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Elevator access returns to Porter Square T station after 15-month absence

Posted by Matt Rocheleau June 22, 2012 04:53 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Elevator access returned to Porter Square Station on Friday evening for the first time in more than one year, according to MBTA officials.

For the past 15 months, passengers requiring elevator access at the station needed to be shuttled on buses to and from a successive stop on the Red Line, Davis Square Station, T spokesman Joe Pesaturo said.

The replacement of an elevator at Porter Square Station that connects the lobby to the platform is finished and reopened for use on Friday evening, he said. The reopening of that elevator means the bus shuttle service is no longer necessary and is being phased out.

The elevator's replacement is the first phase of a five-part project that began last March and entails replacing two other existing elevator cabs and related equipment along with building two new elevators, officials said.

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Two more phases of the \$12 million undertaking are due to be completed this summer, Pesaturo said.

The replacement of an elevator that serves the commuter rail area of the station is scheduled to be completed by the end of July.

And, construction of a new street-level-to-lobby elevator is planned to wrap up by the end of August.

Once that elevator has opened, work will begin to replace an existing elevator that runs between street level and the lobby. Officials expect to finish that project by November.

The final phase, installing a new elevator that connects the lobby to the station's platform, is set to be completed by early spring of 2013.

The overall project is being done as part of the 2006 settlement of a federal lawsuit filed by 11 individuals and the Boston Center for Independent Living over inadequate accessibility for people with disabilities to MBTA trains and buses, the [Globe has reported](#).

As part of the settlement, the T agreed to build additional elevators at the heavily traveled stations of Harvard, State, Porter, Downtown Crossing and Park Street.

The project at Porter Square Station also involves construction of a new elevator machine room and another machine room will be reconfigured, Pesaturo said. Ductwork and a bathroom have been relocated to allow for one of the new elevators.

The sidewalk along Massachusetts and Somerville avenues will be re-graded, according to the spokesman. Exterior stairs will adjusted to accommodate the new grades.

This story was updated at about 8:30 p.m. Friday, June 22, to update that elevator access reopened Friday evening, earlier than the previous schedule of Monday.

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