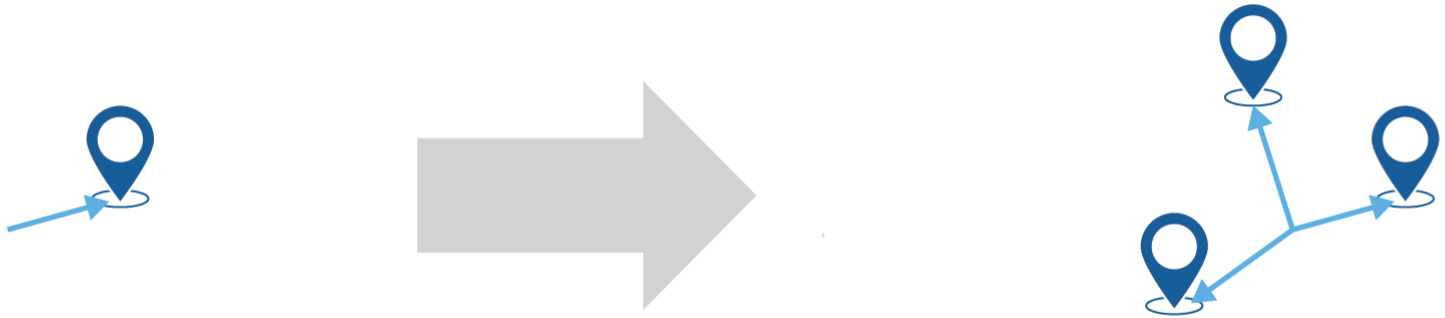
A focus on **all-day service** with more buses in the midday, evening, and weekends.
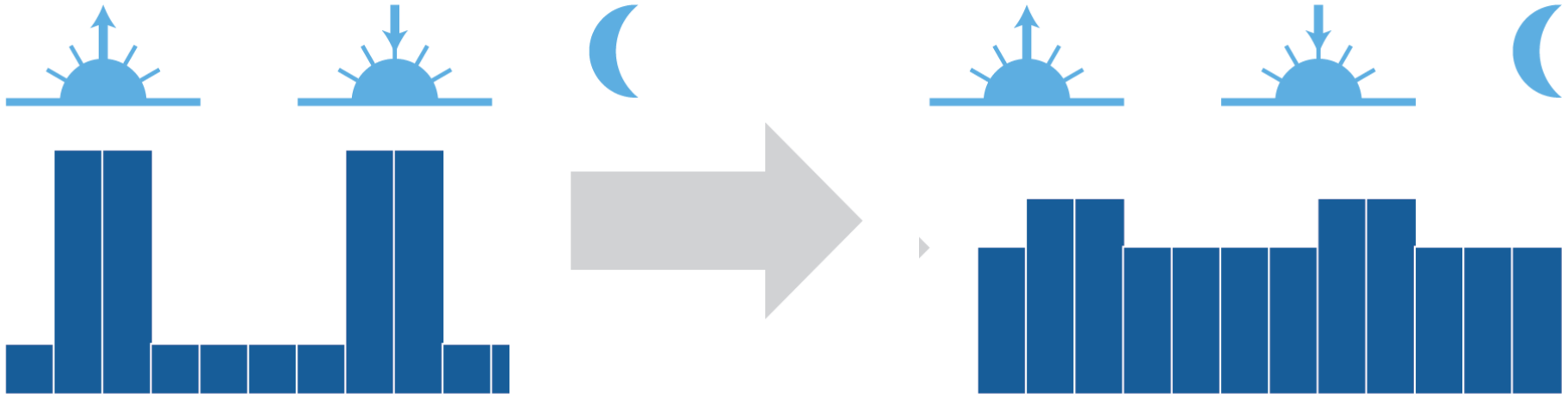
This isn't a long range plan... we want a better network on the street starting next year.

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Better Bus Project 5-year implementation timeline

Project		CY 2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Bus Network Redesign	Planning	Draft network (Fall-Winter 2021/2022)	Adopt final network Commit to full implementation				
	Infrastructure		Transit Priority, Bus Stop Installation, Busway Modifications, Signage				
	Service		Rolling route changes				

We are planning for 3-5 phases of implementation for the Bus Network Redesign that will potentially be rolled out by geography. Implementation timing will depend on structure of the new network, staff and public outreach capacity, and the ability to implement bus priority.

Municipal partnerships are key to success

- To increase service in congested corridors we need effective transit priority.

- Increased service will also require new and expanded layover locations.

- We will need bus shelters and accessible bus stops in new locations.

- We will need new and upgraded garages to operate this service.

The MBTA will only increase service in congested corridors where partnerships with municipalities and other roadway owners result in the infrastructure to provide that service.

The Redesign is coordinated with other initiatives to maximize benefit to riders

We need to replace old buses, and we need new facilities to operate them, to expand, and to electrify.

We need a new network that goes where people need it to go when they need it and is easier to understand.

We need transit priority infrastructure to keep buses moving through traffic.

Fleet & Facilities

Bus Network Redesign

Bus Priority

A Better Rider Experience

Provides fleet to run the service

Service informs fleet & facility needs

Enables high priority corridors

Tells us where we need priority

Ensures expanded fleet is used to provide **more** service

Other key projects include:
Accessible bus stops (PATI)
Modern bus stop amenities
Fare Transformation
Improved rider information
Dispatching tools
...and more

What will you see and what's next?

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Bus Network Redesign Project Timeline

Stay informed! www.mbta.com/busnetworkredesign
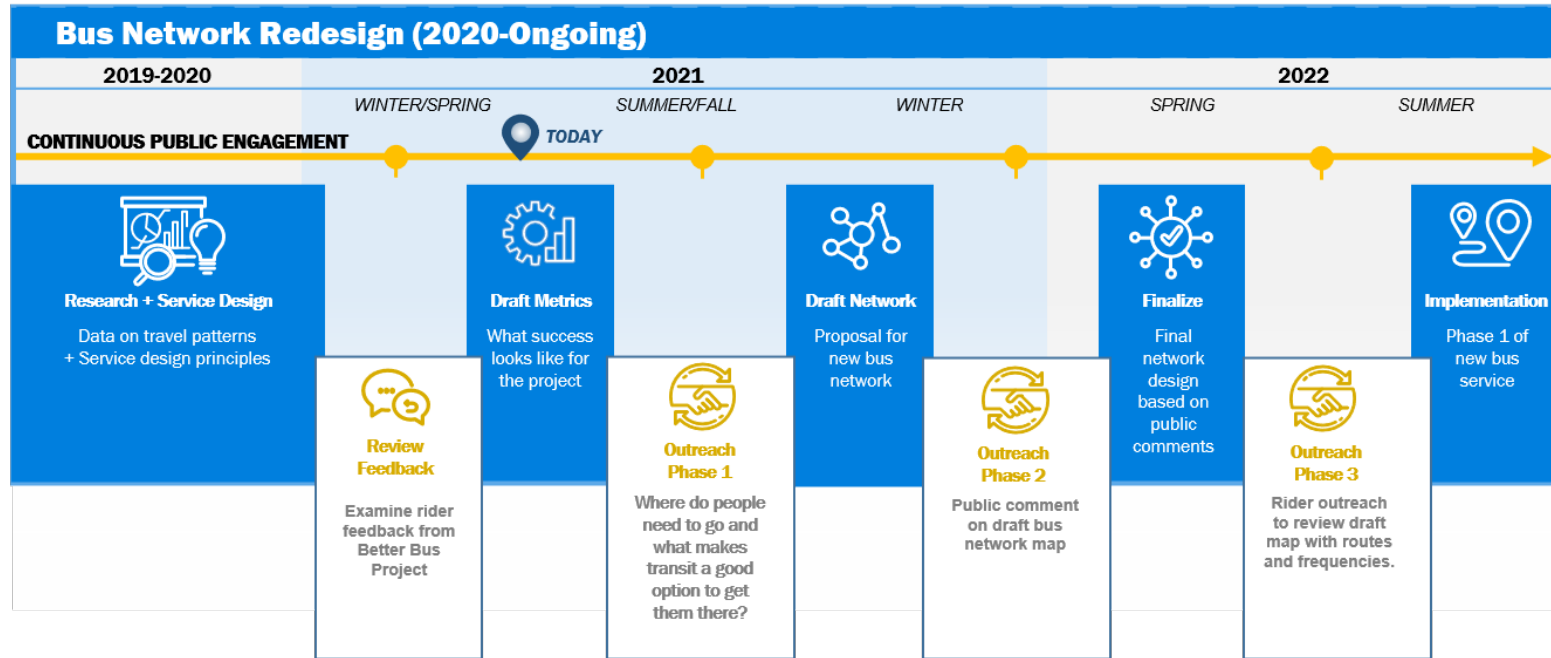
Our commitments

1. **Equity***, first and foremost

2. Truly **transformational change**—no nitpicking at small margins

3. A better network **for the people who ride today**

4. Extensive stakeholder **engagement**

5. Implementation in the **near-term** (in phases, starting 2022)

6. Integrate service changes with **bus priority** and other **infrastructure improvements** to maximize benefits

*Equity is defined as improving access and quality of service for transit-critical populations
(low-income populations, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, or people who live in households with few or no vehicles)

Breakout Sessions

How To Use Zoom
Self-selecting a Breakout Room

- Click "Breakout Rooms" in your meeting controls. This will display the list of open breakout rooms.
- Click "Join" next to the Room you wish to enter, then confirm by clicking "Join" again.
- To exit a Breakout Room, click "Leave Breakout Room" but be careful to only leave the Room, not the meeting.
- *We will be in breakout rooms for 30 minutes. At any point, you may switch to another breakout room. We will ultimately convene everyone back in the main room.*

Note: *if you are joining by phone, you will have to be assigned to a room by a moderator.*
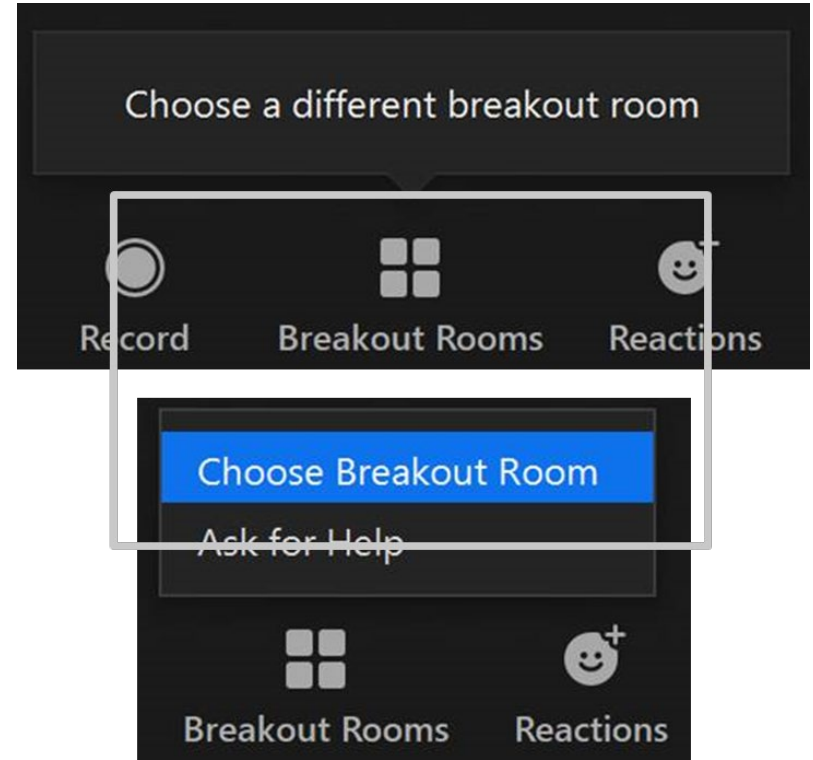
Breakout Sessions

At this time, meeting attendees are in small groups, discussing potential alternatives.
If you are just joining:
- Please select a breakout room to join the discussion
- We will be reconvening at 7:15 pm.

Q&A

Questions & Answers

- Please share only one question or comment at a time
- Use the "Chat" button to submit a typed question or comment
- Press the "Raise Hand" button to share your question or comment verbally. Wait for the moderator to recognize and unmute you before speaking.
- If you have joined by phone only, you may "raise your hand" by pressing the star button and then nine (*9)
- *After you speak, we will lower your hand and you will be muted to allow the team to respond and provide opportunities for others to participate*
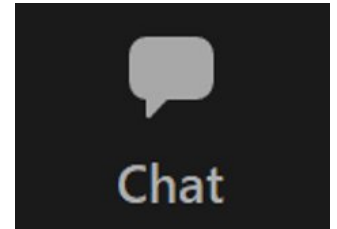
How to Stay Informed

mbta.com/busnetworkredesign

- You can find more details about Bus Network Redesign and other Better Bus Project initiatives on the project website.
- We will continue to provide updates to you on these efforts and inform you of opportunities to provide your feedback via our email list. You can sign up for updates on our website.
- Feel free to reach out to the Better Bus Project team at BetterBusProject@mbta.com with any questions.

Stay engaged!

Upcoming MBTA public meetings, for more information please visit www.mbta.com/events:

- **Summer Service Changes**: June 10

- **Fall Service Changes:** July/August TBD

- **Better Bus Project Open House:** August TBD

You can also share your thoughts about the MBTA each month by joining the MBTA Customer Opinion Panel at www.mbta.com/survey.

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Thank you!

Website: mbta.com/busnetworkredesign
Contact: Betterbusproject@mbta.com

Appendix

Public outreach schedule

| June - July 2021	July - Oct 2021	Nov 2021 - Jan 2022
Phase 1: Travel Survey • Does the MBTA take you to the places that you need or want to go? • Is riding the MBTA a good option for you when you need to get somewhere?	**Phase 2: Policy Choices** Discussion on the policy choices and types of improvements to better meet the needs of the rider.	**Phase 3: Draft bus network map** • Is this better than the current network? • What did we get right or wrong?
Goals of Outreach		
Confirm travel patterns and preferences of current and potential riders. **Design** service strategies and metrics based on input in this phase and previous *BBP* outreach phases.	**Inform** public about the types of trade-offs and service strategies we are examining. **Build awareness** of project goals and implementation timeline.	**Gather input** on proposed new bus network map. **Revise network map** based on input in this phase.

Stay informed! www.mbta.com/busnetworkredesign

Better Bus Project Vision
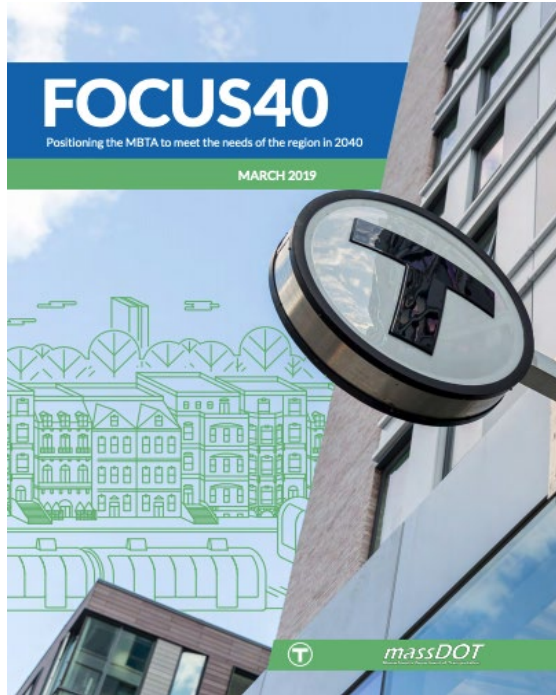
Achieve a better, faster, lower emissions service, supported by all-door boarding and exclusive busways, that is more aligned with where riders live, work, and travel (Focus40)
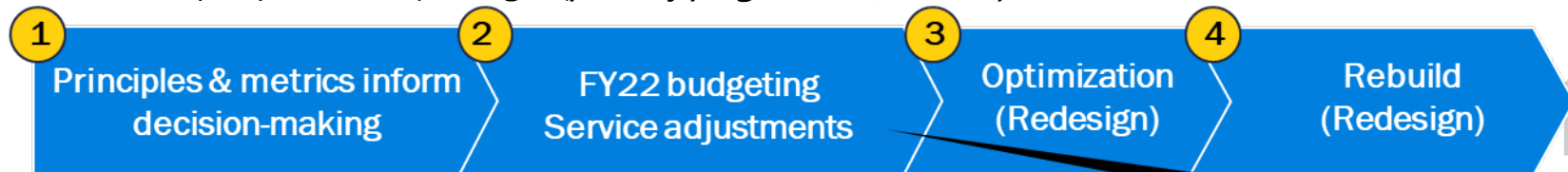
Focus40 and the MBTA strategic plan highlight equity, sustainability, livability, competitiveness, and safety, all of which will guide the bus transformation work.

Vision to bring back service in the future

The Bus Network Redesign is a complete re-imagining of the MBTA's bus network to reflect the travel needs of the region and create a more competitive bus service for current and future bus riders.

The Bus Network Redesign will serve as a blueprint for how to rebuild the longer-term network in the future and requires:

- Planning (*underway*)

- New service (*can be cost neutral*) & demonstration projects (*unprogrammed, $3-5M*)

- Project management (*programmed*)

- Service planning and scheduling capacity (*unprogrammed, $1-4M*)

- Public outreach and marketing (*unprogrammed, $2-4M*)

- Infrastructure: signage, transit priority (**see transit priority slides for costs**),
  bus stop improvements/changes (*partially programmed, $2-10M)*

1 Principles & metrics inform decision-making

2 FY22 budgeting Service adjustments

3 Optimization (Redesign)

4 Rebuild (Redesign)

New tools will help us evaluate and adjust.

High Priority Corridors

Map legend:
- New Connection
- Overlaps Bus Route Fully or Partially
- Overlaps KBR Fully or Partially

Note: bus numbers on the map represent service in that corridor, not routes that exactly create that entire connection.

Map will continue to evolve based on further analysis, public input, and coordination with roadway owners
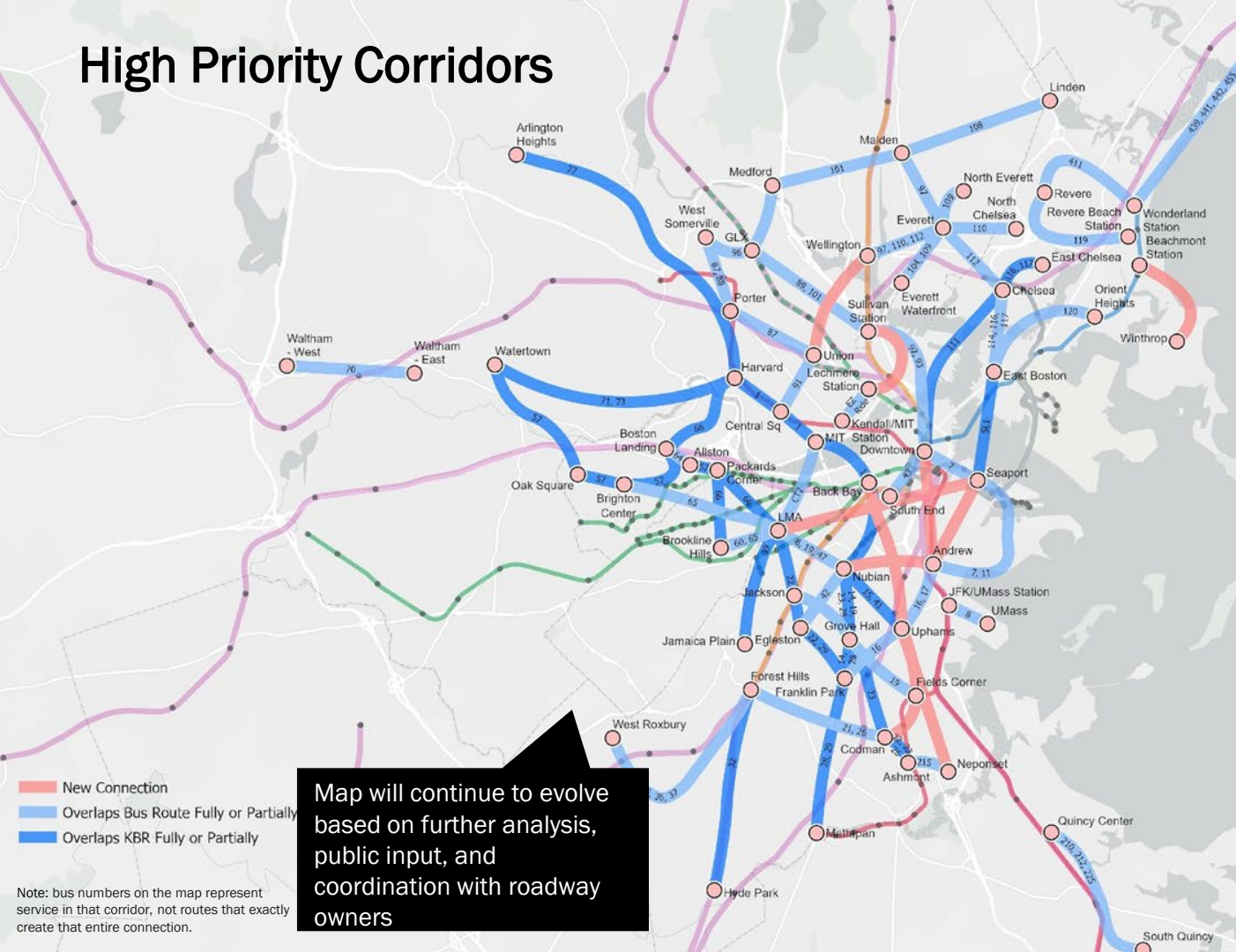
The High Priority Corridors help prioritize investments

- <u>These would not all be implemented at once</u>, and we can prioritize based on value (cost/benefit) of each corridor to the network

- These corridors would provide better service for transit critical populations since the analysis prioritizes travel made by communities of color and low-income populations

- Many of the corridors that show up here are corridors that have retained ridership during COVID and are part of the service being preserved (79% of essential service routes)

- The current transit priority work supports build out of this vision

High Priority Corridors

The current transit priority work supports build out of this vision

Current transit priority projects
1. Mass Ave - Cambridge
2. Columbus Ave Corridor
3. Hyde Park Ave
4. Blue Hill Ave
5. Broadway & Sweetser Circle - Everett
6. Broadway - Chelsea
7. Washington Street - Roslindale
8. Washington Street - Somerville
9. North Washington Street - Boston
10. Mass Ave - Boston
11. Nubian to Ruggles via Malcolm X Blvd
12. Summer Street
13. Brighton Ave - Allston
14. Mass Ave - Arlington
15. Broadway - Somerville
16. Tobin Bridge
17. Mt Auburn Area Cambridge
18. Warren Street

New Connection
Overlaps Bus Route Fully or Partially
Overlaps KBR Fully or Partially

Note: bus numbers on the map represent service in that corridor, not routes that exactly create that entire connection.