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MBTA to close Orient Heights subway station on Blue Line for nearly 7 months

Posted by Matt Rocheleau February 25, 2013 03:03 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The Orient Heights subway station on the MBTA's Blue Line will close for about six-and-a-half months while work is done on a \$51-million project to overhaul the facility in East Boston, officials said.

Trains will be able to bypass, but not stop at, the station during the shutdown.

Starting March 23 and running through mid-October, the T will run shuttle busses between the Orient Heights and Suffolk Downs stations. The buses are accessible to people with disabilities.

Riders traveling to Orient Heights should exit the Blue Line at Suffolk Downs Station and board a shuttle bus in the Walley Street busway on the racetrack side of the station, the T's website said.

Riders traveling from Orient Heights should board a shuttle bus in the Bennington Street busway to get to Suffolk Downs station to connect to the Blue Line

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Blue Line.

The Orient Heights station parking area will remain open, but pedestrian access will be via Saratoga Street only, officials said.

Bus Route 120 will continue to use the station's Bennington Street busway. For information about how the station closure will affect the 712 and 713 bus routes, [click here](#).

Along with the station closure, shuttle buses will replace Blue Line train service between Airport Station and Wonderland Station for an estimated 13 weekends during 2013, the T's website said. Dates for those weekend diversions have not been announced.

Orient Heights Station was built 60 years ago and "has deteriorated over the years," the T said.

The [construction project](#), which is scheduled to be finished by spring of 2014, aims to modernize the station and make it fully-accessible.

Work calls for the a new overhead pedestrian bridge to be installed, along with four elevators, two escalators, new mechanical and power systems, a renovated train operations building, new platforms and improvements to the bus access areas.

Components of the project are required to bring the station into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as with state codes and MBTA standards.

An estimated 4,100 passengers entered Orient Heights station on an average weekday during the 2009 fiscal year, making it the 46th busiest subway station in the T system that year, according to the latest available figures from the transit agency.

For more information about the station closure and related diversions, contact the MBTA Customer Communications Department at 617-222-3200, TTY: 617-222-5146.

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