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Metro

# Government Center T station to close for 2 years

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT    DECEMBER 01, 2012

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MBTA

**A rendering depicts Government Center station after renovations.**

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The Government Center subway station is scheduled to shut down for two years starting in the late summer or early fall of 2013 for an estimated \$90 million project to renovate and rebuild part of the busy station at City Hall Plaza, MBTA officials said.

The station is used by more than 11,000 commuters on weekdays, and MBTA officials say they will provide buses to alleviate the inconvenience while the station is closed.

“We certainly don’t take station closures lightly,” said state Transportation Secretary Richard Davey. “We know it’s not ideal. Government Center is obviously one of our key stations. But we thought it was in the best interest of our customers.”

Trains will still run through, but they will not stop at the station, which is a transfer point for the Green and Blue lines. A special bus route will stop at Government Center, Haymarket, and State Street stations. Bowdoin Station, normally closed on weekends and after 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, will be kept open on a trial basis on weekends and will stay open later on weekdays.

The overhaul, the first significant modernization to the Government Center Station in 50 years, will bring it into



**Maria Olivera** worries the station closure could put her out of work.

For three years, she has run a small stand inside Government Center Station selling shirts, hats, bags, and other items, many of which are Boston-themed. She said she learned about the planned closure last month, but does not yet know if she will be able to set up shop in another station or elsewhere.

The 55-year-old lives in Quincy, and the stand is her only source of income. She said she sends some of the money she makes to her 9-year-old granddaughter and 82-year-old mother who live in Venezuela.

“When you depend on something like this, you really worry,” she said. “The economy is very bad, and you never know what you’re going to have.”

The station will probably close in September 2013 and is scheduled to reopen 24 months later, T spokesman Joe Pesaturo said. The project is expected to wrap up in the second quarter of 2016. The T expects federal funding to cover about 80 percent of the cost.

The station is the 13th busiest in the MBTA system and the third oldest, according to the T. On average, 11,315 people enter Government Center Station on weekdays.

“Notwithstanding the inconvenience of shutting down the station, I think it’s a huge win for all of our customers,” said Davey.

Work will include: renovating Green Line and Blue Line platforms; overhauling the electrical system; installing new elevators, escalators, LED signs, improved lighting, and an expanded fare collection area, and reconstructing some of the surrounding parts of Cambridge Street and City Hall Plaza, officials said.

“We’re taking what looks like an old brick bunker, and not only making it a more aesthetically pleasing structure, but also making it more accessible for all of our customers,” Davey said.

Boston Transportation Commissioner Thomas Tinlin said the city is also working with the T to notify commuters, residents, and businesses about the plan and to provide alternatives to commuters affected by the closure.

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