

RED BLUE CONNECTOR

PUBLIC MEETINGS – OCTOBER 16 & 19, 2023

Last updated: October 27, 2023

Meeting Dates

Location	Date	Time	# of Attendees ¹
Paul S. Russell, MD Museum at MGH 2 North Grove Street	October 16, 2023	6:00 PM – 7:30 PM	80
East Boston Branch of the Boston Public Library 365 Bremen Street	October 19, 2023	6:00 PM – 7:30 PM	48

Event Staff

Name	Affiliation	Events Attended
Shannon Greenwell	MBTA	October 16; October 19
Scott Hamwey	MBTA	October 16; October 19
Tess Paganelli	MBTA	October 16; October 19
Adam Kamoune	MBTA	October 16; October 19
Kristen Bergassi	VHB	October 16; October 19
Izzy Parker	VHB	October 16; October 19
Frank Astone	AECOM	October 16; October 19
Ross Edwards	AECOM	October 16; October 19
Marko Vukovic	AECOM	October 16; October 19
Mark Ennis	STV	October 16; October 19
Oluchi Anyachukwu	STV	October 16; October 19
Ali Al-Saadawi	STV	October 16; October 19
Nancy Farrell	RVA	October 16
Amanda Poggenburg	RVA	October 16
Keith Sonia	RVA	October 19
Liam Kearney	RVA	October 19
Kristine McNulty	RVA	October 19
Claudio Ruiz	Spanish Interpreter	October 16; October 19
Anna Tse	Cantonese Interpreter	October 16; October 19
Samuel Milus	Haitian Creole Interpreter	October 16; October 19
Brendan Levy	Portuguese Interpreter	October 16
Joseanne Lopes	Portuguese Interpreter	October 19
Matthew Kelley	ASL Interpreter	October 16; October 19
Frank Rich	ASL Interpreter	October 16; October 19

¹ Number of attendees who signed in.

Purpose/Subject

The purpose of the public meetings was to present an overview of the preliminary engineering and upcoming state and federal environmental review milestones, to share information about the project MEPA Notice of Project Change public comment period and take comments and questions from attendees.

Format and Process

The meetings included a presentation followed by a question-and-answer period. Attendees could ask questions or make comments by submitting a written comment form or sharing them verbally during the question-and-answer period. Written comment forms were submitted to MEPA as part of its public comment period.

PRESENTATION

A slideshow presentation was delivered at the beginning of each meeting. The presentation² is available on the project website, www.mbta.com/projects/red-blue-connector.

Project Overview, Purpose, & Current Scope (slides 2-4)

Shannon Greenwell, MBTA, opened the meeting and provided an overview of the project. She explained that the project seeks to connect the Red and Blue lines by extending the Blue Line beyond its current terminus at Bowdoin station through a newly constructed tunnel under Cambridge Street to the Charles/MGH Red Line headhouse via a new below-grade Blue Line station.

Ms. Greenwell explained that the Red Blue Connector would improve mobility and access to jobs and health care for East Boston and the North Shore by extending the Blue Line to connect directly to the Red Line, which would eliminate the need to make an intermediate transfer on the Orange or Green Line. She noted that removing this transfer would likely reduce travel time.

She also explained that the project is currently funded to advance through 30% design and state (Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act [MEPA]) and federal (National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA]) environmental review processes, including preliminary engineering, advanced Environmental Justice (EJ) notification, MEPA Notice of Project Change and anticipated supplemental draft and final Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR/FEIR), anticipated NEPA draft and final Environmental Assessment (EA) with Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), Design Build documents, and outreach and engagement. The project is currently not funded beyond this phase, and additional funding will need to be identified before moving to a Design Build contract.

Project History: 2010 DEIR & 2018 Constructability Update (slides 5-7)

Ms. Greenwell reviewed the history of the Red Blue Connector Project. She explained that in 2010, the project filed a DEIR to MEPA which included an alternatives analysis and a methodology that included three types of

² The same presentation was given at both meetings, though there were minor clarification edits to the presentation after the first meeting. A new slide was also added after the meetings to address frequent questions that were asked about Bowdoin Station.

tunneling construction methods³, and received a MEPA Certificate. In 2018, the MBTA completed and published results from a Tunnel Constructability Study, which was conducted after the 2010 DEIR was filed, that was an update to the 2010 DEIR focusing on ridership updates and revisiting the 2010 tunnel methodology considering updated technology, costs, and contractor experience. This report recommended C&C as the most efficient method for the entirety of the project.

2010 DEIR Alternatives

Ms. Greenwell reviewed the alternatives shared in the 2010 DEIR, noting that the two build alternatives were similar in many regards. Both build scenarios extended Blue Line service to the Red Line at Charles/MGH, included a new below-grade Blue Line platform, and utilized a tunneling methodology that included TBM, SEM, and C&C. Where the build alternatives differed was whether or not passenger service was continued to Bowdoin station.

The 2010 DEIR preferred alternative (Build Alternative 1) eliminated service to Bowdoin station as an intermediate stop between Government Center and the new Blue Line station at Charles/MGH as this was found to provide a better travel time for Blue Line passengers going to the Red Line and was found to save the cost associated with relocating the existing Bowdoin station platforms as the Red Blue Connector extension cannot utilize the existing Bowdoin Loop or station platforms due to an operation restriction in the loop and the elevation of the existing platforms.

A no-build alternative was run as a comparison point for the build alternatives.

2018 Constructability Update

Ms. Greenwell explained that the MBTA completed and published a Constructability Study in 2018 which summarized changes in technology, costs, and contractor preferences that would affect the 2010 DEIR tunnel recommendation. The results of the study recommended the C&C method as the preferred method for the entirety of the project. The analysis showed that advantages to the C&C method included the least cost, shortest construction duration, greatest flexibility to incorporate program elements, less project risk compared to other tunneling methods, and not substantially more disruptive to Cambridge Street during construction.

While TBM is a boring process that takes place below the surface, there are still a number of areas in which street-level openings are required (i.e., launch pit and access shaft openings along the TBM path). Additionally, the C&C method would be required for project areas that cannot be completed through TBM (i.e., station, crossover, vertical circulation, and ancillary equipment rooms and ventilation). Given the short run of the Red Blue Connector project (total of 2500 ft), the advantages of using TBM are greatly reduced and C&C becomes the preferred method.

³ Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM), Sequential Excavation Method (SEM), and cut and cover (C&C) tunneling methods.

Project Design Elements (slides 8-12)

Ms. Greenwell introduced the 2021 Concept Design Report. The report refined the DEIR preferred build alternative and reaffirmed the C&C recommended tunnel methodology. This is the basis of the build alternative for this phase of design and environmental review.

Program elements include a 0.5-mile tunnel under Cambridge Street; new Blue Line terminus station; direct connection to the Red Line at Charles/MGH station; a new headhouse connecting to MGH campus; decommissioning Bowdoin station; providing redundant elevators and direct escalator runs from the platform to Charles/MGH station; upgrades to signal, power, and ventilation systems; and consideration of storage tracks.

MGH Headhouse

Ms. Greenwell explained that in the 2010 DEIR preferred alternative, the new Charles/MGH Blue Line station had an entrance into the existing Charles/MGH Red Line headhouse on the western end of the platform, however the eastern end of the platform was simply an emergency exit that opened at-grade at a hatchway in the roadway median. During the Concept Design work, the Red Blue Connector project team worked with the Mass General Ragon Building design team to integrate a headhouse into the new Ragon Building, making it usable by the general public (not just for emergencies) and increasing direct access for riders to the Mass General campus. MGH has included space for a Blue Line station headhouse in the second phase of the Ragon Building, which is currently under construction.

Bowdoin Station Reuse

Ms. Greenwell provided an overview of the existing Bowdoin station, noting that it has the third lowest ridership on the heavy rail system and is the only station on the Blue Line that is not accessible to persons with disabilities. It is 900 feet from the Government Center station entrance and 1,600 feet to the new Charles/MGH Blue Line station entrance.

Ms. Greenwell explained that the Red Blue Connector extension cannot utilize the existing Bowdoin Loop or station platforms due to an operating restriction in the loop and the elevation of the existing platforms. She noted that trains cannot carry passengers through the loop as the curve's tight radius does not allow for safe emergency evacuations in the loop and the existing platforms are not deep enough, or in the right alignment, to accommodate the appropriate alignment and slope of the tunnel extension. The 2010 DEIR preferred alternative eliminated passenger service at Bowdoin station, and this has been a project component since then.

By eliminating passenger service at Bowdoin station, riders benefit from reduced travel time to the Red Line, and the project avoids additional costs associated with rebuilding the station platforms to align with the new track design. Ms. Greenwell further explained that the space at the existing station would be repurposed to accommodate the connection of the new tunnel to the existing tunnel, introduction of a new emergency tunnel ventilation plant, and construction of an emergency exit. Consideration is also being made in the current project scope for this area to be used for storage of trains and maintenance equipment.

Storage Track Alternatives

Ms. Greenwell explained that Orient Heights yard is the primary storage area for Blue Line trains, with limited opportunities at tail tracks beyond the Wonderland and Bowdoin station platforms. The 2010 DEIR proposed storage tracks as tail tracks to the west of the new Blue Line station, a decision that was tied to the recommended TBM construction approach and supporting staging trains here overnight to start service in the morning.

As work progressed on the project and both the tunnel construction method was updated and the use of the storage tracks changed, two additional alternatives for storage tracks were introduced in the Concept Design Report: pocket tracks to the east of the new Blue Line station and repurposing the tracks at Bowdoin station for storage. Placement of storage tracks will continue to be evaluated in this phase of design; however, Ms. Greenwell noted that even if tail tracks are not placed to the west of the new Blue Line station for train storage purposes, there will need to be some area of runoff track beyond the station platform for safe braking purposes.

Project Cost and Schedule (slide 13)

Ms. Greenwell reviewed the project cost and schedule. Ms. Greenwell anticipates the project will be at 15% design in Spring 2024 and that at that point the team would do another round of public engagement to share the update designs. In Spring of 2025 it is expected that the project will be done with 30% design, state and federal environmental reviews, and Design Build documents. Ms. Greenwell noted that this project timeline is subject to change based on funding availability and that funding would need to be identified to take the project through final design and construction.

She explained that the Red Blue Connector project has \$30 million in programmed funding to complete this phase of design, and she noted that the 2021 Concept Design Report cost estimate was \$850 million, which included construction, design, administration, and rolling stock. The project cost estimate will be updated at 15% design and will be informed by the advanced design, current escalation factors, and current market conditions.

MEPA Notice of Project Change (slide 14)

Ms. Greenwell explained that the MBTA filed its Notice of Project Change with the MEPA Office on October 2, 2023, and that a public comment period was open until October 31, 2023. It is anticipated that a MEPA certificate would be issued in November 2023, which would confirm next steps and the MEPA filing approach. She encouraged attendees to submit comments to MEPA via the following methods:

- Online – submit comments online through MEPA’s public comment portal:
<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/PublicComment/Landing/>
- Email – send comments directly to the MEPA Analyst, Eva Vaughan, at Eva.Vaughan@mass.gov
- Mail – written comments can be mailed to:
Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: MEPA Office
Eva Vaughan

EEA No. 14101
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Stay Connected (slide 15)

Ms. Greenwell encouraged attendees to visit the website (www.mbta.com/projects/red-blue-connector) to access project information and sign up for the email list to receive updates on the project. She also noted that an immediate project milestone taking place in the project area would be soil borings, likely to start along Cambridge Street in November.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Ms. Greenwell reviewed the public comment process and opened the meeting to public comment, first to elected officials and then to all meeting attendees.

See [Appendix A: Verbal Question and Answer Summary](#) for a summary of the verbal question-and-answer from each meeting. See [Appendix B: Written Comments](#) for a summary of the written comments from each meeting.

APPENDIX A: VERBAL QUESTION AND ANSWER SUMMARY

Ms. Greenwell reviewed the public comment process and opened the meeting to public comment, first to elected officials and then to all meeting attendees.

October 16 Public Meeting at Paul S. Russell, MD, Museum at MGH

Boston City Councilor Sharon Durkan, District 8, provided remarks in support of expanding transit access and completing the inner transit core. She stated that this plan will benefit both employees and those seeking healthcare, but it will be important to work with West End neighborhoods during construction to address impacts. She noted Mass General Hospital's role, including a Blue Line headhouse in its new building. To view her full remarks, please see [Appendix B: Written Comments](#).

Alan Wu said he was glad to see movement on the project and noted that the benefits are well understood. He asked if there are provisions to extend the Blue Line beyond the proposed terminus, under the Charles River to the new Volpe Building, and connect to the previously proposed Urban Ring. Ms. Greenwell replied that the current plan would not preclude a future extension; however, the MBTA would not want to burden this project with the potential delay in time and additional cost that might result from future-proofing the design for a specific extension, particularly as there are no current plans for further extensions nor is there consensus on either the need for or the alignment of such an extension.

Cynthia Bergstrom asked if the turnaround at the Bowdoin Loop is too tight for rolling stock. Ms. Greenwell said the loop currently presents a restriction in terms of slow speed and can't carry passengers due to not providing safe egress for passengers in an emergency. Additionally, the existing station outbound platform does not accommodate 6-car trains. The new Blue Line station would be fully accessible, which the current Bowdoin station is not, and accommodate 6-car trains.

Fred Salvucci, former Secretary of Transportation, said that the project has been a long time coming and he thanked the team for a clear presentation. He asked if the project could combine with work that needs to be done on the Beacon Hill tunnel to the Red Line station and reconstruction of the platforms. Ms. Greenwell replied that the Longfellow Viaduct project, which includes both the viaduct work and station platform work, is ahead of the Red Blue Connector and some of the elements of that scope will benefit this project. Mr. Salvucci said that his understanding from the Red Blue Connector presentation is that Bowdoin station would close at the start of construction and expressed concern about the impact on the traveling public for five years without access to the station. Additionally, Mr. Salvucci said that the cooperation of MGH is very helpful to this terrific project. He suggested not using all of the tail track to minimize impacts at the Mass Eye and Ear (MEE) parking lot and leaving the possibility of reviving the Public Private partnership of a few years ago. Ms. Greenwell confirmed that Bowdoin station would close to passengers early in construction and remain closed to passengers in the final build condition. The Bowdoin area would be repurposed to support the project. She also responded that in initial evaluations, using the west-of-station tail tracks option for train storage is falling to the bottom of the potential options but noted that the team is continuing to look at the best way to address safe braking/runoff tracks.

Michael Glazkov asked what traffic will look like on Cambridge Street and at Charles Circle during construction. Ms. Greenwell replied that the team anticipates maintaining two traffic lanes in either direction during construction, with the possible exception of some nights and weekends. She explained that the constructability update analysis recommended the C&C option as the preferred method for the entirety of the project as it has the least cost, shortest construction duration, and not substantially more disruptive to Cambridge Street compared to previously evaluated options. The team will continue to look at these issues during this phase of design.

Cullen Paradis inquired about boring locations expected in the next few weeks along Cambridge Street. Frank Astone, AECOM, replied that the MBTA will have a City of Boston permit that includes a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and many of the locations will be toward the sides of the roadway with the goal to minimize disruption as best as possible.

Taylor Campbell asked if there will be a protected bike lane on Cambridge Street after the work is complete, if Charles Circle will need to be rebuilt, and if the MBTA closes Bowdoin station, will 6-car trains be in use right away. Ms. Greenwell replied that the MBTA is coordinating with the City of Boston and the project is committed to replacing the streetscape to the condition in which it was found, including restoring existing bicycle lanes. Regarding Charles Circle, she noted that there is likely to be a bump out at the back of the existing headhouse to accommodate the vertical circulation connecting to the new Blue Line below-grade station. Lastly, she replied that 6-car trains are already operating on the line, however the outbound platform at Bowdoin station platform is too short for a 6-car train and not all train doors are able to open when that station is served today.

Ed Fleck, West Cedar Street, inquired about the inclusion of the cost of rolling stock in the \$850 million Concept Design cost estimate, and asked why more trains are needed. Ms. Greenwell replied that the additional train set will maintain pre-COVID 4.5-minute headways due to the additional length of the ROW.

Caleb Scott Joseph asked about the time differential between the C&C option and the TBM as construction alternatives. Ms. Greenwell responded that the estimated length of construction for the C&C method is 4.5 to 5 years versus 6 years for the TBM. She also noted that C&C is less risky and presents a lower cost compared to other tunneling methods.

Cynthia Bergstrom asked about the accessibility of the design considering that riders will be passing from a tunnel beneath Cambridge St. and going up to the Charles/MGH headhouse. Ms. Greenwell replied that there will be escalators from the tunnel to the surface and elevators on the west and east ends of the platform as well. She stated that the design will meet accessibility standards and the project is significant to the Blue Line because this new Blue Line station at Charles/MGH would replace the existing Bowdoin station, which is the only station on the line that is not currently accessible.

Tom Chmura, who operates a neighborhood business, asked if tying the project to the MGH capital construction will mean extending the timeline for construction. He asked if the Red Blue Connector would still be disrupting Cambridge Street after MGH's clinical building is completed and if a TBM approach would be better. Ms. Greenwell replied that a TBM would not be efficient for a relatively short run, that the top-down C&C approach allows the surface level to be restored more quickly. She explained that the MBTA and MGH are

working in coordination and noted that the Red Blue project will not hold up the MGH building completion. Nick Haney, MGH, said that there will be a shell space left in the tower for the headhouse and the space can be used by MGH for other purposes until it's time to build the station and connect into the MGH building.

Taylor Campbell asked if the presentation will be posted so participants can see how the elevator connects to the street level. Ms. Greenwell replied that the presentation and meeting summary would be available on the project website after the meetings.

Laurie G., Revere resident, said she rides the Blue Line and asked if Bowdoin station will be reopened or repurposed. Ms. Greenwell responded that the station will be repurposed and, when completed, the new service will stop at Government Center and then at the new Charles/MGH Blue Line station without making an intermediate stop at Bowdoin station.

A participant asked about the need for repairs to the Longfellow Viaduct and structural supports for the Red Line Charles/MGH and if it will conflict with the Red Blue Connector. Ms. Greenwell replied that there is underpinning work for the Red Line station in the Red Blue contract, and that it won't be in conflict with the Longfellow Viaduct project.

Dave Uhrenholdt asked if there are lessons learned from the GLX project that could be applied to Red Blue Connector and if funding is available for the project to be completed, or if there will be roadblocks. Ms. Greenwell replied that the MBTA is anticipating that funding will be a mix of state and federal funding. She explained that the agency will be in competition for federal discretionary grants and it's difficult to gauge the likelihood of success at this point without knowing the competition and the timing for a submittal. Mr. Astone replied that there is a formal process for review after the completion of a project, including GLX, and that information is available to the team. In response to a question about possibly competing with the North South Rail Link for funding, Scott Hamwey, MBTA Director of Infrastructure Planning, replied that it is not an active project.

A participant asked about the depth of the station and if it would make sense to remove the mezzanine level. Ms. Greenwell responded that the C&C method may not need to be as deep as the TBM option and presents time and budget savings. She stated that, at this time, the plan is to dedicate most of the mezzanine level space for back of house functions, and that the eastern headhouse also uses a mezzanine level for vertical circulation. When asked about siting back of house functions in space above grade, she noted it would be difficult to find space above ground given how dense the area is and could be costly given that many parcels are privately owned.

Mr. Salvucci noted that the Red Blue project was a commitment of the Commonwealth as mitigation for the Big Dig (in December 1990) and was reinforced in 1991 and should have had funding priority¹. He discussed his experience with other projects, including one with AECOM in Puerto Rico. He said that, for that project, the

¹ On December 8, 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency published a final rule in the Federal Register approving a revision submitted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to remove from the State Implementation Plan the commitment to design the Red Line/Blue Line Connector project. Previously, in 2006, the SIP commitment had been downgraded from a commitment to construct the project to a design commitment.

team began the Design/Build process early, as soon as there was a record of decision on the environmental process, and that approach could save construction time while ensuring high quality. He thanked the team for a good presentation.

Taylor Campbell asked if there would be space to operate a café. Ms. Greenwell replied that there are currently no retail uses anticipated.

October 19 Public Meeting at East Boston Branch of the Boston Public Library

Brian Solvane expressed disagreement with the disruption issues and stated that he has worked on three underground tunnels with TBM, including a project that went two and a half miles in nine months. Mr. Solvane disagreed with the C&C method and encouraged TBM due to concerns about disruptions similar to the "Big Dig." Ms. Greenwell acknowledged that TBM is more efficient for longer stretches but noted that this project is a shorter distance, and some sections need to use C&C regardless of which method is used for the other sections. She also noted that construction will allow for the preservation of two lanes of traffic in each direction and acknowledged the importance of maintaining access to the hospital and medical facilities.

Vince Dixon, a transit activist, noted that there is a potential alternative to go under Beacon Hill to bring a Blue Line extension to Park Street, creating a "super station," and asked if this has been evaluated or considered. Ms. Greenwell replied that there have been a number of ideas to extend the Blue Line past MGH and explained that the project team is designing the project to not preclude an extension past MGH, but due to the time and cost it has taken to get this design off the ground, they are trying not to burden this project by adding additional elements associated with future extensions beyond MGH for which there is no consensus nor planning work being done. Mr. Dixon stated that Partners Healthcare is a major stakeholder and inquired if Partners has been giving resources, specifically money, to this project, as they are the primary beneficiary. Ms. Greenwell replied that the team that worked on the Concept Design in 2021 worked with the MGH design team of the Ragon building and that MGH designed shell space in their building so that the MBTA is able to use the space for a headhouse in the future. She noted that the 2021 Concept Design with the MGH eastern headhouse is a vast improvement over the 2010 design that only included an emergency exit on the eastern end of the platform. While the Red Blue project has not received funding from MGH, it has received real estate space in the MGH building for that eastern headhouse. Mr. Dixon also asked about the impact on residents and tourists at Charles Circle during construction. He is concerned with flooding and preservation of historic properties. Ms. Greenwell replied that the western tail tracks from 2010 push close to DCR property, but now that the project will not utilize those tracks for storage, they can examine how the land will be used west of the station for safe braking and reduce environmental impacts. She stated that all impacts will be captured under the state environmental review process in the DEIR, including historic preservation, noise and dust, with both the MBTA and MEPA heavily involved.

Zach Menuly, employee at Eastern Bank, asked if the \$850 million budget from 2021 will be revisited at 15% design and if there are preliminary cost estimates. Ms. Greenwell replied that the cost estimate will be updated at 15% design and will be informed by advanced design work, current escalation factors, and current market conditions.

Seamus Duffey, western Revere resident, asked if the team could address the inconvenience and safety of Charles/MGH when crossing from the esplanade over the bridge, as it can be very confusing and dangerous for bikers and pedestrians. He noted that it could be beneficial to use the reconstruction of Charles/MGH to redesign that area. Ms. Greenwell responded that the project is committed to restoring the street level to the condition it was found in, and it is the MBTA's understanding that the City of Boston does not have an active planning process for a larger redesign of Cambridge Street. Regarding the bridges, she noted that those are not owned by the MBTA.

Asa Aarons, Red Line rider, asked if there will be service changes to the Red Line if the project continues. Ms. Greenwell replied that the project team is not anticipating changes to Red Line service due to this project.

Giordana Mecagni, a resident, suggested considering a road diet for Cambridge Street as there is too much road there, especially when the City is already enforcing road diets to encourage public transit. She expressed interest in including a road diet as part of the plan and using it as a dedicated bus and ambulance lane. Ms. Greenwell replied that planning for a larger redesign of the roadway is not under MBTA jurisdiction and the project team cannot lead a conversation about that. She suggested contacting the City to work on this issue.

Stephen Ruggiero, Winthrop Town Council, stated that commuters shouldn't have to pay two fares to get from the Red Line to the Blue Line, noting the current status is a failure of the system. He said that the cost sounds like scary number, but that number will go up the longer we wait. Additionally, Mr. Ruggiero asked the project team to keep in mind that East Boston and Winthrop have been dealing with constructions and disturbances and there is a need to restore faith in the MBTA so residents can feel confident working in Cambridge and along the Red Line. He stated that it took an hour to get to MGH via car, but he wasn't willing to pay two fares when it would've taken longer. Ms. Greenwell responded that the passenger experience will be staying on the paid side of fare gate so transfers will not require double payment. She also responded that riders today do not need to pay two fares to make the transfers to get from the Blue Line to the Red Line.

Malcom Regan asked if there are any other radii other than the Bowdoin turning loop that limit the length of Blue Line cars and if it has been considered that future Blue Line cars may be longer and need longer radii to turn around. Ms. Greenwell replied that Bowdoin Loop is the major constraint on the line for turning radii, and that if the area is utilized for train storage, and not service, trains would not utilize this loop. She explained that traveling through the loop is not just an issue about speeds but also wears on the vehicle and that eliminating the need for vehicles to travel through the loop would also be helpful for maintenance. She noted that the Blue Line currently uses 6-car trains but that the shorter length of the outbound platform does not allow for all vehicle doors to open. She further noted that the new Blue Line station will be fully accessible and able to utilize all car doors.

Matt Gallagher, Winthrop resident, asked if there is any way the existing emergency exit at Government Center will be converted into a headhouse. Ms. Greenwell replied that it is not something in the current scope but, if the Red Blue Connector continues to move forward in, the MBTA could look into it as a station improvement.

A participant from UMass Boston asked how this will affect service at Government Center and downtown, as Bowdoin is used to turn around now. Ms. Greenwell responded that during construction, trains will run to

Government Center and an early action item would be installing a crossover east of Government Center to turn trains. She explained that, for the final build condition, trains would go through Government Center to the new Blue Line station at Charles/MGH. The new crossover east of Government Center would remain beyond construction of Red Blue Connector and would make the station available as a terminus if future construction were to occur west of Government Center.

Kevin, Orange Line rider, asked for clarification about the plans for fare gates at the new station. Ms. Greenwell replied that the concept design has fare gates on the eastern side of the headhouse and the western platform would utilize the fare gates within the existing Charles/MGH headhouse.

Ian, East Boston resident and transportation planner, asked how this project will tie into bus service and if new bus connections will be considered. Ms. Greenwell replied that there will be no impacts to bus service and no new connections.

A participant asked if Orient Heights will be utilized less if Bowdoin is used for train storage. Ms. Greenwell responded that storage at Bowdoin will be for disabled trains and staging extra cars, not primary train storage so Orient Heights will remain the primary storage area.

A participant asked if each station on the Blue Line will have to be redesigned to accommodate larger train cars, noting the elimination of the Bowdoin loop and various technical issues due to the short turning radius. Ms. Greenwell replied that the MBTA is currently scoping the mid-life overhaul of the existing Blue Line fleet and that the MBTA would need to prepare for the procurement of the next generation of cars in the next several years. She noted they have not determined the new vehicles specifications, future Blue Line demand, or how to serve that demand at this time.

Tracey Lichter, East Boston resident, asked if there will be shuttle buses replacing service to Bowdoin during the project and if they could be extended to MGH as a pilot. Ms. Greenwell replied that Blue Line service will terminate at Government Center during construction.

A participant stated that, in the short term, many residents and visitors to Cambridge Street will have a range of different feelings from the disruptions during construction, but that will be temporary and when it is finished, they can celebrate the new connections.

Winfred, Jamaica Plain resident, asked if the MBTA would consider the platform screen doors in the future and what the timing is for the new fleet of Blue Line trains. Ms. Greenwell replied that platform doors are not included in the current design, and that would be an investment that would best be considered with a new Blue Line fleet of vehicles.

Nikki Chin asked if the Red Blue Connector will serve downtown with additional stops. Ms. Greenwell responded that the biggest strength of the project is the direct connection between the Red and Blue lines and, fortunately, the Blue Line already has several stops in the downtown area.

Mr. Dixon asked if there is a scenario in which Partners Health would contribute to the financial cost of the project. Ms. Greenwell confirmed that they are providing real estate for the project headhouse.

A participant stated that the Red Blue Connector was promised during the Big Dig, which was some time ago. They asked if this is the last project that the MBTA has addressed as part of that mitigation plan. Mr. Hamwey replied that this project was part of that collection of projects, then removed as a legal requirement about 10 years ago. He explained that the final two projects were the Green Line Extension and Blue Hill Ave. station, which have been completed.

David, an MBTA rider, asked what the daily ridership is for Bowdoin station. Ms. Greenwell replied that a report run in early October showed that Bowdoin had about 1,700 passengers daily, which is generally the second or third lowest ridership on the heavy rail system. She added that Bowdoin is also currently the only inaccessible station on the Blue Line.

Mendell Rankin asked if, instead of or concurrent to this project, there has been consideration for an underground concourse between the northern platform of Downtown Crossing and State Street. Ms. Greenwell responded that a pedestrian connection would involve a private parcel between those stations. The MBTA is currently focused on a rail connection between the Blue and Red Lines.

Tania Castro-Daunais, an East Boston resident, stated that the escalator at Bowdoin has been broken and wanted to know if there is any plan to stop improvement of the station in anticipation of closure. Ms. Greenwell replied that Bowdoin station would be decommissioned and replaced by a new Blue Line station at Charles/MGH under the Red Blue Connector project. She acknowledged that the escalator has been broken and, moving forward, the MBTA needs to consider what investments should occur knowing the station would be closed under this project design.

State Representative Adrian Madaro, 1st Suffolk District, stated that this is an incredibly exciting moment for residents on the north side of the tunnel, as this was promised as mitigation for the Big Dig, and the project will address a longtime promise as well as an equity issue. He noted that they have been waiting for decades, so being at this juncture is incredibly exciting. He noted that Blue Line usage during the pandemic wasn't low compared to the other lines due to essential workers from these communities, many of which are heavily immigrant and low to medium income. He said the benefits from the Red Blue Connector will make sure these communities can access job growth sectors and healthcare. He thanked the MBTA and Healey administration.

A participant asked if there is any consideration for bike facilities around the updated Charles/MGH station. Ms. Greenwell replied that there are space limitations both inside and outside of the location of the new station at Charles/MGH, and it is unlikely that the project will include those amenities. Additionally, most larger bike parking facilities are at stations that either serve to connect folks to biking for the "last mile" of the trip or in downtown locations where there is a connection to regional train service.

An attendee asked if the new MGH Blue Line station is going to be a multi or single platform station. Ms. Greenwell replied that it would be a single center platform.

A participant asked if there are any plans to extend the Blue Line to Lynn, noting that the Blue Line is the only heavy rail line that does not currently connect to the commuter rail. Ms. Greenwell replied that there are currently no plans for extending the Blue Line to Lynn.

APPENDIX B: WRITTEN COMMENTS

October 16 Public Meeting at Paul S. Russell, MD, Museum at MGH

Name	Questions/Comments
Will Stattman	<i>I am a 10+ year resident of Beacon Hill and I would like to see this built as quickly and inexpensively as possible! Please let this critical piece of infrastructure happen! Minimizing disruptions in the area is appreciated. Thanks!</i>
Ed Fleck	<i>Need a small public process/campaign RE: Longfellow project (What? Why? When?)</i>
Mendell Rankin	<i>Has anyone also considered a concourse between Downtown Crossing Orange Line (northbound) platform to the State station Orange Line (southbound) platform for a Blue-Red Connector?</i>
Kevin Huang	<i>If Bowdoin station is closed, wouldn't adding another headhouse at Government Center be of some use? It would provide another entrance so that folks who are using Bowdoin would be able to walk only one block to a headhouse instead of two blocks at the Green Line Gov. Center headhouse. Probably might be a good compromise?</i>
Michael	<i>Why is there no crossover for the tail tracks? This increases capacity and is international best practice. The new station is too deep. A mezzanine is not needed and the added depth is more costly. Plus it's a longer transfer. Building on the comment above, why are we tunneling under Bowdoin? There are provisions already for western expansion. Was cost ever listed as a project constraint? \$800 million for 2000 ft is incredibly expensive. Does the new tunnel support CBTC or some other modern signaling system?</i>
Michael Glazkov	<i>Very amazing project and it's very great that the general public is invited to have a say in it. One thing that would be very beneficial would be even more public input so that we're informed every step of the way.</i>
David Kirk	<i>Could any part of Bowdoin Station be used as an MBTA history museum? No big deal, just something I wish we had as the oldest subway in the country. The one in NYC is cool!</i>
Tom Bryan	<i>Thank you for your work on this vital project. I fully support the cut-and-cover approach and urge the MBTA to prioritize speed when planning and constructing this project, even at the expense of temporary traffic restrictions on Cambridge St. I also want to strongly request that the MBTA work closely with Boston, MDOT, and the DCR to improve the pedestrian environment at Charles Circle. In particular, I would suggest restricting the Storrow Drive NB off ramp and it's associated connection to Cambridge St. to a single lane to ease access to the MGH headhouse.</i>



SHARON DURKAN
OFFICE OF BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR, DISTRICT 8

Secretary Rebecca Tepper
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Tepper,

As the District 8 Councilor representing the West End neighborhood and a resident of Anderson street close to the proposed site, I wanted to thank the MBTA and all involved stakeholders for coming together in pursuit of expanding transit access and transit connections through the proposal to connect the Red and Blue Lines by extending the blue line underneath Cambridge Street to meet at the Charles MGH stop. This connection would complete the inner core of the subway system and make whole portions of our City more accessible to more people, particularly environmental justice communities in East Boston and Dorchester. Such accessibility is certainly a necessity at the entrance to the central campus of the largest hospital in New England for the tens of thousands of people who work at and obtain care at Massachusetts General Hospital, so I wanted to thank Massachusetts General Hospital for their commitment to building a head house in their new clinical building currently under construction along Cambridge Street.

In order for the Red-Blue Connector to be a success, we must ensure the planning, development, and construction process includes all of the stakeholders, so I appreciate this initial public meeting and the ongoing coordination efforts between the City, State, institutions, and public, understand that particular attention needs to be paid to the cooperation between the MBTA and the Boston Transportation Department as it relates to the reconstruction of Cambridge Street. It also goes without saying that the construction management of this program should prioritize community safety and quality of life.

A meaningful public engagement effort is particularly important to the West End because of the neighborhood's historic experience with urban renewal, and the amount of construction that is already underway in the neighborhood.

The Red-Blue Line connection will offer a host of transportation and environmental benefits to the neighborhood and the City by adding further capacity to a highly trafficked transportation and commuting corridor along Cambridge Street, which during the morning and evening rush hours sees great use by cars, cyclists and pedestrians by delivering on a long delayed environmental commitment to mitigate air quality impacts of the Central Artery. Because of the historical imperatives associated with this connection, we must too consider the future implications. Therefore, I encourage the MBTA and the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to consider how to preserve and enhance future optionality related to the design and engineering details of the connection. I would also like to see a breakdown of how the project costs increase when using a tunnel boring method as opposed to cut and cover. I believe we should strongly consider costs as the state already has enough of a tough time funding crucial projects like this.

When completed, the Red-Blue Line connector will improve the quality of life and ease of movement for all Bostonians and our visitors. I look forward to working with you, and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sharon Durkan
Boston City Councilor, District 8

October 19 Public Meeting at East Boston Branch of the Boston Public Library

Name	Questions/Comments
Chris Morton	<i>Please add my email address to your mailing list for the project. Thank you.</i>
Anonymous	<i>When you do connect the Red and Blue Lines, it might be helpful to avoid [messing] up the gauge and then just not telling anybody about it. P.S. if you build a new Blue Line station, you should name it for Tony Conigliaro!</i>