

MBTA Fare Hikes and Service Cuts: What you need to know

The MBTA is over \$8 billion in debt. In order to close this year's \$160 million budget shortfall, the MBTA is asking riders to choose between the lesser of two evils: drastic fare hikes or draconian service cuts. Both options are bad public policy because the T is balancing its books on the backs of T riders. Cutting service and increasing fares will devastate communities in and around Boston, forcing people who currently depend on the T to get back into their cars or be completely stranded.

The MBTA is critical to the entire state of Massachusetts, connecting people to jobs, school, doctor's appointments, and wherever they need to go. It gets cars off the road, decreasing congestion and pollution. **Massachusetts and the MBTA should be expanding public transportation and increasing ridership, not raising fares and cutting service.**

Why is the MBTA in Debt?

1. **Costs are going up** – In recent years, the MBTA has had to spend more money on energy, fuel, and health care.
2. **The Money's not coming in** – The T is primarily funded through the Massachusetts sales tax. Revenue from the sales tax has been much lower than projected, leaving the T without a real funding source.
3. **Saddled with Big Dig Debt** – Over ten years ago, the T inherited billions of dollars in debt from the state. This debt originated from public transportation projects the state committed to build as part of the Big Dig. The MBTA has the highest debt burden of any U.S. transit agency.

Fare Hikes and Service Cuts Proposals

The MBTA has announced two options for closing the projected deficit, both involving drastic fare hikes and service cuts.

| | Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Fare Increase | | |
| Rapid Transit | 50% | 50% |
| Local Bus | 50% | 33.3% |
| THE RIDE | 125-500% | 50-150% |
| Commuter Rail | 40-53% | 27-41% |
| Service Cuts | | |
| Rapid Transit | Eliminate E Branch and Mattapan Trolley weekend service | Eliminate E Branch and Mattapan Trolley weekend service |
| Local Bus | Eliminate duplicate and underserved routes | Eliminate over 100 public bus routes and all private carrier and suburban bus routes |
| Commuter Rail | Eliminate Commuter Rail service and 10p.m. and weekend service | Eliminate Commuter Rail service and 10p.m. and weekend service |
| Ferry | Eliminate all Ferry Routes | Eliminate all Ferry Routes |

Fare Hikes and Services Cuts are Not the Solution

1. Fare Hikes and service cuts punish the T's most vulnerable riders: students, seniors, and low-income populations.
2. Hikes and cuts will create an immediate reduction in ridership, at a time when the MBTA should be preserving ridership, which is currently higher than it has been in the last five years.
3. The proposals on the table don't even solve next year's problem, which is projected to be nearly a quarter of a billion dollar shortfall.

We need a long-term solution.

We need a solution that addresses fare hikes and service cuts in the context of the Commonwealth's broader transportation needs, needs that span every corner of the state from the Berkshires to the Cape. Now is the time for the administration and the legislature to work together to find a solution that gives us a real 21st century transportation system.

Testifying at MBTA Public Meetings

The MBTA is hosting public meetings on the topic of upcoming fare hikes and service cuts. This is an opportunity to voice your concerns to the MBTA. Comments at all meetings will be considered by the MBTA for further action.

Tips for delivering effective comments:

1. **You'll only have 2 minutes to speak** – Keep your comments short and sweet. Practice your remarks and time yourself before the public meeting.
2. **Tell YOUR transportation story** – The more personal, the more compelling.
3. **Drive your point home** – Fare hikes and service cuts are not a solution, and the administration and legislature must work together to fully fund public transportation in Massachusetts.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

MON, FEBRUARY 6

Lowell
City Hall, Council
Chambers
375 Merrimack Street
5-7pm

TUES, FEBRUARY 7

Lynn
City Council Chambers
3 City Hall Square
6-8pm

WED, FEBRUARY 8

Boston (West End)
Shriners Hospital,
Auditorium
51 Blossom Street
4:30-6:30pm

WED, FEBRUARY 8

Hingham
Town Hall, Central
Meeting Room
210 Central Street
6-8pm

MON, FEBRUARY 13

Boston (South Station area)
Boston Public Library,
Boston Room
700 Boylston Street
6-8pm

TUES, FEBRUARY 14

Framingham
Town Hall
150 Concord Street
6-8pm

WED, FEBRUARY 15

Quincy
Thomas Crane Public
Library, Community
Room
40 Washington Street
6-8pm

THUR, FEBRUARY 16

Malden
City Council Chambers
200 Pleasant Street
6-8pm

TUES, FEBRUARY 28

Somerville
High School, Auditorium
81 Highland Avenue
6-8pm

WED, FEBRUARY 29

Cambridge
Citywide Senior Center
806 Massachusetts
Avenue
6-8pm

THUR, MARCH 1

Waltham
Government Center,
Auditorium
119 School Street
6-8pm