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Augst 24, 2023, Agenda Item 1

- Chair Glynn, Members of the Board, Secretary Fiandaca, General Manager Eng, thank you for the opportunity to deliver comments today.
- Like many in the region, A Better City and our more than 130 members are preparing for the post-Labor Day transition back to work and school, including making decisions about commuting routines.
- In a perfect world, the obvious choice would be to take the MBTA. Today, given the speed restrictions and reduced bus service riders face, choosing public transportation might not be someone's first choice if another option is available to them—and for many, there is no other option.
- We hope to hear a detailed update from you today on the status of the speed restrictions and how this ongoing work will impact riders this Fall. Specifically:
 - What is the plan and timeline to remove the restrictions that are slowing people down during their commutes?
 - Is there a diversion schedule available to inform the public on what to expect and how to get around?
 - Has any progress been made into the investigation regarding the data inconsistencies that triggered the global speed restrictions in the spring?
- Solving the problem should be the T's primary focus, but accountability is also key to re-establishing trust with riders and getting them to come back to the system.
- Incentives may also be part of the solution. The Sumner Tunnel Closure mitigation measures were largely a success and did get many folks to #DitchTheDrive. This is no doubt due to the tireless efforts of the MBTA staff and leadership—thank you.
- Now, how do we sustain the mode shift gained during the closure and encourage riders across other parts of the system to take the transit options the T provides? A Better City has two suggestions to continue to build on the success of and expand the impact of the #DitchThe Drive campaign.
 1. **Promote a baseline Back to School/Work Campaign** showcasing the T's readiness and existing fare options to encourage riders to keep ditching the drive; and
 2. **Launch an enhanced Back to School/Work Campaign** that adds in time-limited incentives across the system (e.g., discounted Commuter Rail parking at select locations systemwide, Zone 1A pricing in other corridors, select free bus routes in transit-dependent corridors, etc.).
- We hope you will consider these ideas, and as always, we stand ready to support you in implementing them. Thank you.