



## Going Green: How the MBTA is Taking Climate Action October 1, 2024

*Questions asked prior to and during the virtual event. Answers provided by the MBTA Climate Team.*

### Questions about Electrification

#### Questions

- Please detail plans for battery electric trains rollout.
- Is there planning for electrification of the commuter lines at this point?
- Regional electrification?
- Are there specific plans for electrifying the commuter rail, including the Needham Line?

#### Answer Summary

The Fairmount Commuter Rail Line is the shortest of the Commuter Rail Lines, with nine stations (including South Station and Readville) and with environmental justice (EJ) communities along its route. This project prioritizes these communities for cleaner air and a more modern commuting experience. This program will be a full-scale test of the effort and impact of decarbonizing passenger rail for the MBTA. Along with the Fairmount Line, the Newburyport/Rockport Line and the Providence Line were identified by the MBTA Board in 2019 as one of the highest priority lines for conversion to a decarbonized regional rail service.

#### Question

- What are the short-term and long-term plans for coordinating with EverSource et al regarding fleet electrification?

#### Answer

The MBTA coordinates with investor-owned utilities and municipal light plants on an ongoing basis as we seek to replace existing assets or to build new facilities, as well as



on ongoing system maintenance. The MBTA will be seeking to deepen its collaborations with utilities and other regional partners as it pursues sustainability and resilience initiatives.

## Questions about Tracking:

### Questions

- Do you have metrics to track climate progress?
- How does MBTA account for Scope 3 Emissions?
- How does the MBTA measure the effectiveness of the system's climate change initiatives? Are there legislative changes?

### Answer Summary

The MBTA tracks energy use and emissions and is working to integrate energy and emissions data into the MassDOT (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) open data platform to have greater public visibility into our decarbonization metrics. We are coordinating with the [ResilientMass Action Team \(RMAT\)](#) to develop statewide resilience metrics.

### Question

- Will there be information about the timeline of this project?

### Answer

Each step identified in the Climate Assessment includes a timeline for implementation.

## Questions about Prioritization:

### Questions

- Please discuss how priority-setting has been done, on what basis and working toward what implementation timeline.
- How do you balance this initiative with all the maintenance work that the MBTA is trying to catch up on?
- What are the top priorities and how are you prioritizing?
- How is the MBTA prioritizing adaptation investments?

### Answer Summary

As the MBTA prioritizes investments, the agency places a major focus on ensuring the transit system can run reliable service, striking a balance between State of Good Repair needs and modernization or expansion. The MBTA allocates capital dollars through the Capital Investment Plan process using a set of criteria. For example, to assess investments through the lens of climate adaptation, the MBTA assesses two resilience

factors for each project. One related to climate vulnerability, with a criticality factor assigned through our asset prioritization framework that considers the vulnerability of the primary asset or system related to a given project to extreme heat, sea level rise and storm surge, inland flooding, high winds and extreme cold. Another related to severe weather resiliency and whether the project is anticipated to make a given system or asset more resilient, utilizing the [ResilientMass Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool](#). Through this framework, the MBTA seeks to prioritize projects that address climate vulnerability. However, with limited resources, not all highly rated projects are guaranteed to receive funding in a given year.