

Dear City Councilors,

I know that many of you have expressed interest in, and concern about, the MBTA's Better Bus proposal to change bus routes, schedules, and operations across its system, including Newton.

Citizen members of Newton's Transportation Advisory Group have reviewed the proposal as it currently stands. As Chair of TAG, I wanted to forward a letter that we have sent to Mayor Fuller with our high-level comments on the plan.

As the letter states, contrary to worst case outcomes, we believe that the plan offers some significant improvements in bus service in Newton, while making cuts in primarily underutilized service or confusing alternate routes. In particular, the plan improves local bus service, both within Newton and connecting to surrounding municipalities. What's more, it offers service at greater frequency and at more times outside of the regular 9-5 commute than ever before.

The City should be prepared to embrace the improvements that the T has suggested based on its intensive analysis of existing service, while advocating for adjustments or other changes that benefit the needs of local residents, visitors, and businesses.

TAG looks forward to working with Mayor, the City Council, city staff, and the MBTA to make our transportation system more robust and convenient for everyone.

Sincerely,  
Michael Halle  
Chair, Transportation Advisory Group  
For its citizen members