

**MBTA Green Line Extension (GLX) Project
Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2021
4:00 to 5:30 p.m., Via Webinar**

*This meeting is the 41st consecutive, monthly GLX Community Working Group meeting.

ATTENDEES:

CWG Members:

Ryan Dunn (Co-Chair)
Viola Augustin (Somerville)
Jim McGinnis (Union Square)
Jennifer Dorsen (Ball Square)
Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge)
Laurel Ruma (Medford – College Ave)
Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square)

MassDOT/MBTA:

Kathleen Wallace (MBTA)
Will Kingkade (MBTA)
Melissa Dullea (Senior Director MBTA Service and Planning)
Terry McCarthy (MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement)

GLX Project Team:

Martin Nee (GLX Program Management Team – Stakeholder Engagement)
Erin Reed (GLXC)
Jeff Wagner (GLXC)

Other Guests:

Matt Hartman (Senator Jehlen’s office)
Tim Dineen (VNA Resident)
Rocco Dirico (Tufts University)
Ben Chu
Chaing
Ron Newman
Brian Campbell

PURPOSE: The GLX Community Working Group (CWG) was formed to help engage and foster communication with the communities along the GLX corridor by meeting with representative members (both residents and officials) of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford.

BACKGROUND: The Green Line Extension (GLX) Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). The project intent is to extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. The goals of the project are to increase mobility; encourage public transit usage; improve regional air quality; ensure a more equitable distribution of transit services; and support opportunities for sustainable development.

Terry McCarthy opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He proceeded to present the Safety Moment on Rideshare safety. He followed with a brief update on MBTA Restoration Services. Melissa Dullea (MBTA Bus Operations) commented in on summer schedules for buses and subway. Red, Orange, and Blue schedules will be close to restore service at 100 percent. Green Line is expected to be less. Buses are expected to get back to 80 to 90 percent of Pre-COVID-19 service hours by summer and 94 percent by fall.

Will Kingkade, MBTA Deputy Director, Automatic Fare Collection, and Kathleen Wallace, MBTA Deputy Director of Maintenance and Operations, Automatic Fare Collection, presented insight on expected fare collection protocols that will be in place when GLX begins revenue service.

- What changes will look like when GLX comes online. New ticket vending machines are expected to be deployed for GLX. These machines will be in full service and will accept all types of fare. Of note, the machines are lower in height to conform with ADA requirements.
- Magnetic tickets in use today will be updated to chips and will become trackable for data collection purposes (not personally trackable).
- Fare validation and deduction is expected to be rolled out with GLX. A one-device solution is expected to be available at all Green Line stations.
- Contactless cards will be used.
- Question from Laurel Ruma. Will there be more than one device at each station in case one goes down? Yes, there will be between 2 and 4 ticket vending machines at each station.
- Andy Reker asked, will there be fare gates at Lechmere Station? Answer: No fare gates will be used at any Green Line stations. How then will customers show that they've paid their fare? By then everyone will be on a chip-based card which is tappable. The plan is to have everyone on this new system by the time GLX opens.
- Terry McCarthy mentioned you will also be able to purchase tickets at convenience stores, etc.

Jeff Wagner provided an in-depth construction update.

- One of the changes in the field is there will be far less commuter rail outages available to the extent they have been going forward. This will make the work zones more congested and less efficient due to more elaborate safety requirements. GLXC will be adapting to these new conditions as they push to complete the zones for Revenue Service.
- School Street Bridge received steel spans on February 25. Utility work is ongoing.
- Medford Street Bridge received steel spans on March 18. Deck construction is underway.
- Gilman Square station elevator shaft has been erected at the Community Path / Somerville High School Entrance.
- Viaducts are being completed rapidly. The viaduct between Lechmere Station and the Red Bridge area has received waterproofing and ballast and track will follow. Tracks have been installed on most viaducts at this point.
- Rail placement on the Medford Line continues at a rapid pace. Track and systems work is at its peak at this point.
- Systems work has begun in some areas. At Union Square feeder cables are being fed onto poles for eventual catenary power.
- Three of 9 Central Instrument Houses (CIHs), also known as Signal Bungalows are in place and work has begun on the interiors. The rest will be installed in the next few months. Every wire has to be tested, commissioned, and function correctly for a period of months before it can put into service.
- Overhead Catenary System poles are going in rapidly. More than 603 pole foundations have been drilled.

- Station construction continues at all 7 stations. Steel canopies are visible at various levels of completion at Lechmere, Union Square, East Somerville, Gilman Square, Magoun Square, and Ball Square.
- Bridge Progress: Medford, School, and Lowell Street Bridges advancing rapidly. At Cedar Street, the alterations are complete.
- At the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF), the exterior is essentially complete. Interior electrical and mechanical work is near completion, and track work in the yard is in its final stages.
- Retaining walls are being completed based on their affect on critical path. McGrath Highway, North of Walnut, and Medford/Tufts Station are the hot spots for retaining wall work.
- The Community Path Viaduct is advancing smoothly. Concrete has been placed on the ramp near Brickbottom. Rebar work is underway and concrete deck pours are expected soon.
- The GLX hotline has received 1,784 inquiries with 1,685 closed out. The project received 43 inquiries in March.
- The GLX Community Connections Team had its best response ever in support of Project Soup. 335 pounds of food and 965 personal care products were delivered to the group on April 1, 2021.
- The Lechmere Station Artwork has begun at the North Headhouse. Randal Thurston's work is being installed which is very visible already!

Question & Answer

- Ron Newman asked when revenue service will begin. Terry explained that GLX is pushing for end of 2021 for revenue service. The testing and commissioning phase of the project will continue in the coming months and must be completed prior to trains going into service to ensure safety. Union Square is expected to be in service before the Medford Branch. The Community Path will open with revenue service.
- Laurel Ruma, will the project still need 6 months of testing before opening. Terry explained that testing has already begun. GLX is targeting end of year for revenue service. The project will provide precise dates as we get closer to completion.
- Laurel Ruma asked what is being done to ensure there are no derailments. Terry explained GLX is all brand-new track. The system will be extensively tested and conform to all safety codes and standards. GLX does not anticipate track problems.
- Jim McGinnis asked about the coordination with US2 in terms of access. Terry explained ADA access will be maintained for all customers at all times during US2 construction phases.
- Jim McGinnis asked how the East Cambridge Viaduct Rehabilitation project is going. Terry explained track is going in and communication cables are being run. GLX is coordinating closely with that project. GLX is expected to have a few new No. 9 vehicles at the VMF for testing and first responder training this summer.
- Andy Reker wanted to confirm there is more nighttime work. Will work on the East Cambridge Viaduct and Lechmere be at night? Jeff Wagner said most of that work is during the day because we don't run into the same track access issues as crews working along the commuter rail lines do. Once we get into testing you may see a lot of trolley activity at night. Terry explained as we get closer to completion, we will provide more updates on night work.
- Tim Dineen asked how they will get elevators into the shafts? Terry and Jeff assumed they would bring them in at track level. Jeff will get an update on this and let Tim know.
- Terry explained that weekend service will be returning to the Commuter Rail lines this spring and summer.

- Terry announced there is a public meeting being scheduled for June. Date, time, and details to follow.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 8:30to 10:00 a.m. via Video Conference.

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