



Better **Bus** Project

Making transit
better together



About the MBTA Bus Service Network

- More than a third of all MBTA trips are taken on buses.
- The MBTA's bus network consists of 180 routes.
- Over 400,000 trips are taken on MBTA buses in a single weekday.
- Serving 50 communities, the bus network provides critical connections where our rail system does not go.

About the Better Bus Project

Goal:

Understand the gap between today's bus service and the standards set by the January 2017 Service Delivery Policy.

Make recommendations to close the service gap that incorporates public engagement and municipal partnerships.

EVALUATE

Evaluate the bus network against the January 2017 Service Delivery Policy.

IDENTIFY

Identify changes to each route to better serve our bus customers.

OUTREACH

Outreach to communities, riders, and municipalities to identify their needs and concerns.

DEVELOP

Develop plans and recommendations.

IMPLEMENT

Begin to implement service recommendations in 2019.

POTENTIAL CHANGES

Service Changes

Route changes and frequency of service

Operational Changes

Dispatching buses and improved MBTA procedures

Capital Investments

Additional buses and supporting infrastructure

Partnerships with Municipalities

Implement street changes that improve service

CAN
PROVIDE

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Buses Will Show Up on Schedule

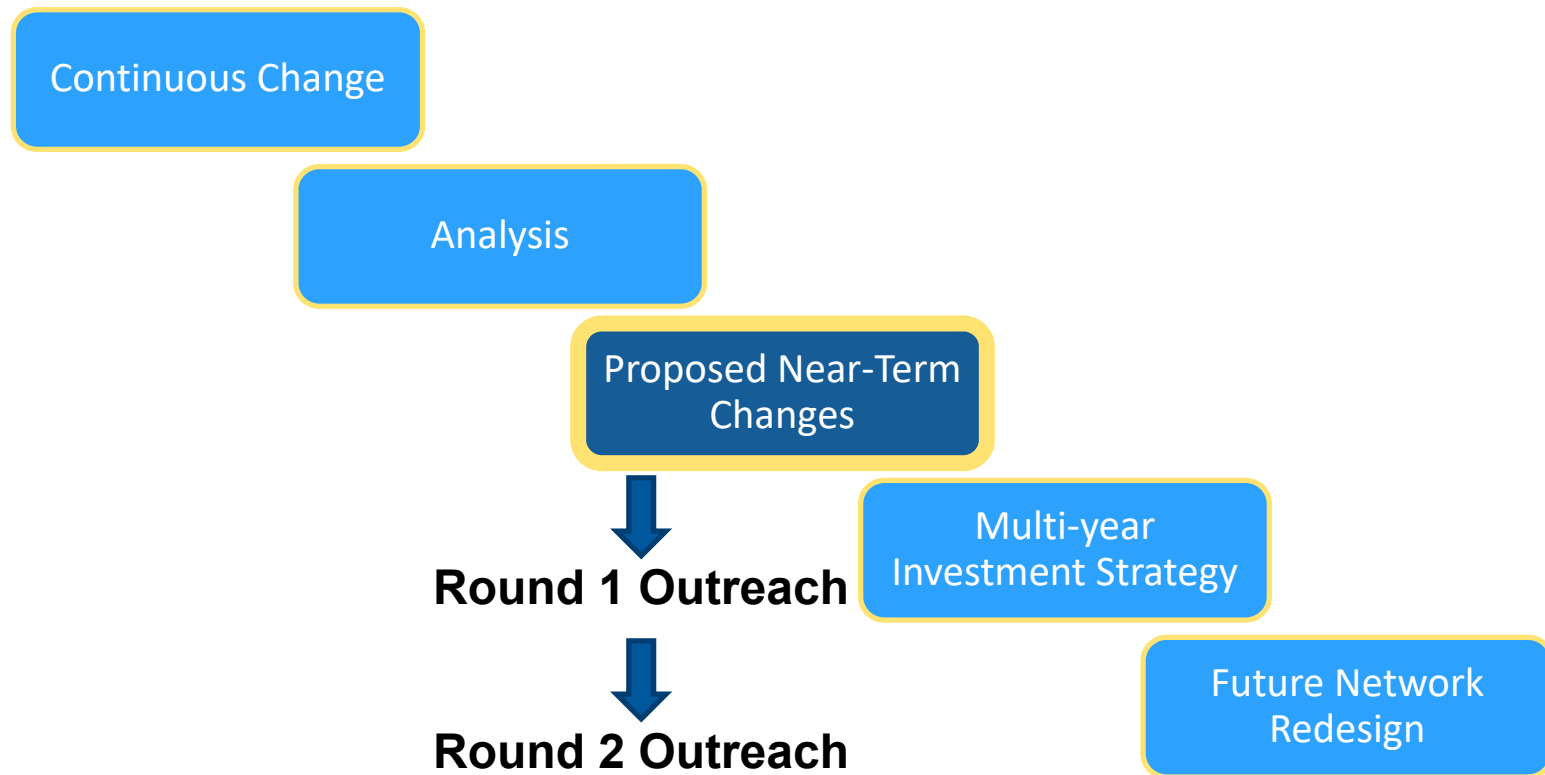
People Get to Work Faster

Less Crowded on Buses

Easy to Understand Routes

Resources Are Spent More Efficiently

Better Bus Project Process Map



Round 1

2018 BBP Outreach: Public Engagement Strategies



2018 BBP Outreach: Round 1 Summary

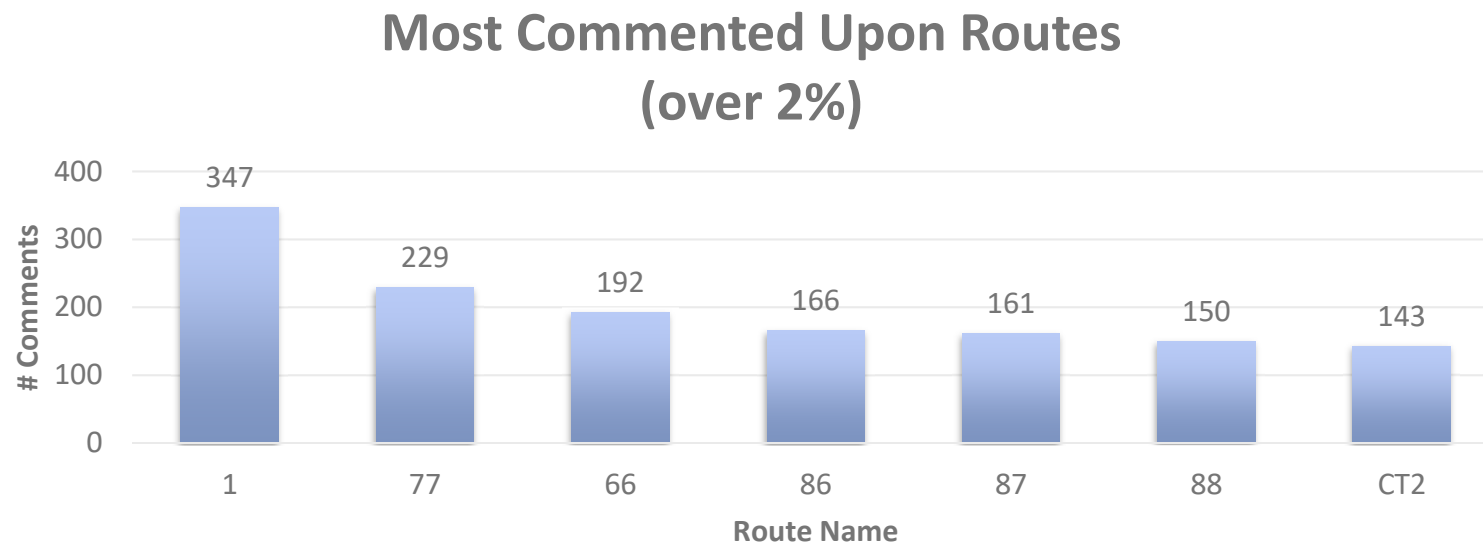
- **7** Regional public meetings
- **15** Transit Talks (Local meetings)
- **24** Street Teams
- **1,143** Paper survey forms collected
- **1,986** Online survey forms collected
- **Monthly** listening sessions with bus operators



2018 BBP Outreach: What We Learned

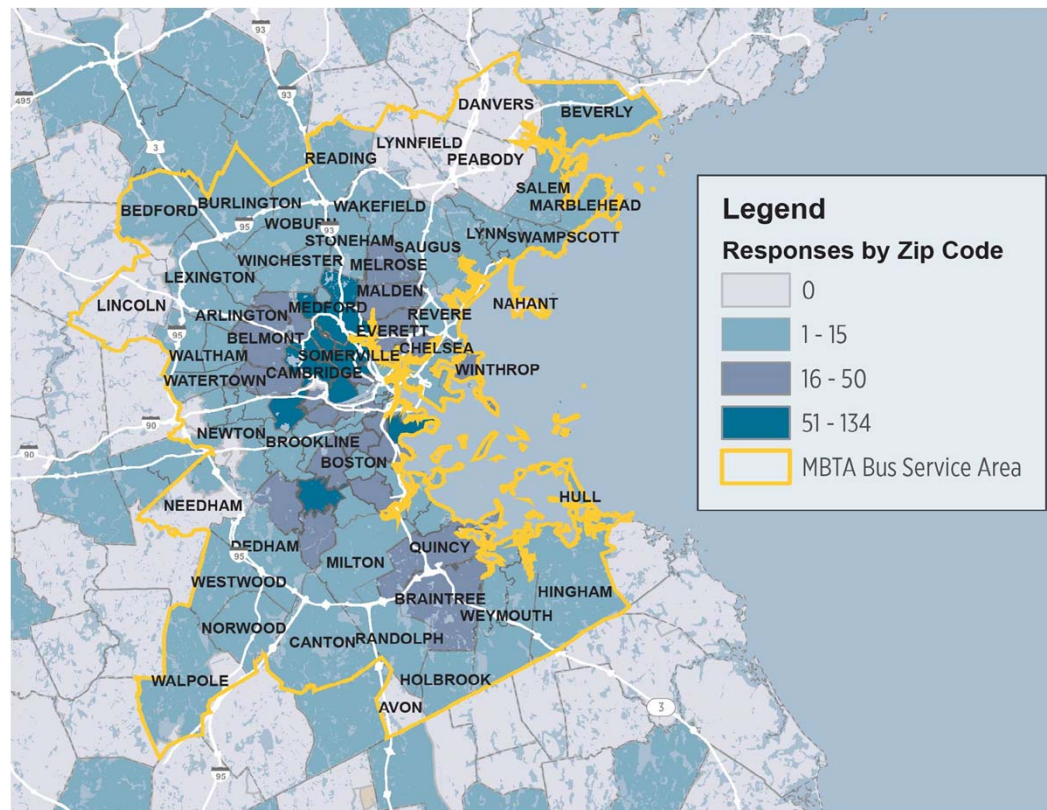
Who we spoke to:	What we heard:
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More reliable service• More frequent service
Bus Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedules that can be met• Better spacing of stops
Consultant Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service is too complex• Not enough routes with good levels of frequency• Service is slow and getting slower• Service is unreliable• Many buses are overcrowded• Many routes start too late• Many routes end too early

2018 BBP Outreach: Routes



Total Number of Comments about Routes: 6,881
All routes commented upon with the exception of the SL3.

2018 BBP Outreach: Mapping Responses



Municipalities with most responses:

- Boston (all neighborhoods) - 599
- Cambridge - 353
- Somerville - 271
- Medford – 92
- Chelsea – 49
- Watertown - 47

Excluded:

- Three responses - zipcodes do not exist
- One response -East Greenwich
- One response – Providence, RI

Round 2

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Proposed Near-term Changes: Principles for Change

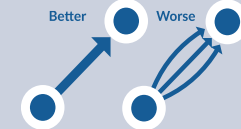
Keep Proposals Cost Neutral

Consider route changes that improve bus service, without requiring additional resources to implement the proposal.



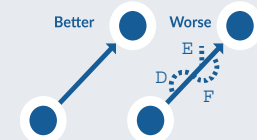
Combine Similar Services

Combine routes that serve the same areas in slightly different ways to create a more reliable and frequent service that's easier for our customers to use.



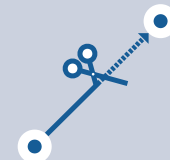
Minimize Route Variations

Reduce route variations that create customer confusion, serve few people, and do not impact vulnerable populations who do not have other alternatives. This creates faster and more reliable service for customers that's easier to understand.



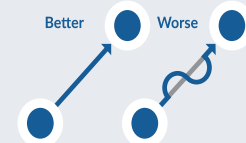
Shorten Unproductive Sections

Many routes are very long with sections that have little to no ridership, or have other service options. By shortening routes, we provide customers on the remaining service with increased frequency and reliability.



Straighten Routes

The less a bus needs to turn or deviate from a straight path, the faster it will travel. This makes bus routes easier to understand while also provide faster and more reliable service for our customers.



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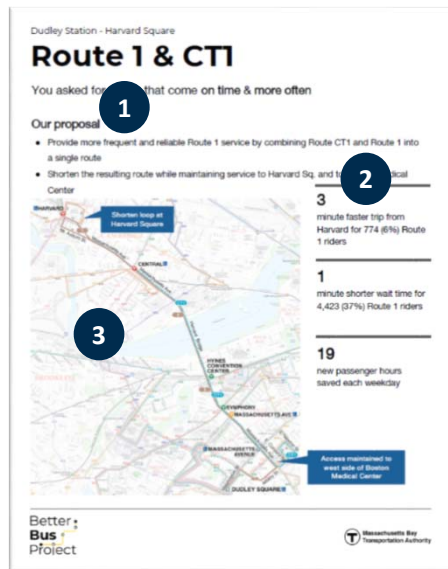
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Example Proposal: How we are communicating proposals

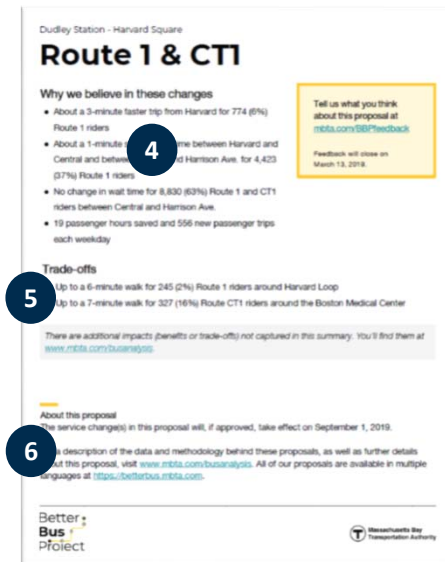


FRONT SD JH=

- 4 Description of proposed change
- 5 Aggregated customer impact
- 6 Visualization of proposed change

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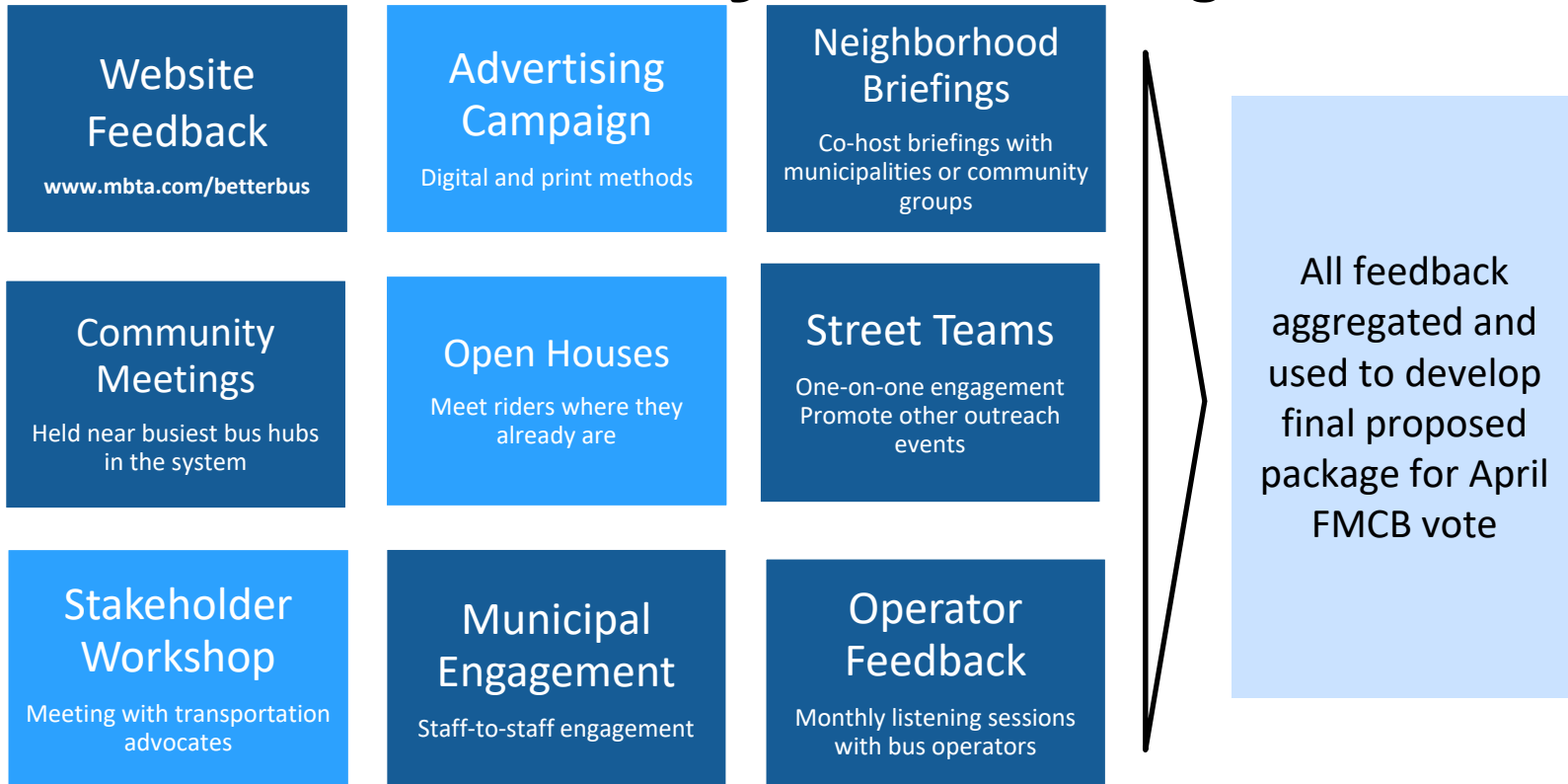
- 7 Why we believe in these changes and who is impacted
- 8 Trade-offs
- 9 Where to get more information, access to translated versions, and provide feedback online



BBP Proposed Near-term Changes: Total Impact

- **47 proposals** that affect 63 of our 180 routes across ~35 communities
- **2,000 passenger hours saved each weekday**, or 509,000 weekday hours a year
- **8,000 new bus rides every weekday**, or over 2 million new rides a year
- **At least 30,000-45,000 of weekday bus riders positively affected** by these proposals
 - 14,000 weekday bus riders will have a **faster trip**
 - 32,500 weekday bus riders will have a **shorter wait time**
- **A small subset of riders will be inconvenienced** by these proposals
 - 786 weekday bus riders (less than 0.2%) will be further than ½ mile from bus or other MBTA transit service
 - 3,000 weekday bus riders (less than 1%) who didn't have to transfer before will now have to transfer

2019 BBP Outreach: Public Engagement Strategies



2019 BBP Outreach - Round 2 Summary

Between Open Houses, Street Teams and MBTA Community Meetings, staff had over 2,500 in-person interactions

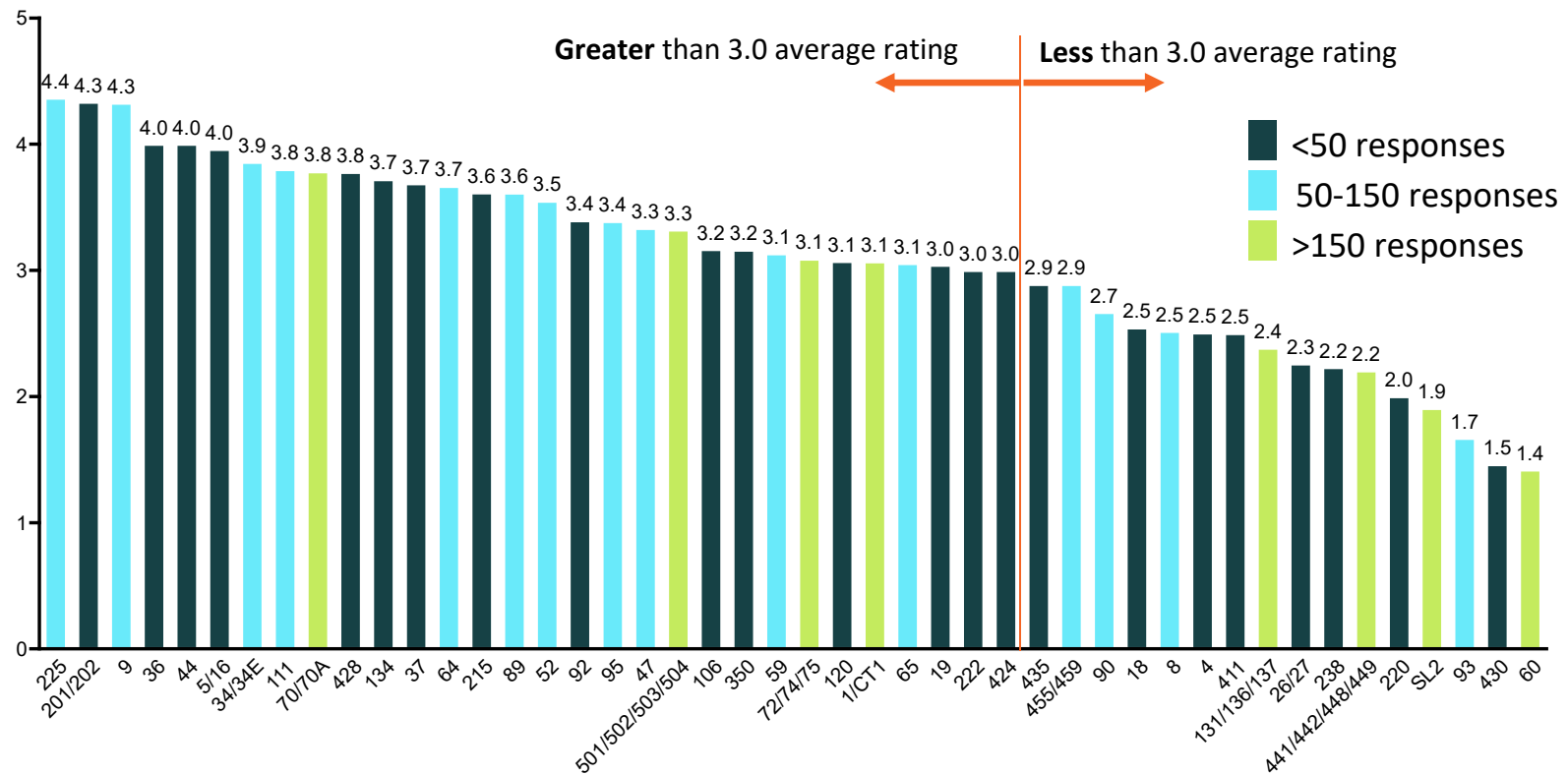
Type of Event	Number of Meetings
Community Meetings	8
Open Houses (at stations)	7
Street Teams (at stations)	6
Briefings	50+

Online Feedback

Type of Feedback	Number of Comments
Online Feedback Form	2,854
Emails/Letters	284

2018 BBP Outreach: Preliminary Feedback

Average score per proposal



2019 BBP Outreach: Preliminary Analysis

5/16	9*	34/34E
36*	37	44
52*	64	70/70A
92	106	111
120	134	201/202
222	225	350
428	424	

Likely to move forward (20)

CT1/1	SL2
4	59
60	72/74/75
89	90
95	131/136/ 137
220	411
435	441/442/ 448/449
455/459	501/502/ 503/504

Under deeper review by team
(16)

8	18
19	26/27
47	65
93	215
238	430

Requires further analysis, not
likely in CY19 (10)

2019 BBP Outreach: What We Heard

Who we spoke to:	What we heard:
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reliability and frequency most demanded metrics• Accessibility should not be lost, but either met or improved, and busway access should be maintained as much as possible• In favor of additional connectivity, but not always with trade-off of less frequency• Mostly in favor of proposed routing changes if frequencies could be maintained or improved• Key to maintain connectivity to high-demand destinations like hospitals, malls, and transit hubs• Concerns about safety, accessibility, and time if they had to walk further• Many riders were uncertain about the benefits of losing their one-seat rides

Questions?

