

## **Alternative Option for Orange Line Shutdown Will Alleviate Stress on Riders and Region, Still Allow for Timely Completion of Work**

*Full shutdown of 18 days through Labor Day, 7 weekends-only shutdowns a viable approach for addressing FTA concerns and revitalizing service by resuming vital weekday rapid transit service*

**BOSTON, MA (August 08, 2022)** – Today, A Better City (ABC) delivered a [letter and workplan](#) to Governor Baker, outlining an alternative option for the Orange Line shutdown that builds off the administration's current plan. Based on concerns from riders, students, school officials, businesses large and small, and our region's health care and academic institutions, ABC's alternative plan prioritizes Federal Transit Administration (FTA) safety directive actions through a full shutdown for 18 days (August 19<sup>th</sup> to September 5<sup>th</sup>) and then weekend shutdowns from September 9<sup>th</sup> to October 22<sup>nd</sup> to accomplish the remainder of the work while also resuming vital weekday rapid transit service.

The MBTA's current proposal provides 764 work hours over the 30-day period with service expected to resume on September 19<sup>th</sup>. ABC's alternative option would provide 792 work hours, allowing for vital Orange Line weekday service to reopen on September 6<sup>th</sup>, the day after Labor Day, and require only seven weekend shutdowns – five more than the MBTA's proposal – to complete the same amount of work. This alternative provides additional time for staging and testing, and it allows new Orange Line cars to come online by September 19<sup>th</sup> as the T proposed.

"The urgency of restoring safe and reliable service across the MBTA system is well understood, but so is the impact the hastily announced complete shutdown of the Orange Line will have on more than 100,000 riders, many of whom are low income and transit-dependent, trying to get to work, school, and otherwise live their lives," said A Better City President & CEO Rick Dimino. "A Better City believes that a shorter full shutdown is the most viable approach to help the MBTA immediately address the FTA's safety concerns on the Orange Line without crippling the economy as we enter the post-Labor Day period."

"Planning and execution of a transit disruption of this scale and duration should be undertaken in a way that maximizes repair efforts and minimizes burdens on transit riders and others," said James Aloisi, former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation. "A Labor Day pivot to weekend shutdowns rather than full time shutdowns would be the best path forward."

"The month-long shutdown of the entire Orange Line would cause more harm to the regional economy than is necessary to address the significant problems that exist and would create a dramatically unfair burden on our transit-dependent population," said Jim Tierney, Market Director for JLL New England and A Better City Board Chair. "Governor Baker should

expeditiously consider A Better City's alternative plan, which would limit impacts to riders and our economy alike as we enter the critical post-Labor Day return to work and school.

"Given that a significant part of the Orange Line's ridership comes from Environment Justice communities, the T should be doing everything possible to lessen the impact of this shutdown, including considering A Better City's alternative plan that would reduce complete shutdown times," said Jarred Johnson, Executive Director, TransitMatters.

The urgency of adopting this alternative is more pronounced by the recent announcement of the Green Line shutdown, which serves riders in a similar corridor and could leave T passengers stranded at North Station if they choose the Commuter Rail as an alternative mode.

Read the full letter and work plan here:

<https://www.abettercity.org/assets/images/A%20Better%20City%20Letter%20to%20Gov%20Baker%20Alternative%20Shutdown%20Option%208.8.22.pdf>

### **About A Better City**

A Better City represents a multi-sector group of nearly 130 business leaders united around a common goal: to enhance the Greater Boston region's economic health, competitiveness, equitable growth, sustainability, and quality of life for all communities. By amplifying the voice of the business community through collaboration and consensus-building, A Better City develops solutions and influences policy in three critical areas: 1. transportation and infrastructure, 2. land use and development, and 3. energy and the environment. A Better City is committed to building an equitable and inclusive future for the region that benefits and uplifts residents, workers, and businesses in Greater Boston.

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