



I. Transportation

A. MBTA Subway, Commuter Rail, & Buses

1. Baker announced an \$83.7 million 5-year plan to fix the problems that caused the shutdown of much of the system after a bad snowstorm in 2015. (MBTA press release, 6/4/15, “Gov. Baker announces \$83.7 million MBTA winter resiliency plan.”) However, the cold weather and snowstorms of this past winter demonstrated that major problems still plague the subway and commuter rail. The MBTA has a backlog of maintenance and modernization needs of at least \$7 billion. (Governor’s Special Panel to Review the MBTA, 4/8/15, “Back on track: An action plan to transform the MBTA”) As he has done elsewhere, here **Governor Baker spends a little money on the MBTA and, to great fanfare, claims he’s solved a problem that he knows is much bigger.**
2. **Baker thinks a 15 - 20 year period is an acceptable timeline for fixing the MBTA.** (Vennoch, J., 1/11/18, “T riders, it’s time for a revolution,” The Boston Globe)
3. **The MBTA’s performance on the Fairmount commuter rail line has been uneven at best.** This line **serves the low-income Mattapan and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston**, which are highly transit-dependent and under-served. **An order for new cars and engines that would have improved service was canceled by Governor Baker’s administration. In 2016, this line had the commuter rail system’s worst performance record and its train cars were frequently shifted to suburban service. This reflects poor management and smacks of discrimination.** (Smith, J., “Report: More frequent trips needed on Fairmount Line,” Dorchester Reporter; Editorial, 11/19/17, “More trains mean equity for Fairmount Line,” The Boston Globe)
4. **The MBTA’s Mattapan trolley service connecting the low-income neighborhood of Mattapan to the subway’s Red Line was out of service for a week in February while issues with power and trolley cars were resolved.** On several occasions that month, problems with the trolleys required shuttle buses to replace or augment trolley service. The MBTA has struggled to provide timely information to riders on the status of service on the line. The trolley cars are 70 years old and parts for repairs are hard to obtain. (Around the Region, 2/2/18, “‘High-speed’ trolley is out of service,” The Boston Globe; Ruckstuhl, L., 2/3/18, “Power issue halted Mattapan trolleys,” The Boston Globe; Lavery, T., 2/4/18,

“Mattapan trolley taken out of service, set to resume Monday,” The Patriot Ledger; Smith, J., 2/22/18, “Legislators want clarity, better communication on trolley situation,” Dorchester Reporter)

5. **The MBTA’s commuter rail service has the most breakdowns in the country**, according to the Federal Transit Administration. (Yee, E., 10/13/17, “MBTA commuter rail gets unwanted distinction of having the nation’s most breakdowns in 2016,” Boston.com)

 6. **The MBTA experiences serious overcrowding regularly at rush hour on all its modes of transportation.** On the subway’s Orange and Red Lines, as well as some bus routes, commuters routinely must let packed trains and buses go by before there is room for them to get on. Commuter rail cars are often standing room only and some are so full that conductors cannot get through the cars to collect fares. Some commuters head away from the city first to get to a point where trains or buses are less crowded, so they can then board and start their actual trips into the city. **Relief is years away.** The MBTA plans to have new fare collection systems in place by 2020 to expedite boarding. New cars and signal systems (that would allow more frequent trains running closer to each other) are not scheduled to be in place until 2023. (Vaccaro, A., 1/31/18, “T riders say rush hour is now the crush hour,” The Boston Globe)

 7. **The Baker administration’s promises of savings and improved service from privatization of the MBTA’s service for people with disabilities, known as The Ride, are yet to be realized.** In 2016, the Baker administration privatized the scheduling and dispatch functions for The Ride. A 3-year, \$38.5 million contract was signed with promises of increased efficiency and savings of \$40 million. However, missed pick-ups, long waits, and customer complaints increased so dramatically that the MBTA fined the contractor \$100,000 in the first six months of 2017. A consultant was hired to analyze the problems and suggest solutions. Cost savings never materialized and service was so bad that the MBTA announced that a new contractor would replace the existing one in June 2018. This time it would be a 5-year, \$57.5 million contract with more MBTA staff assigned to oversee the contractor and no promise of savings. (Vaccaro, A., 8/9/17, “Service at the T’s Ride improving, but still lagging,” The Boston Globe; Vaccaro, A., 5/1/18, “MBTA picks French firm to operate Ride service,” The Boston Globe)
- B. **Governor Baker has consistently underfunded the 15 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) that provide public transportation outside of the Greater Boston area.** Despite supposed commitments to increase funding for them by \$2 million per year, Baker cut their funding by \$2 million in his FY2018 budget and level-funded them at \$80 million in his proposed FY2019 budget. **Rising costs for fuel, health benefits for employees, and other expenses have forced**

the RTAs to cut services and raise fares. This disproportionately hurts the most vulnerable residents – the poor, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The Pioneer Valley RTA, which serves Springfield, surrounding communities, and the colleges and universities in the area with 11 million trips a year, is increasing fares by 20% while cutting service. The 15 RTAs say an additional \$8 million is needed to maintain service levels and current fares. **Nonetheless, Baker’s Transportation Secretary, Stephanie Pollack, said recently that more money is not the answer to the financial challenges of the RTAs.** (Mohl, B., 4/24/18, “Pollack notes: More money for RTAs not the answer,” CommonWealth Magazine; Vaccaro, A., 4/16/18, “Worcester, Springfield face cuts in bus service,” The Boston Globe; Moulton, C., 3/20/18, “WRTA supporters rally in Worcester, demanding better funding of transit authorities,” Worcester Telegram & Gazette)

- C. In **September 2017**, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito announced that Governor Baker would sign an executive order **“in the coming weeks” creating a new commission to review transportation needs and how the state could fund them.** The members of the transportation commission were **finally named in late January 2018.** Despite a press release that stated that the commission would get into “transportation planning, forecasting, operations, and investments for the period from 2020 through 2040,” the commission will only prepare, by December 1, a vision for transportation needs. **The commission chair made it clear that the commission will NOT look at specific projects or how to fund them. Some commission members, as well as other transportation experts, expressed frustration that the need for funding and near-term investments would not be addressed.** (“So far, no transportation commission,” C. A. Young, 1/4/18, State House News Service, The Boston Globe; Mohl, B., 2/8/18, “Transportation commission won’t look at revenues, financing,” CommonWealth Magazine)
- D. **Governor Baker’s Dept. of Transportation’s plan** for straightening the Mass Pike in Allston to permit the creation of a new neighborhood, known as Beacon Yards, **postpones construction of a new rail and bus hub, West Station, until 2040.** The overall highway project could cost as much as \$1 billion, but public transportation takes a back seat to road construction. Apparently, Governor Baker and his team have not learned from the congestion and transportation challenges of getting people to and from the developing Seaport district that public transportation is essential infrastructure for large developments. (Ramos, D., 12/15/17, “In Allston, the transit lesson we never learn,” The Boston Globe)
- E. **On our roads, congestion in and around Boston is getting worse.** In 2017, the average driver spent 60 hours stuck in traffic, an increase of 2 hours from the year before. **Boston drivers now spend 14% of their overall driving time stuck in traffic; tied for worst in the country. This is happening because the Baker administration hasn’t made transportation infrastructure**

improvements that are necessary to accommodate the growth in population and jobs in Massachusetts, especially in the Boston area. (Vaccaro, A., 2/11/18, “Rush-hour woes worsened in ’17,” The Boston Globe; Ramos, D., 3/28/18, “Your commute stinks because Greater Boston can’t fathom its own growth,” The Boston Globe; Teitell, B., 3/26/18, “Boston’s clogged arteries,” The Boston Globe)

- F. **Governor Baker supported the 2014 ballot question that overturned the indexing of the state’s gasoline tax to inflation.** This has reduced the funding available to support transportation infrastructure. (Mohl, B., 2/8/18, “Transportation commission won’t look at revenues, financing,” Commonwealth Magazine)