



**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

# Proposed Fare Change Package

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Public Outreach

January – February 2024

# Proposed Fare Changes

## 1. Expand Reduced Fares to Income-Eligible Riders

- a) A “low-income” or “means-tested” fare program

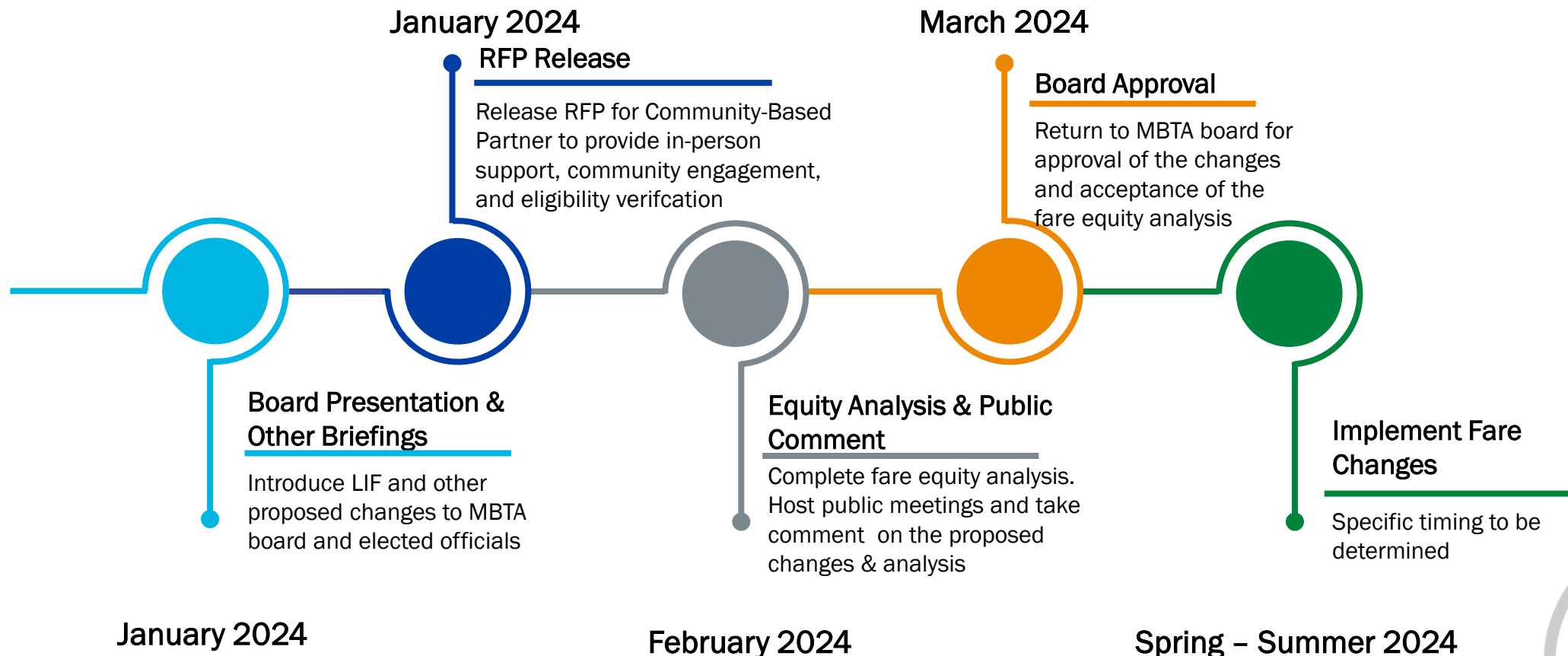
## 2. Other Changes

- a) Eliminate Change Tickets, Replace with CharlieCards
- b) Implement Holiday Pass on Commuter Rail



# Timeline for Fare Changes

*To meet federal Title VI requirements, fare changes require public engagement, equity analysis, and board approval.<sup>1</sup>*

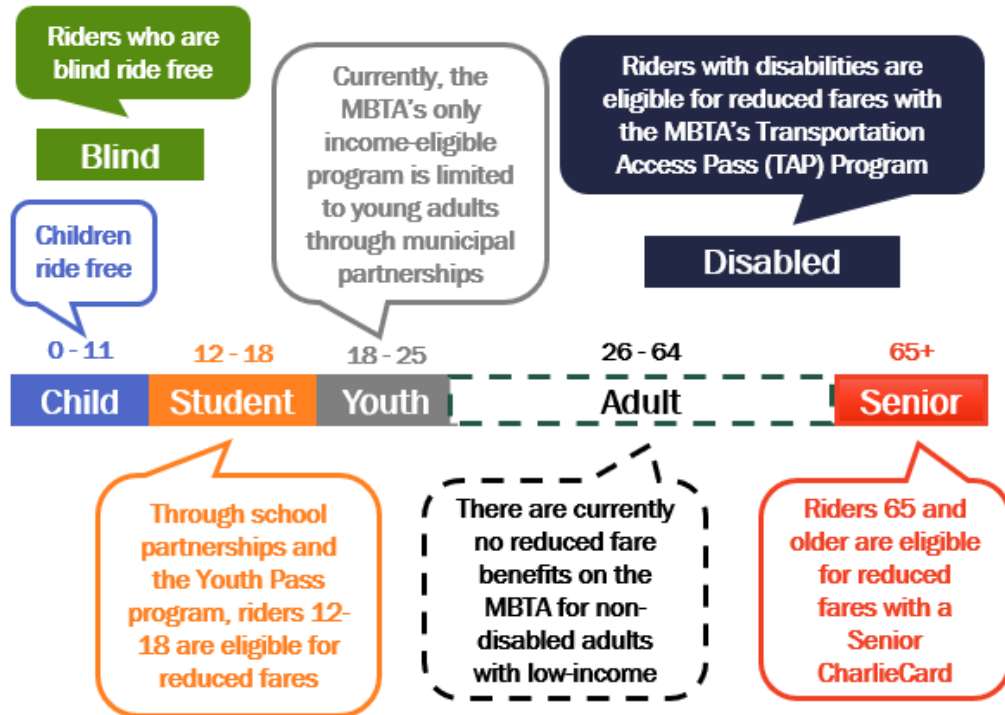


1. Changes leverage the [MBTA Fare Policy](#), approved December 21, 2015



# Local & National Context on Reduced Fares

The MBTA has several reduced fare programs.



Reduced Fares provide ~50% off tickets and passes on subway, bus, commuter rail, and ferry

In the US, six of the top ten and 19 of the top 50 transit agencies offer a reduced fares to riders with low-income.

Comparable Agency Programs			
Location	Program Name	% Discount	Income Threshold
New York - MTA	Fair Fares	50%	100% FPL
Los Angeles - LA Metro	LIFE	100-25%	250% FPL
Washington DC - WMATA	Metro Lift	50%	200% FPL
San Francisco - Muni	Lifeline Pass	50%	200% FPL
Bay Area - BART	Clipper START	50%	200% FPL
Portland, OR - TriMet	Honored Citizen	50%	200% FPL
Seattle - King County	Orca Lift	64%	200% FPL

FPL: Federal Poverty Line

50% off fares and a 200% Federal Poverty Level threshold are most common across the country

- 200% FPL is widely used across government programs




# Proposed Expansion of Reduced Fares

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 The MBTA is proposing to expand reduced fares eligibility to riders with low-income

 Riders who are enrolled in SNAP or certain MassHealth programs will be eligible for reduced fares

 Alongside this new eligibility for reduced fares, we will be extending reduced fares for riders who are income-eligible and senior riders on The RIDE



# Eligibility Detail

## 

- Riders under 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) will be eligible for the program
- 200% FPL equates to \$29,160 for a single individual and \$60,000 for a household of 4



## Eligibility Demonstration

- Riders will not demonstrate their income directly to the MBTA, but demonstrate eligibility via enrollment in other income-based programs
- Enrollment will last for one year after approval date and riders will re-apply annually

### ***Accepted Programs at Launch***

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Transitional Assistance for Families and Dependent Children (TAFDC)
- Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled & Children (EAEDC)
- MassHealth CarePlus
- MassHealth Family Assistance
- MassHealth Limited
- MassHealth Standard

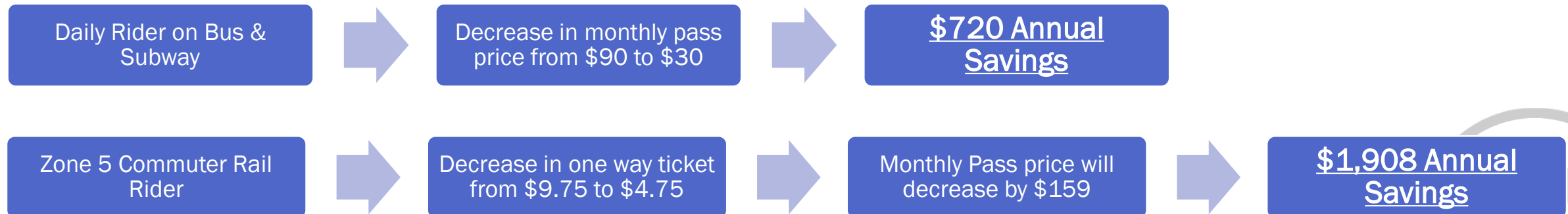


# Rider Experience and Savings

- Riders enrolled in the program would be mailed a CharlieCard that will be valid for approximately half fares
  - When loaded with stored value, tapping the card at a fare gate or farebox would deduct approximately half of our full fare levels
  - When used at a Fare Vending Machine, riders would see discounted pass prices on **all modes**
  - For RIDE users, standard trips would be 50% off (\$1.70 vs. \$3.35)



## Example Rider Savings



# Example Fares @ Public Meeting Locations

*New reduced fares apply across the MBTA service area. Here are example changes for a trip from our public meeting locations to MBTA headquarters downtown!*

Meeting Location	Fare Product Example	Current Price	New Price
Lowell	<i>Commuter Rail Zone 6 One-Way</i>	\$10.50	\$5.25
Dorchester	<i>Subway Single-Ride</i>	\$2.40	\$1.10
Roxbury	<i>Local Bus Single-Ride</i>	\$1.70	\$0.85
Brockton	<i>Commuter Rail Zone 4 One-Way</i>	\$8.75	\$4.25
Mattapan	<i>Subway Single-Ride</i>	\$2.40	\$1.10
Worcester	<i>Commuter Rail Zone 8 One-Way</i>	\$12.25	\$6.00
Chelsea	<i>Communter Rail Zone 1A One-Way</i>	\$2.40	\$1.10



# The RIDE

*The expansion of reduced fares to include income-eligible riders will be **the first MBTA reduced fare program to include the RIDE**. As part of this change, Senior RIDE users will also be eligible for half fares on the RIDE.*

- RIDE fares for ADA trips (\$3.35) are federally capped at 2x the full fares of equivalent fixed route transit services. **Eligible users will now pay \$1.70 fares for ADA trips.**
- The expansion of reduced fares will launch only on ADA trips. Staff continue to consider possible expansion to Premium (\$5.60) and Flex fares (\$3 plus any cost over \$43)



# Application Process

- ✓ **4 steps, < 5 min to complete:**
  1. Identity Check with the Registry of Motor Vehicles using Driver's License, Mass ID, Learner's Permit or Liquor ID card number.
  2. Eligibility Check with Mass Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), including MassHealth or Mass Dept of Transitional Assistance (DTA)
  3. Instant approval if eligible
  4. How you want to get your card: mail vs. pick up
- ✓ **Available in:**
  - English
  - Español
  - Português
  - Kreyòl Ayisyen
  - 中国人
  - Tiếng Việt
- ✓ **Accessible to screen readers**

## Income-Eligible Reduced Fares

Step 2 of 5

### RMV Check

Enter your Massachusetts Driver's License, Mass ID, Learner's Permit, or Liquor ID card number.

We use this information to automatically verify your identity with the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). This helps prevent fraud and someone else from claiming your benefits.



ID Number \*Required

Please make sure that when you fill out your information below that your full name and date of birth is correct and matches your government ID.

First Name \*Required

Last Name \*Required

Date of Birth \*Required

Month MM      Day DD      Year YYYY

By clicking Next, I give permission to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") to share my personal information provided in this application with the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles ("RMV") to verify my identity. By clicking Next, I give permission to the RMV to share sufficient information to verify my identity.

Next

Back

# Community Partner Support

*The MBTA has released an RFP for a community partner to support the application process & program*

## In-Person Application Support

- For riders who do not have access to a computer or prefer to apply in person, the Community Partner would provide in-person application support across the MBTA service area

## Back Office Verification

- The MBTA plans to accept proof of identity and eligibility through uploaded documentation if a rider is not automatically enrolled via the integrations with the RMV and EOHHS
- The Community Partner or another contracted organization would staff a back office to review and confirm enrollment for these riders

## Marketing & Engagement

- In addition to MBTA staff efforts, the Community Partner would amplify outreach via attendance at community events and use of existing networks



# Planned Outreach & Marketing

*The MBTA will implement a comprehensive marketing and outreach strategy to reach individuals who are eligible for and would benefit from the newly expanded MBTA reduced fare program.*



**Goal:** Raise awareness of the expanded eligibility criteria, drive people to apply, and facilitate ease of enrollment.



**Target Audiences:** Current and new riders who are income-eligible, between 26-64 years old, and currently enrolled in accepted assistance programs like MassHealth, and DTA's TANIF, SNAP, and EAEDC.

**Tactics**

## Physical MBTA Assets

Car cards, digital triptych screens, bus shelter posters

## MBTA.com

## MBTA Social Channels

## Create Outreach Partner Toolkit

Print materials, Sample Email, Blog or Newsletter Post, Sample Social Posts and images, News Release

## Collaborate with Partners

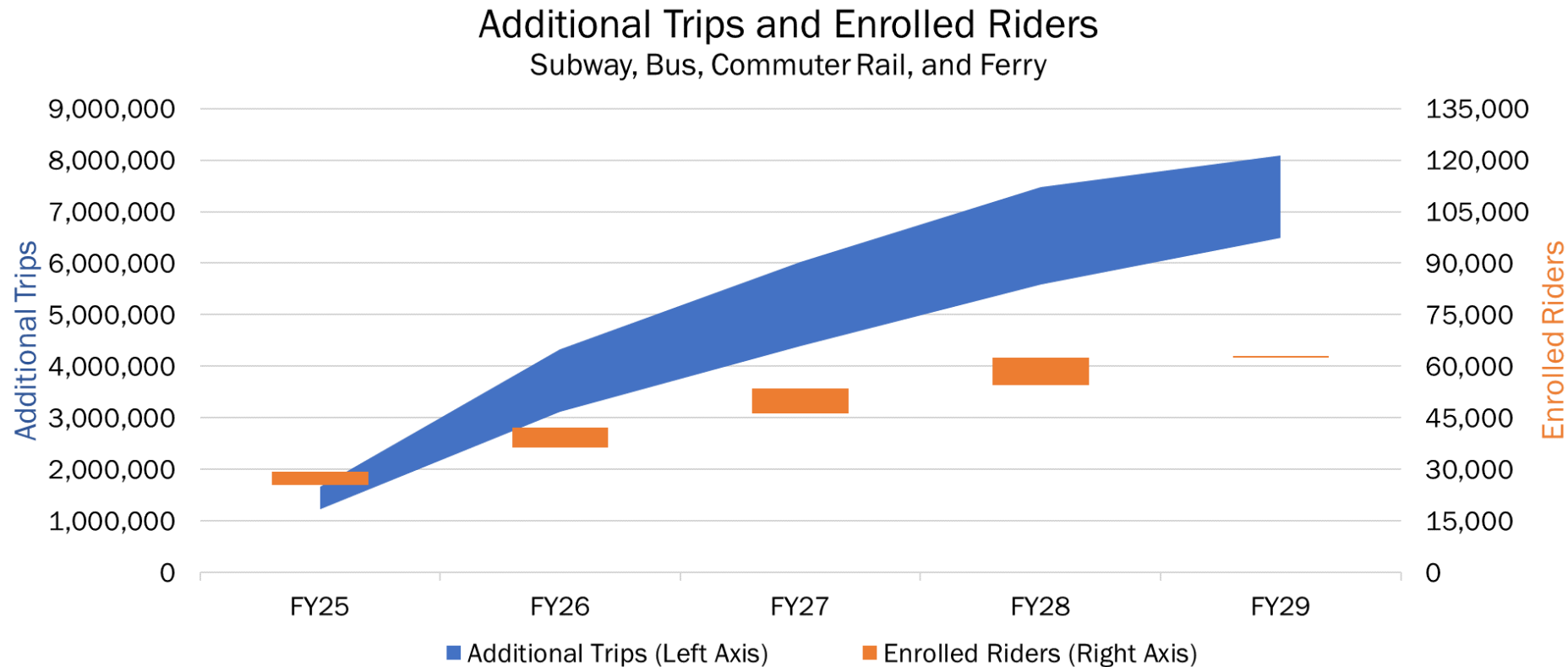
Executive Office of Health & Human Services (HHS), MassHealth, and Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), Case Managers, Community-based MBTA partner networks (Youth Pass, System-wide Accessibility, Community Engagement)





# Proposal Impact & Enrollment

*This expansion is expected to enroll 62 thousand riders and induce up to 8.1 million annual trips on the subway, bus, commuter rail, and ferry system by fiscal year 2029.*



*Approximately 28 thousand RIDE users are also expected to enroll, generating up to 185 thousand additional trips annually.*



# Proposal Cost

*Program costs, including fare revenue loss, operations, and administration, are expected to grow from \$25 million annually to \$58 million over the first 5 years of implementation as program awareness and enrollment increase.*

<i>(millions)</i>	FY24 (Pre-Launch)	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
<b>Fare Revenue Loss</b>	--	\$7.2 - \$9.1	\$16 - \$21	\$22 - \$29	\$27 - \$35	\$31 - \$38
Subway, Bus, Ferry, Commuter Rail	--	\$5.7 - \$7.6	\$14 - \$20	\$20 - \$27	\$25 - \$34	\$30 - \$36
The RIDE	--	\$1.5	\$1.6	\$1.7	\$1.7	\$1.7
<b>Operational Costs</b>	--	\$13 - \$14	\$15 - \$16	\$16 - \$18	\$17 - \$20	\$17 - \$21
Subway, Bus, Ferry, Commuter Rail	--	\$0.2 - \$0.7	\$0.4 - \$2.0	\$0.6 - \$2.9	\$0.8 - \$3.7	\$1.0 - \$4.1
The RIDE	--	\$13	\$14	\$15	\$16	\$16 - \$17
<b>Initial Program Design &amp; Ongoing Administration Costs</b>	\$4.2	\$2.9	\$2.9	\$3.0	\$3.1	\$3.2
<b>Total Program Costs</b>	<b>\$4.2</b>	<b>\$23 - \$26</b>	<b>\$33 - \$40</b>	<b>\$40 - \$50</b>	<b>\$47 - \$58</b>	<b>\$52 - \$62</b>

# Other Changes



# Replace Change Tickets with CharlieCards

*MBTA plans to remove the Change Ticket functionality on March 1, 2024 and stock CharlieCards on buses to store cash overpayment*

## Drivers of Action

- If a rider overpays with cash onboard a Bus, Green Line, or Mattapan Line vehicle by more than \$0.50, the farebox issues a CharlieTicket with stored value as change (a “Change Ticket”).
  - 10-15 thousand change tickets are issued per month
- This functionality is going away due to obsolescence of certain elements of fare collection technology (magnetic stripe, or magstripe, paper tickets).

## Additional Mitigating Actions

- **No other transit agency issues change for overpayment.**
- Stock CharlieCards on buses in a dispenser near the farebox
  - Riders will be able to take a CharlieCard and load cash onto the CharlieCard. Pilot launched on 100 buses in November 2023.
- Update all fareboxes to only accept small bills (\$1 and \$5) to reduce the impact on riders

## Timeline

- Begin pilot on March 1 due to end-of-life technology; permanent change pending board vote on this fare change package, scheduled for March





# Commuter Rail Holiday Pass

*MBTA plans make permanent the Commuter Rail \$10 Weekend Pass on all federal holidays*

## Ongoing Pilot

- The MBTA is currently conducting a fare pilot to test an expansion of the Commuter Rail \$10 Weekend Pass to include federal holidays.

## Observed Impact

- On holidays CR trains have capacity to carry more riders.
- The pilot has generated approximately +\$50k in net revenue and positive ridership to date.

## Impact

- On a projected annual basis, this change will increase ridership and have minimal revenue impact (\$0 to +\$50 thousand).



# Next Steps



# Draft Equity Analysis Results

For any fare change, the MBTA is federally required to ensure that the change does not have a *disparate impact* on riders of color or a *disproportionate burden* on riders with low-income.

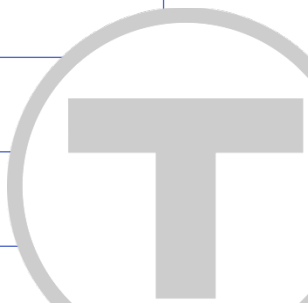
- In other words, the MBTA must ensure that any fare increase does not increase fares more for protected populations than all riders, and that any fare decrease does not decrease fares less for protected populations than for all riders.

	Calculation	Threshold (For Fare Decrease)	Calculation
Disparate Impact Ratio	$\frac{\% \text{ Change in Fares for Riders of Color}}{\% \text{ Change in Fares for All Riders}}$	> 0.9x	1.41x
Disproportionate Burden Ratio	$\frac{\% \text{ Change in Fares for Low-Income Riders}}{\% \text{ Change in Fares for All Riders}}$	> 0.9x	1.64x

The proposed fare changes pass our thresholds for equity based on our draft analysis

# Fare Change Process and Engagement

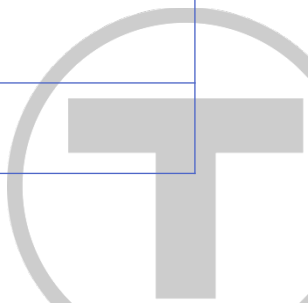
Date	Key Activities
<i>January 19</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief MBTA A&amp;F Subcommittee</li> <li>• Open <b>public comment period</b> and website with information</li> </ul>
<i>January 24</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release Community Partner <b>RFP</b> to support income-eligible reduced fares</li> </ul>
<i>January 25</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief <b>MBTA Board</b></li> </ul>
<i>January 19 – February 29</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief <b>external partners and interest groups</b></li> <li>• Host 8 <b>public meetings</b>, in various locations, times, and languages</li> <li>• MBTA Staff &amp; partners complete required <b>Title VI Equity Analysis</b></li> </ul>
<i>February 1 – 5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Draft <b>Title VI Equity Analysis</b></li> </ul>
<i>February 29</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Close public comment period</b></li> </ul>
<i>March 6</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post summary of <b>Public Comment</b></li> </ul>
<i>March 6 – 16</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBTA staff can <b>revise any proposed changes</b> based upon public feedback</li> </ul>
<i>March 28</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Full MBTA Board vote</u></b> on fare changes</li> </ul>
<i>March - September</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Launch changes</u></b></li> </ul>



# Public Meeting Schedule

Staff have planned eight public meetings across the MBTA service area. Meetings will be accessible and available in several languages. Please visit [mbta.com/2024farechanges](https://www.mbta.com/2024farechanges) or reach out to [publicengagement@mbta.com](mailto:publicengagement@mbta.com) with any questions.

Date	Time	Location	Address
January 29	6:30-8:30pm	Lowell	Pollard Memorial Library, 401 Merrimack St., Lowell
February 1	6-8pm	Dorchester	Cristo Rey High School, 100 Savin Hill Ave, Dorchester
February 5	6-8pm	Roxbury	Dewitt Center, 122 Dewitt Drive, Roxbury
February 7	6-8pm	Brockton	Brockton Public Library, 304 Main St, Brockton
February 12	6-8pm	Mattapan	Mildred Avenue Community Center, 5 Mildred Ave, Mattapan
February 13	6-8pm	Worcester	Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Square, Worcester
February 20	6-8pm	Chelsea	La Colaborativa, 318 Broadway, Chelsea
February 27	6-8pm	Virtual	Virtual



Thank You

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**We now welcome questions and comments**

**Please limit questions and comments to 2 minutes.**

*Please visit [mbta.com/2024farechanges](https://mbta.com/2024farechanges) or reach out to [publicengagement@mbta.com](mailto:publicengagement@mbta.com) with any further questions or to submit a comment.*

