



City Update September 2025 PTAC Meeting



Agenda

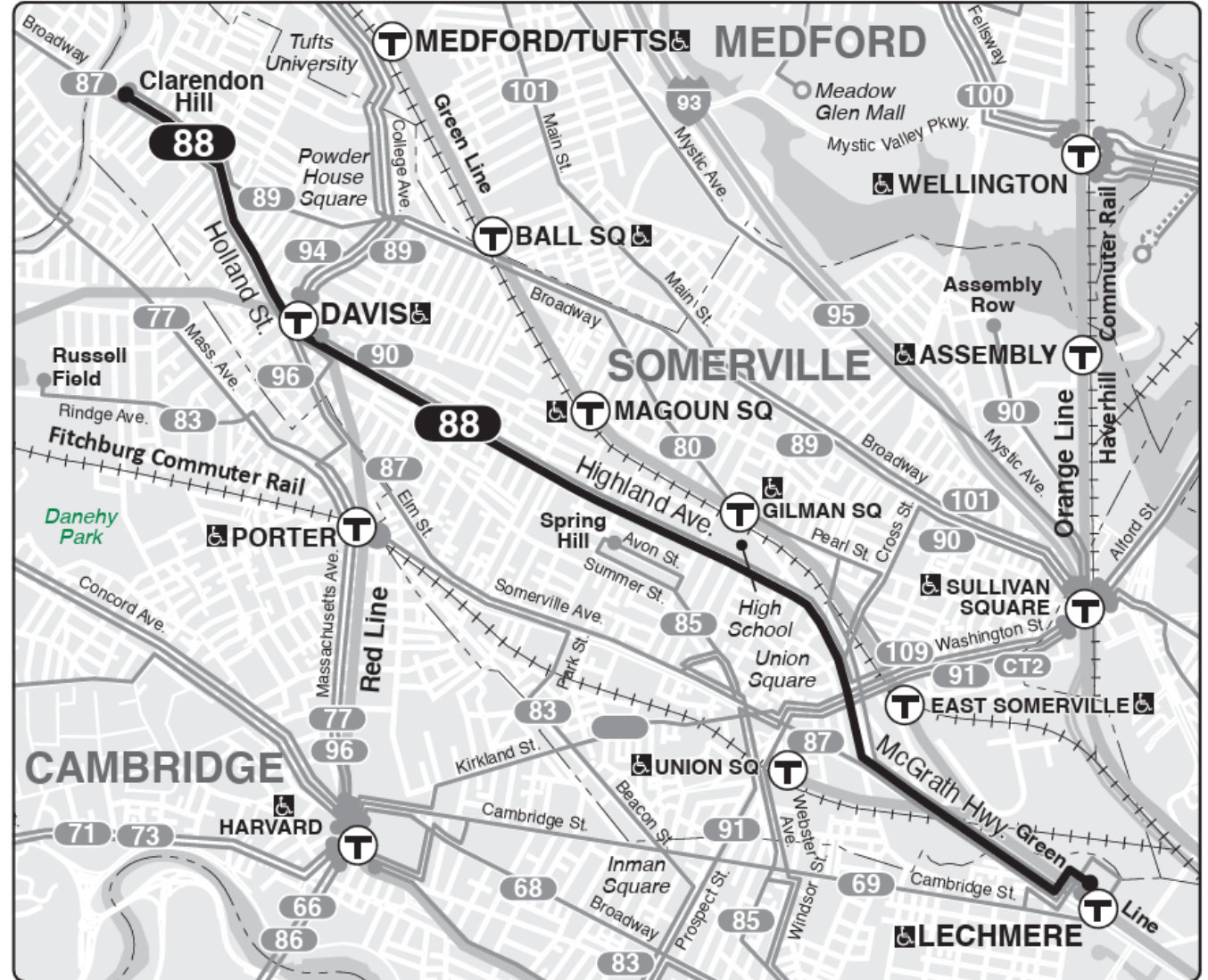
- MBTA 90 Bus –
Service Planning
Considerations



Above: New bus shelter installed on Washington St at Beacon St.

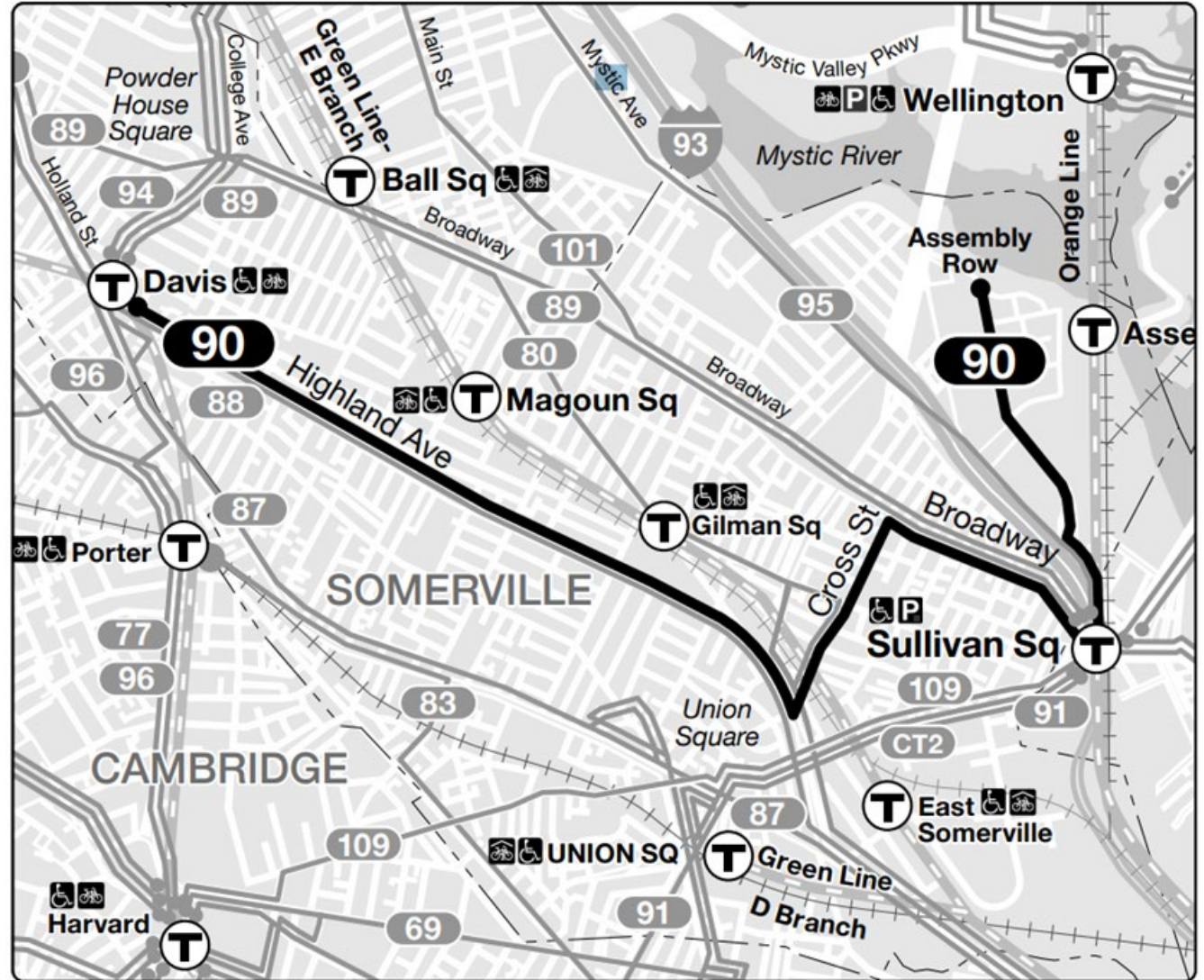
Route 88: Clarendon Hill - Lechmere

- **Span:** 5:15am-1:39am weekdays, 5:30am-1:35am Saturdays, 6:40am-1:35am Sundays
- **Connections:** Red Line & Green Line
- **Frequency:** mostly every 20-30 minutes
- **Primary service** along Highland Ave
- **Ridership:** 1770 riders/weekday
- **Busiest weekday stops** (by ons+offs): Davis – 646, Clarendon Hill – 572, Lechmere – 380
- Lechmere ridership is down by 29% Fall 2024 compared to Fall 2022 due to GLX opening



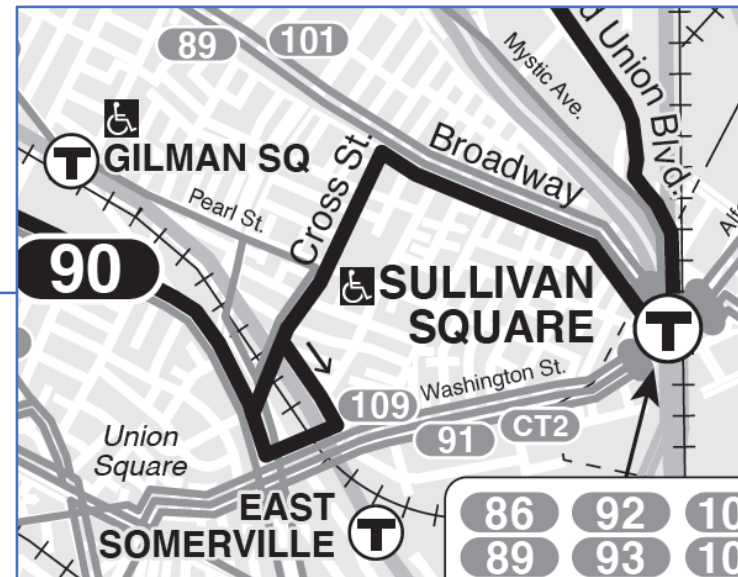
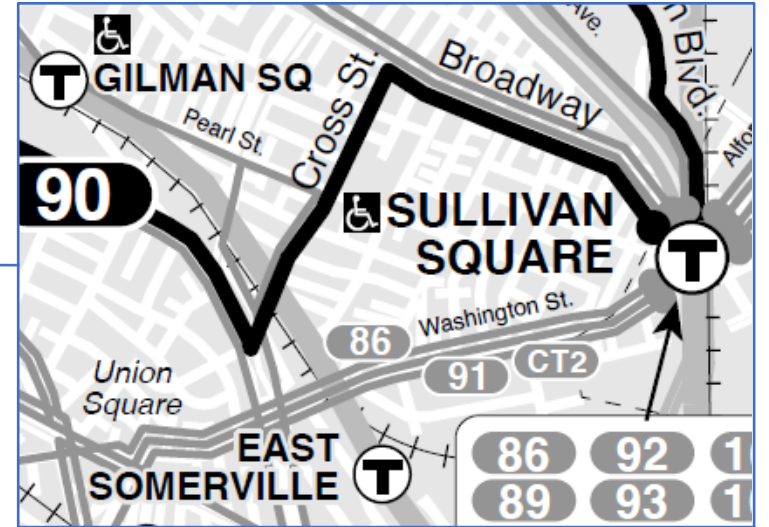
Route 90: Davis – Assembly Row

- **Span:** 6:05am-11:28pm weekdays, 7:00am-10:51pm Saturdays, 10:30am-6:56pm Sundays
- **Connections:** Red Line & Orange Line
- **Frequency:** mostly every 40-70 minutes
- **Ridership:** 647 riders/weekday
- **Busiest weekday stops** (by ons+offs): Davis – 222, Sullivan – 202, Assembly Row – 121



Route 90: Changes since 2023

- MBTA route 90 originally ran down the full length of Cross St
- From Fall 2023 – Spring 2025 the outbound 90 was relocated to travel down Tufts St to make a closer connection to the East Somerville Green Line Station (McGrath @ Allston St)



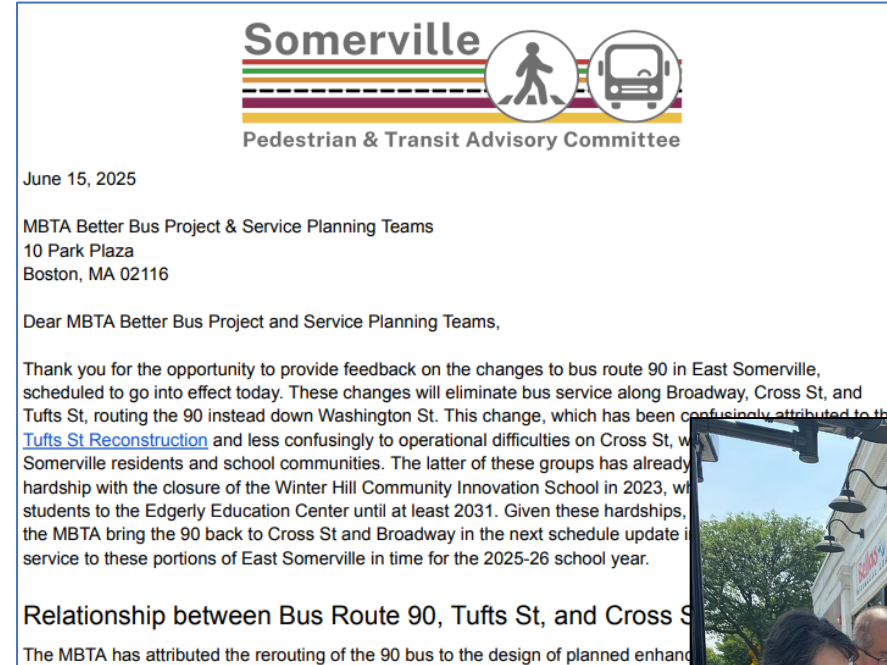
Route 90: Changes since 2023

- In Summer 2025 the 90 was changed to omit Cross St and Tufts St due to expected challenges navigating a redesigned Tufts St as well as existing challenges navigating Cross St.
- The 90 bus instead traveled down Washington St and was able to connect closer to the East Somerville Green Line Station.



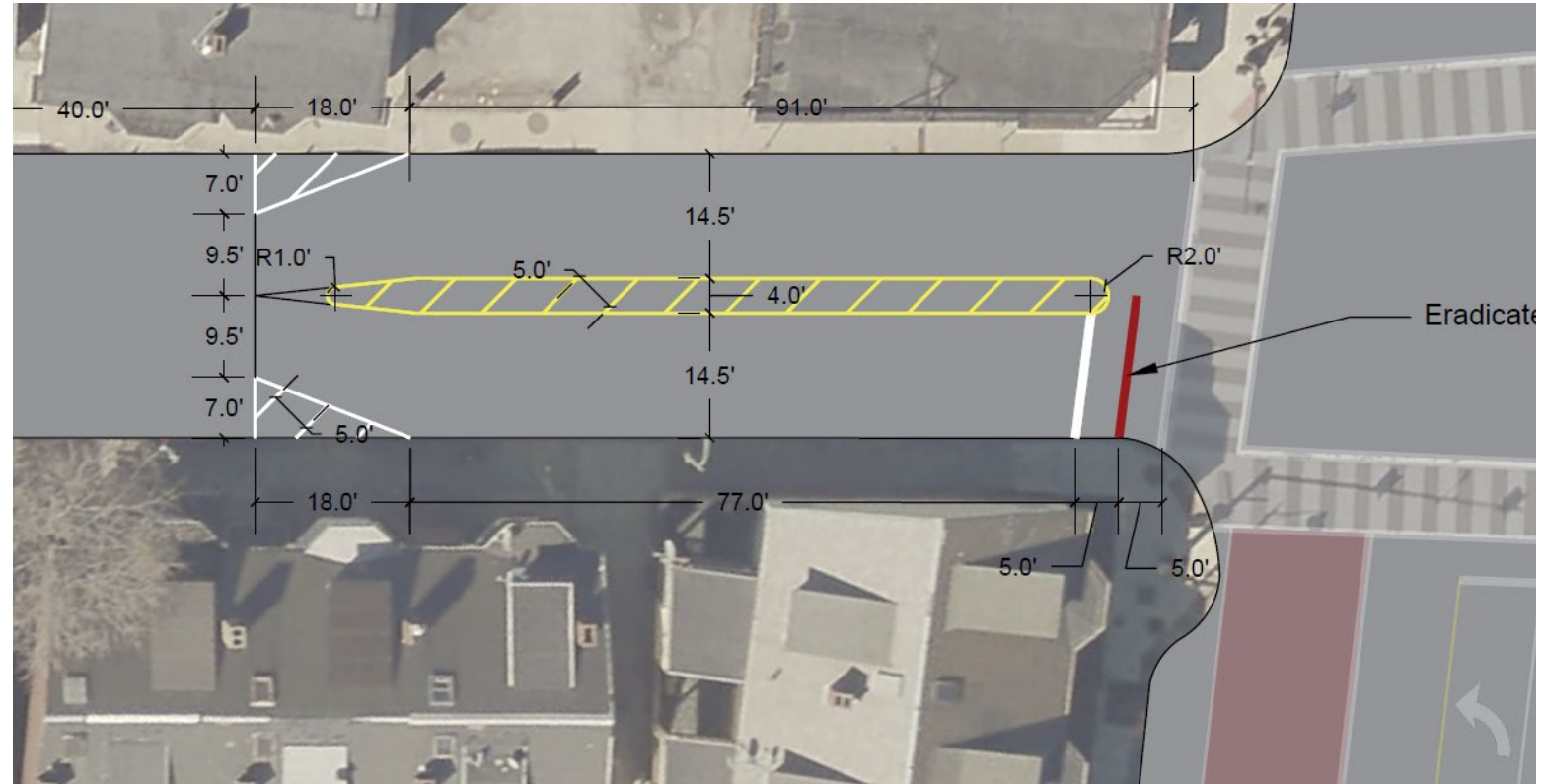
Route 90: Changes since 2023

- The MBTA and the City received substantial community advocacy opposed to this change and its impacts on the Somerville High School, East Somerville Community School, and Winter Hill School (@ Edgerly) communities as well as the East Broadway business district.
- On June 13th, 2025, Mayor Ballantyne, MBTA GM Phillip Eng, and staff from the city and MBTA staff walked Tufts St, Cross St, and Broadway to discuss these concerns.
- Following community and City advocacy, the MBTA agreed to return service to Cross St provided that Somerville improve travel conditions for the bus on Cross St, especially at the intersection with Broadway.



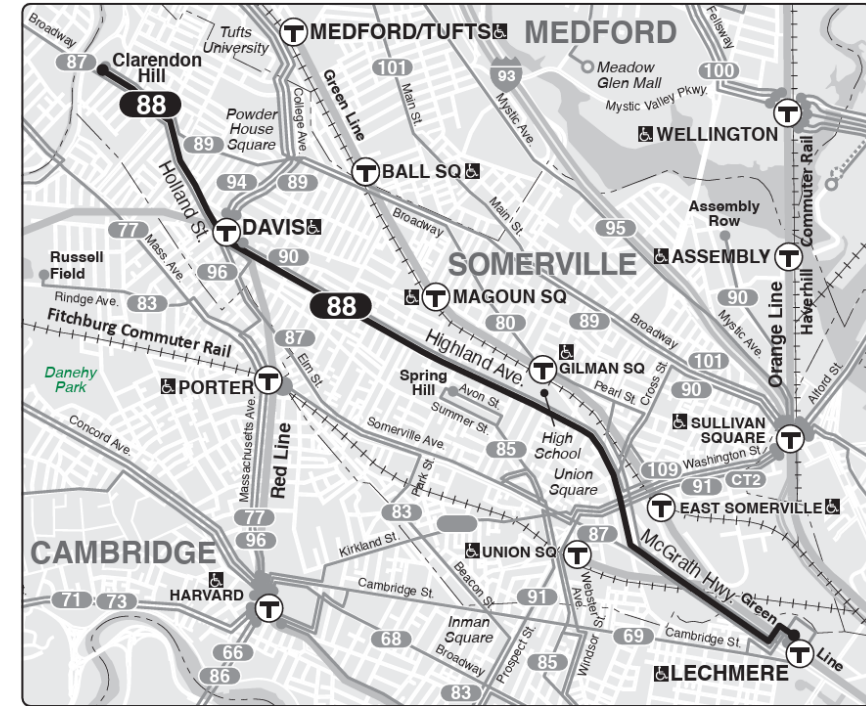
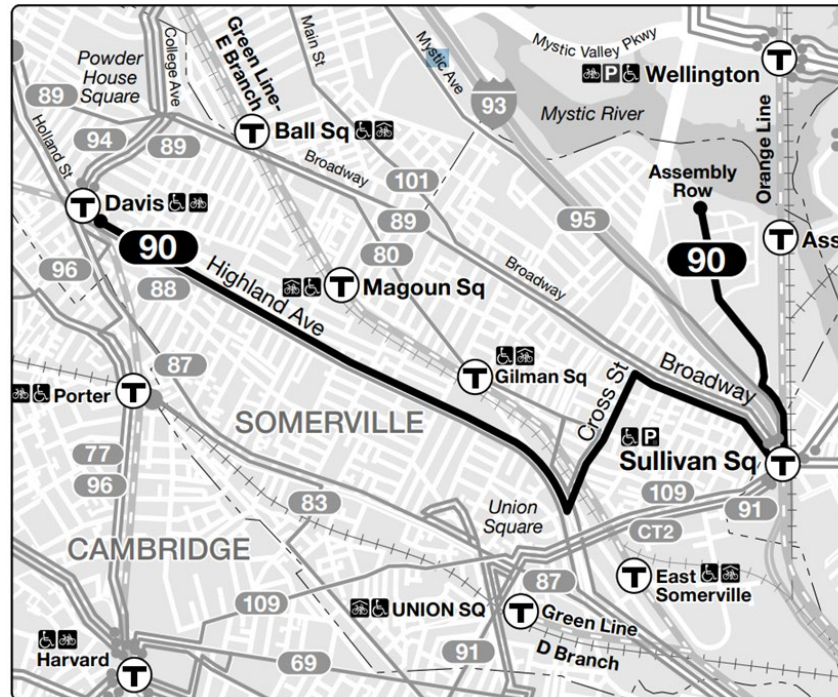
Route 90: Changes since 2023

- Over the summer, staff have:
 - Added flex posts to no parking areas at intersections
 - Made pavement marking changes to Cross St at Broadway
 - Relocated stop bar
 - Added a painted median to provide more turning space
 - Lengthened bus stops to meet MBTA standards, replacing approximately four parking spaces.
- On August 24th the 90 bus returned to Cross St.



Bus Network Redesign

- **Issues identified during the Bus Network Redesign process**
 - 88 & 90 are largely duplicative. They lack sufficient frequency and often bunch together. The routes are very near GLX but transfers are awkward.
 - North / South connections across Somerville are important.
 - Insufficient service span & frequency to Assembly Row from Somerville.
 - 88 duplicates the GLX south of Washington St.
 - Cross St is difficult for buses, but is near important destinations.



Bus Network Redesign

- 2022 Bus Network Redesign Goals
 - Consolidate the two routes for more frequent service
 - Service schools and neighborhood via Cross St
 - Connect to the GLX
- Complications
 - Original Bus Network Redesign plan assumed 88/90 could connect with Green Line at Gilman – however School St slopes cannot provide an accessible transfer
 - GLX connection via Tufts St conflicts with conversion to a Neighborway. Tufts St is no longer an option.
 - 381 average weekday ons or offs (both directions) per weekday at Lechmere on Route 88 – how to accommodate



Route 90 Service Planning - Summary

- Bus service on Cross St and East Broadway may not be compatible with an accessible Green Line connection.
 - Continuing to serve existing 88 bus passengers transferring at Lechmere is critical for MBTA.
- Important community destinations are located on Cross St and East Broadway. Service here also connects residents with the rest of the city – Assembly, City Hall, SHS, Library, Davis Square, etc.
- No path forward is without significant tradeoffs:
 1. Consolidate 88/90, keep service on Cross St without GLX connection.
 - MBTA does not support at this time.
 2. Consolidate 88/90, locate service on Washington St for GLX connection.
 - Significant reservations from city and community.
 3. Do not consolidate 88/90.
 - Does not achieve better frequency, leaves in place duplicative and infrequent services.