

Mattapan Line Transformation – Public Comments

Timeframe

1) When will the decision process begin to select the final vehicle option?

Answer: We are underway with evaluation process. No official vote is scheduled.

2) Is it true that the 8 years will allow for infrastructure improvements to be made to eventually transition to another vehicle?

Answer: Yes.

3) Is 8-10 years the best-case scenario for having the modernization work completed? Will some aspects advance faster?

Answer: That is the current overall timeline. Phase 2 work is anticipated to be completed within the first phase of the 8-10 year threshold.

4) Why is the timeframe for access improvements so long?

Answer: The first 2 -3 years is for design and addressing stations in poor conditions.

5) Very educational presentation. The PCC cars are cool and fun, but they're museum pieces and not fun to ride. They should be replaced sooner than 10 years.

6) Does the timing of the procurement of the Type 9 depend on the procurement of the Type 10? Can MBTA just procure additional Type 10 LRVs for Mattapan? Why can't we get new vehicles sooner?

Answer: The Type 9 fleet has already been purchased and we are currently receiving the first few vehicles. Two are in service and two are on property undergoing testing. The Type 10 design is underway and procurement will have a long timeline. The Type 10 will also be a significantly larger vehicle than anything currently on the Green Line. The existing Green Line vehicle will have three sections (two articulations) and the Type 10 vehicles will like have five sections.

7) Why are we ordering additional new Type 9 LRVs for the Mattapan Line but cannot receive them sooner?

Answer: We are constrained by the infrastructure work required to accommodate a new vehicle. The engineering work and construction would take at least 3 years. We also have already completed the purchase of 24 Type 9 light-rail vehicles.

8) The Mattapan trolley service has been ignored for so long and has fallen into disrepair, but MBTA provides new service to Somerville. Why are Hyde Park and Mattapan ignored? We want new trains now and not more patchwork on the existing service.

Answer: We are constrained by the infrastructure work required to accommodate a new vehicle. The engineering work and construction would take at least 3 years.

9) In summary, what is the plan and timeline?

Answer: The MBTA will continue with routine maintenance. We have requested the first \$60 million for Phase 2 improvements in the current Capital Improvement Plan effective July 2019. The next 2- 3 years will include reconstruction of stations to provide accessibility, power system resiliency upgrades, etc. In 8 to 10 years, the selected future vehicle will be introduced.

Design Options

1) Why can't we revitalize the existing PCC trolleys for continued service?

Answer: Unfortunately, we cannot make the existing cars accessible. We are exploring how we can incorporate the vehicle as part of the corridor design or community history.

2) The community also appreciates the historic nature of the trolleys. Could a modern light-rail vehicle be designed to capture some of the unique design of the Mattapan Line?

Answer: We can absolutely have a public discussion on how to respectfully incorporate the Mattapan line's unique feel into the future vehicle choice.

3) What will happen to the decommissioned PCCs trolleys? They need to be preserved.

Answer: We will have a community engagement process to determine their reuse

4) It is great that we are considering honoring the cars' historical significance.

5) If we move away from the PCC vehicles in the future, will the PCC vehicles be phased out slowly by cannibalizing the vehicles? Will that be on Mattapan or on Green Line?

Answer: The plan is to use them as heritage fleet or incorporate them aesthetically into the new design of the corridor. This will mainly be the Mattapan Line.

6) Was extending the Red Line to Mattapan evaluated as part of this study?

Answer: Extending the Red Line was not part of this study. There are major challenges that precluded it as a viable option, including finding sufficient space for a maintenance and storage yard along the corridor, right of way and bridge clearances, private property encroachment, and significant infrastructure changes to address road crossings. Extending the Red Line is not within the scope of this study, as it is not feasible.

7) Is anyone looking into a better connection between the Red Line and the Mattapan trolley?

Answer: This topic was raised at previous meetings. MBTA is reviewing the current operations to identify a solution. We are looking to extend the peak operations period to accommodate improved connection to the trolley.

8) Will the Mattapan Line be extended up Blue Hill Avenue?

Answer: This is not included in this study.

9) Why are we getting a "hand-me-down" vehicle? This is an opportunity for our neighborhood to have a state-of-the-art vehicle for the first time in a very long time.

Answer: Type 9 vehicles are new. The MBTA has taken delivery of approximately 2 of the 24.

10) Why are we getting “hand me down cars” (Type 9 option)? Why is this community always last? The only reason we have this charming trolley is because the line has been neglected for so long. While in some ways I’m happy the MBTA ignored us and didn’t replace the PCC vehicles when they should have, things should be done the right way now that they will be replaced. Why is the Green line getting new cars and Mattapan and Dorchester residents must fight for everything? We deserve new vehicles.

Answer: Type 9 vehicles are new vehicles. We are committed to improving service and reliability.

11) I appreciate transparency with the presentation. This service is incredibly important to the community. What is the difference between the Type 9 and the other Green Line vehicles? Why can’t the Type 7 or 8 cars be used to supplement Mattapan? Is it true that the Green Line vehicles can’t make the curves on the Mattapan Line?

Answer: The Type 7 and 8 cars will be reaching the end of their useful life at the time that infrastructure upgrades are completed to accommodate new vehicles. The existing Green Line fleet is also not large enough to service the Green Line and Mattapan simultaneously. It’s our current understanding that the trains will make that curve.

12) Can you speak more to the capacity of the Type 9 vs. PCC?

Answer: Approximately 200 passengers. The Type 9 also improves boarding time by having more doors and level boarding. As we transition to a new system of fare collection, that will also speed the process and make it easier to pay.

13) How is it that the Type 9 light-rail vehicles would work for the Mattapan Line and not for the Green Line

Answer: We need to have the same vehicle on one line to operate reliably and efficiently, so a uniform fleet is required. Today, there are Type 7, 8, and 9 light-rail vehicles on the Green Line. This means we operate at the level of the Type 7 or the oldest vehicle, which limits our level of service. Therefore, we are working on the Type 10 to have uniformity.

14) Clarification is needed on Option 3, will the Green Line Type 9 vehicle be repurposed? Is there a Type 10 procurement planned for the Green Line?

Answer: Yes, the Type 9 light rail vehicles are 35-year life vehicles and will be approximately 8-10 years into that life at the time of a transition to Mattapan. There is also a plan to procure a Type 10 fleet to replace all current Green Line vehicles to obtain a homogenous light-rail vehicle fleet.

15) I used to live in Brighton and saw the wear Green Line trains are subjected to in service. Ten years on the Green Line for a vehicle is like 30 years of wear. Mattapan should get a fresh start. By the time we get the Type 9 vehicles, they will be old. We need new trains.

Answer: Before the Type 9 would transition to Mattapan, it would receive repairs and upgrades as needed to bring it to a state of good repair.

16) Will the MBTA have to replace the Type 9 light-rail vehicles that are transitioned to Mattapan from the Green Line?

Answer: The Type 9 light-rail vehicles (and Type 7 and 8 light-rail vehicles) will be replaced altogether by the Type 10 fleet.

17) Brand new modern vehicles are preferred to “hand-me-down” Type 9s. In two years, if the Type 10 funding doesn’t come through, what will happen?

Answer: Type 9 vehicles are new. We have made the commitment to provide an accessible vehicle to the Mattapan Line.

18) Do we have to reinvent the wheel with respect to a new, modern light-rail vehicle? There are manufacturers that produce these cars for many transit agencies? Why can’t we buy something designed for another agency?

Answer: Although based on the same fundamental design, every light-rail vehicle order is customized to a degree. The operating environment is critical to how the vehicle is designed. Even the Type 10 light-rail vehicles, which is an MBTA design, would not be accommodated on the Mattapan High Speed Line.

19) Was a noise analysis conducted as part of the study? I’m concerned about increased noise from the larger vehicles (e.g. Type 9 light-rail vehicle).

Answer: The Type 9 is larger, but actually quieter due to its modern design.

20) I am optimistic about the Type 9 light-rail vehicles.

- 21)** I fully support Option 3 because of the benefits it provides, mainly to accessibility and capacity. I think it is a clever solution to re-purpose the Type 9 cars for use on the Mattapan line - I understand the importance of having more uniform rolling stock that existing mechanics know how to maintain. I also understand that procuring new vehicles (Option 4) is risky and potentially costly. While I like the possibility of 100% low floor trolleys, the costs are outweighed by the benefits.
- 22)** Looking at your presentation, of the 6 options provided, it appears obvious that options #3 or #4 are the best options. The tradeoff between community impact (positive & negative) and cost relative to the other options raises these two options above all others. So which of the two are best and why? Converting the MBTA Type 9 cars to function/fit on the Mattapan line may be the least expensive up-front but is it the best longer-term solution? Will option #4 with the New LRV provide much more runway into the future and perhaps be less expensive over a much longer time frame than option #3?

Answer: Type 9 vehicles are known to the MBTA and follow an existing maintenance protocol. In addition to the cost of financing the procurement of new light-rail vehicles, new vehicles would also require their own maintenance protocol, the true cost of which would not be known until the design of a new vehicle was complete.

- 23)** I saw in the rendering of Option 3 (and confirmed during the meeting) that the plan is to paint the re-purposed Type 9 cars orange (presumably to match the PCCs). The orange of the PCCs is a nod to the original trolley colors, but that is irrelevant once new cars are on the line (especially if a few PCCs are preserved for history sake). I urge you to consider painting them red instead to match the scheme of the rest of the system (e.g., red line cars are red). The trolley line is red on the system map, so the cars should be red.

- 24)** Can the MBTA assure the Mattapan community that our preferred option will be the final choice?

Answer: Please provide your feedback/comments via the MBTA email address as we value the community's input.

Funding and Costs

- 1)** What will be the funding sources?

Answer: Project funding for Phase 2 has been allocated within the next Capital Investment Plan (CIP) window, but the specific source is yet to be determined.

- 2) What was the vehicle cost estimate for Option 4 based on? I think there are international vehicles that are much cheaper.

Answer: The cost is an average of per vehicle costs from similar procurements within the United States (i.e. quantity purchased, vehicle type and size, likely manufacturers). International orders were not used because many international vehicle purchases do not comply with “Buy America” requirements, so the price would not be representative.

- 3) Was there any discussion about fare increases for Mattapan?

Answer: Fare increase discussions are separate from this project. The funding for the Mattapan Transformation is included in our Capital Investment Plan and is not tied to a fare increase.

- 4) Is there any way that we as a community can gather and provide funds to get the best, most accessible light-rail vehicle so we have something new?

Answer: As part of the MBTA’s commitment to extending the useful life of the PCC fleet while planning for the Mattapan Line corridor’s future, we expect to use traditional sources of funding available to finance those investments.

Accessibility and Safety

- 1) Can current vehicles be retrofitted to accommodate accessibility?

Answer: There is no adaptation available for making these vehicles accessible to our standards.

- 2) What is the MBTA going to do about inaccessible stations, specifically Valley Road? Can improvements be accelerated to address safety concerns with the existing stairway?

Answer: Station accessibility improvements are a priority and planned under Phase 2. We do not have a specific timeline. However, we will do our best to accelerate accessibility and safety investments.

- 3) Accessibility at Valley Road is a major issue. What is the plan?

Answer: Potential accessibility improvements were evaluated at Valley Road, but no decision has yet been made. Possible accessibility improvements include elevators, or ramps.

- 4) Valley Road has the second fewest boardings of all stations throughout the MBTA service. Making it accessible will also be a huge investment. Will that stop remain?

Answer: It is not currently our intent to eliminate Valley Road. However, it will take significant engineering effort to modernize and make Valley Road accessible. It's possible that making Valley Road accessible could increase ridership.

- 5) Can you please speak to the prolonged Milton Station stairway closure? It's difficult for some community members to make the additional length of travel.

Answer: The stairway at Milton were closed due to safety concerns. Reopening will be dependent on being able to address the rest of the accessibility issues at the station. At a prior meeting, we said 2-3 years.

- 6) The stairway at Milton Station is still closed. The parking lots providing unofficial access are dangerous during inclement weather as they are not cleared of snow. They are also dangerous for people walking at night. We should not have to wait three years to have access. Stairs need to be repaired ASAP. If not, transit police should be at the station at night as the access via the lot is dangerous.

Answer: We apologize for not ensuring lots are cleared of snow. The stairs are unfortunately beyond repair and will be addressed as part of larger renovations.

- 7) In light of the recent trolley/automobile accident at the grade crossing at Central Avenue Station, can we discuss safety concerns? Will there be changes to signage or pavement markings.

Answer: We and local legislators are aware. Part of the modernization program includes a signal system to address safety. More immediate concerns will be addressed through coordination with the cities of Boston and Milton to ensure uniformity in the approach.

- 8) Can we address the pot holes and uneven pavement at the crossing at Central Avenue?

Answer: Part of the modernization program includes improvements to the crossing at Central Avenue.

- 9) I have concerns regarding safety at the Central Avenue crossing. There are currently no signals for the trolley or for pedestrians/bicyclists on the path. This should be easy to address.

Answer: Part of the modernization program includes improvements to the crossing at Central Avenue.

Operations

- 1) The existing PCC trolleys can't operate in 4 inches or more of snow. Will this issue be addressed on the existing vehicles and what will the difference be (if any) with new vehicles?

Answer: All of the options studied will provide better snow operation than the existing. Modern light rail vehicles would have the same performance in snow on the Mattapan line as on the Green Line due to modern propulsion systems and all new vehicle components.

- 2) The arrivals and departures of the Mattapan trolley and Red Line trains are often out of sync. Wait times, especially off peak, are extensive. Why can't the Red Line train arrival be timed with Mattapan trolley departures, so passengers are not waiting outside at the Ashmont trolley platform?

Answer: The current trolley vehicles have obsolete systems that cannot communicate automatically with the MBTA Operations Control Center. Operators use a radio system to communicate, making it difficult to sync travel patterns.

- 3) At Ashmont there used to be a canopy between the Red line and trolley platforms providing coverage from the elements for passengers. Can we have it back? Also, why can't we board on both sides of the trolley to speed up boarding?

Answer: One of the benefits of the Type 9 option, which has operator cabs at both ends, is to remove the loop at Ashmont replacing it with a pull-in and pull-out method that would allow for level boarding without needing to travel as far to board the trolley, boarding on both sides could also be investigated at Ashmont.

- 4) Signalization at Central Ave. New mixed-use commercial/residential development in that area is bringing more pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Answer: We will partner with the town of Milton and City of Boston to find the best and safest signaling option for all users of the streets.

- 5) Will the new trains carry bikes? We need bike racks and garbage cans at the entrance to Mattapan Station.

Answer: Any rail vehicle on Mattapan will likely follow the same bicycle guidelines that currently exist throughout the rest of the system. MBTA continues to invest in bike infrastructure.

- 6) How does the MBTA determine ridership? I think the numbers you have are low and that ridership would jump considerably with a new, modern trolley. How will fares be collected?

Answer: Central planning performs studies on ridership counts. There is variation depending on the day and circumstance. We're planning for more ridership with the consideration of higher capacity vehicles. The MBTA is embarking on a new fare collection system with greater flexibility for riding the system. It's currently in the planning and validating process.

- 7) This is critical to Milton and the surrounding communities. I think the community is underrepresented by the current ridership counts. I am a member of the Neponset River Greenway Council and emphasize the importance of an improved crossing at Central Ave. How would low floor vehicles impact station platforms, crossings, and pedestrian access? Retaining walls along the trail are in need of repair. Will that be included in Phase 2 maintenance? What else? Would like to see a bike cage at Mattapan Station or others to increase and encourage bike ridership and limit bike theft.

Answer: Crossings would be made accessible through the use of ramps at strategic location. Not an insurmountable challenge. Retaining walls would be upgraded in Phase 2 along with targeted bridge rehabilitation. The need for new bridges will depend on the future option selected. Also, MBTA continues to invest in bike infrastructure.

- 8) Thanks for the presentation. Seconding bike cage at Mattapan Square. Will future options improve the speed of the trip?

Answer: Unknown at this time. A limiting factor is the distance between stops, not necessarily the vehicle. But there may be some improvements with modern vehicles and signaling systems.

9) Will the Type 9 be able to accommodate the loop at Ashmont? If not, will construction on the loop impact the neighborhood? If there is going to be infrastructure work on the Ashmont loop, residents (e.g. Beale Street, Bushnell, and Radford Lane) must be included early in the decision-making process and aware of the specific plans.

Answer: The Type 9 vehicles can navigate the Ashmont loop. With the Type 9, the MBTA would consider eliminating the loop to reduce noise and improve Red Line access.

10) Is the potential loop removal at Ashmont possible for all options?

Answer: Loop removal is still under consideration. It would only be feasible for the Type 9 or a modern light-rail vehicle, which have operator cabs at both ends so the vehicle can pull in and back out of the station. MBTA will focus on impact mitigation of any construction.

11) Will headways improve?

Answer: We are still evaluating the frequency of service that can be achieved with the different options.

12) The trolley goes through the cemetery (only such trolley in the world, I believe). What are the considerations regarding the cemetery?

Answer: The Type 9 light-rail vehicles fits the existing right of way and clearance envelope.

13) Was noise considered, especially related to the bus options?

Answer: No noise analysis was conducted. It is anticipated that an electric bus would be far less noisy than a conventional vehicle. At this point, a bus is not a preferred option in general. The rail options are also anticipated to be quieter due to more modernized systems.

14) Once the Type 9 cars are in place, please do not reduce the frequency of service because of the added capacity.

15) Are there any service disruptions for this project?

Answer: We are underway with identifying impacts as we go through the modernization project.

Environmental Equity

1) Is the MBTA considering climate change in the planning of this project?

Answer: Yes, climate resiliency is a factor.

2) Please speak about environmental issues. Are you working with Neponset River Watershed Association?

Answer: The issues are drainage, snow removal and melt. All evaluated service options will provide better snow operation.

3) Very concerned with environmental issues, especially those posed by buses.

Answer: At this point, a bus is not a preferred option in general.

Miscellaneous

1) Where did Phase 1 come from?

Answer: Phase 1 was a plan advanced in coordination with legislators. Investment was needed and MBTA responded with Phase 1.

2) The real investment here is the infrastructure to prepare the line for the future vehicle.

3) What type of parts are often repaired on the existing PCC trolleys? Can they be reproduced using a 3D printer, e.g. using capabilities available at the Wentworth Institute of Technology?

Answer: Parts include driveshafts, brakes, propulsion system, etc. These are large parts that can be up to the size of the length of the vehicle. The limiting factor is the obsolete parts' ability to integrate with modern electronics. The overhaul project is less about parts availability and more about old parts communicating and functioning with new systems.

4) Why aren't the Orange/Red Line vehicles manufactured in the United States?

Answer: There are no U.S. based heavy rail car manufacturers. As there are no U.S. based heavy rail car manufacturers, U.S. transit agencies must procure their public transit vehicles from international manufacturers in accordance with applicable federal and/or State "Buy America" regulations. For this reason, the manufacturer of the Orange and Red Line cars opened a production plant in Springfield, MA.

- 5) The Neponset trail is very important. Can MBTA ensure station modifications include more and better access directly to the trail?

Answer: We will provide access where we can.

- 6) I hope there is some design and coordination with DCR to provide connectivity to path.

Answer: We plan to work with DCR and all our partners.

- 7) This plan comes with a proactive maintenance plan. Our existing maintenance facility is inadequate. We need to put more attention into maintaining our investment.

Answer: The maintenance facility will accommodate the selected vehicles and will be larger than the existing maintenance shed. What comes with this program is a new maintenance facility.

- 8) The history of the line includes an original intent to extend the Red Line not just to Mattapan, but to Hyde Park. This is an equity problem.

- 9) My family takes the trolley every day. Family worked for MBTA and rode the trolley for 10 years.

- 10) Please consider replacing the green line branches with a heavy rail rapid transit. The existing green line trolleys are way too slow. Transform the current train tracks into bus only corridors. Much faster and cheaper!

- 11) All efforts should be made to minimize line closures - please work to do station and track work concurrently so the disruption period is short. This is especially important for Capen Street and Valley Road riders, who don't have direct access to the shuttle (I'm aware of the van option but I can't imagine it's faster than walking to Mattapan or Central Avenue.

- 12) Please work to ensure that the procurement of Type 10 cars happens on-schedule, so that the Type 9 cars are introduced to the Mattapan line before the soon-to-be-refurbished PCC trolleys completely fall apart.

- 13) Can we have a copy of the study?

Answer: The analysis and findings of the study have been posted on the page for the Mattapan Line Transformation.

- 14) Are the slides on MBTA.com?

Answer: Yes, [download the PDF](#) on the MBTA's web page titled [Mattapan Line Transformation](#).