



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January– December 2018

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

ALLSTON INTERCHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

As a result of our continuing advocacy for replacement of the Turnpike viaduct with an at-grade highway, A Better City has changed the dialogue and the substance of the Allston Interchange design process and opened the door to a selection of a solution that provides greater benefits at all levels. There are now three Highway At-Grade alternatives under serious consideration as a result of A Better City's technical/design work and advocacy. There is significant stakeholder support for this Highway At-Grade family.

MONITORING TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

A Better City closely monitored implementation of replacement of the westbound lanes of Commonwealth Avenue Bridge over the Turnpike in Boston and Brookline during July and August 2018 following active participation in the MassDOT Transportation Management Working Group for that project. A Better City has participated in the Longfellow Bridge Stakeholders group evaluating the use of the bridge and defining a pilot test of reallocation of roadway space on the inbound side of the bridge. At the end of the year, we joined in planning for bicycle accommodations on the Charles River Dam Road. A Better City will continue to work with MassDOT monitoring reconstruction of the North Washington Street Bridge, and implementation of a comprehensive Construction Coordination and Management Planning Strategy for the next five years of transportation projects in the metropolitan area.

SEAPORT LEADERSHIP GROUP

A Better City is managing a group called the Seaport Leadership Group (SLG), which is a reorganization of the former "South Boston Business Leaders" working group. Since this group was formed, the SLG is making significant progress to unify the voice of business community in the Seaport area and advance important transportation projects and management for this important economic center. The SLG consists of representatives from businesses located in Boston Seaport area, with the top priorities being implementing recommendations from the 2015 South Boston Waterfront Sustainable Transportation Plan. The SLG is making progress on projects, such as delivering new adaptive traffic signals in the district, reopening the South Boston Bypass Road, bringing water ferry service from North Station to Fan Pier in the South Boston Waterfront, and improving mobility services throughout the area.



FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION

In January of 2018, Governor Charlie Baker announced the creation of the Commission on the Future of Transportation in the Commonwealth to explore anticipated changes in technology, climate, land use, and the economy and determine likely impacts on transportation between 2020 and 2040. The final Commission report was sent to the Governor on December 1, 2018 and will be released to the public on December 14, 2018.

A Better City was asked to contribute comments and suggestions for the Commission and we submitted a lengthy assessment calling for a transportation system that supports and advances our common goals of maximal economic vitality, social equity, smart growth, improved public health, a cleaner environment and a high quality of life. Key to achieving these goals is to consider the best approach to incorporate the wave of emerging changes in transportation technology while acknowledging that technology is not an antidote to public policy. While we are certainly in the midst of paradigm-shifting technological change, the future of transportation is not about technological disruptions that will happen to us; rather, it is about harnessing technological innovation to meet these common goals.

STATE OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We are finalizing the second edition of the State of the Built Environment report in consultation with consultants from the UMass Donahue Institute, which provides a quantitative update of the Transportation Finance Commission reports from 2007. This report assesses the funding needs for the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure system, the current funding available in MassDOT and MBTA budget plans, and what is necessary over the next ten years to meet the needs of our transportation system.

We have begun rolling out this report to our A Better City Board, business and stakeholder group leaders, MassDOT and the Governor's Administration. This report will be used as a working document to provide data and build conversations and coalitions in order to move funding proposals from the Governor and Administration going into 2019.



LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

GREENWAY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

We have created not only the Greenway Business Improvement District, but also a BID Corporation as will be the legal entity, as required by law. In May, Mayor Walsh signed the petition into law to create the geographic district and allow for BID assessments to be applied to certain properties. Since then, A Better City organized the BID Member Annual Meeting, where the members voted for the BID Board of Directors. A nominating committee was established by the ABC Abutters Committee. Also, Rick Dimino has been elected to be Executive Director of the BID. A Better City filed paperwork to establish the BID as a 501-c6 organization, and the BID Corporation opened its own bank accounts. Most importantly, the A Better City prepared City of Boston property tax bills to include the correct BID assessment amounts. Once the money was paid by the BID properties, A Better City transferred two quarterly payments totaling \$750 K to the Conservancy. These BID funds are designated for maintenance and horticulture costs of the Greenway. Next summer, BID funds will be designated for enhancements to the park, and this money will be determined by the Greenway BID Board, in consultation with the Conservancy.

PUBLIC REALM PLAN FOR GO BOSTON 2030 FINALIZED

In August 2018, A Better City and Boston Transportation Department, finalized the Public Realm Plan for Go Boston 2030, with technical support from the urban planning and design firm Utile. The three-year planning process yielded Boston's first tactical public realm guidelines, regulatory changes in street policies, urban design proposals for two new tactical pedestrian plazas, and a research memo on how to improve the Article 80 Design Review for Large Developments. The process also led the City of Boston to hire its first Public Realm Director to oversee the implementation of the tactical guidelines (<https://www.boston.gov/publicrealm>) and support innovative public space projects. These tactical public realm guidelines complement the Boston Complete Streets guidebook by introducing interim place making strategies to reclaim and activate underutilized roadway and sidewalks for people. The public realm resource provides urban design guidelines and administrative procedures for installing tactical pedestrian plazas, street murals, parklets, and outdoor cafes. Their development process inspired the implementation of a tactical pedestrian plaza in Downtown Boston this summer.

PUBLIC SIDEWALK CAFE INSTALLED IN EAST BOSTON

A Better City installed East Boston's first public cafe seating in an underused corner plaza at the intersection of Meridian and London streets. The new public space is privately managed by Meridian Food Market and will remain open through the day for the general public. This project came out of a partnership between A Better City, East Boston Main Street, and Meridian Food Market, with support from the City of Boston, Barr Foundation, and Nutter, McClennen, & Fish.



ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY PRIORITIES

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND ADVOCACY

The legislative session came to a close at the end of July; two pieces of legislation passed that was a priority of the Energy + Environment Unit Advisory Committee:

- The Environmental Bond Bill included many aspects of the proposal for a Comprehensive Adaptation Management Plan (CAMP). Key aspects signed into law include the requirement that a state adaptation strategy be published every five years and the creation of a Global Warming Solutions Trust Fund.
- An Act to Advance Clean Energy will allow for the procurement of an additional 1600 MW of offshore wind by 2035, increases the renewable portfolio standard that governs the amount of clean energy utilities must purchase, and creates a “peak clean standard” to incentivize energy storage. Yve Torrie was on the Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee’s (IAC) Buildings Working Group that developed and submitted recommendations at the September IAC meeting for consideration regarding the 2020 update to the Commonwealth’s Clean Energy and Climate Plan. At a City level, A Better City hosted a focus group on BERDO's energy action and assessment requirements due in May 2019 for the first cohort of BERDO buildings that began reporting in 2014. Energy savings actions can include any combination of measures that result in a 15% or greater reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or energy usage over the prior 5 years. Members provided significant input into the guidance documents that detail the compliance pathways for the Energy Action and Assessment requirement.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS INITIATIVE

- In the July 12 meeting, initial findings from the [Carbon Free Boston project](#) were discussed.
- On August 14th, SBI members were part of a focus group on BERDO's [energy action and assessment requirements](#) due in May 2019 for the first cohort of BERDO buildings that began reporting in 2014.
- On October 11th, members heard from the City of Boston who partnered with Eversource and National Grid in a pilot utility sponsored Building Operator Certification training with 28 municipalities. The utilities have agreed to partner with A Better City for a pilot utility-sponsored commercial buildings training in the spring for 30 member facilities.
- On December 4th, we discussed the statewide recycling education initiative developed by MassDEP and Material Recovery Facility owners to help everyone become smarter recyclers. Two memos requested by the group: current waste hauler services; and green janitorial certifications, were also distributed.



GREEN RIBBON COMMISSION (GRC) COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE WORKING GROUP

- 2019-2021 Three Year Energy Efficiency Plans for Utilities: A Better City provided significant written and verbal comments to the 2019-2021 draft three-year utility energy efficiency plans until the resolution was approved by the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council on October 31st. Key accomplishments from our engagement include:
- A commitment from Eversource and National Grid to fund a Building Operator Control training for A Better City members opening pathways for funding for future cohorts of facilities.
- An accelerated timeline for the release of a new incentive program to assist buildings with retro-commissioning (RCx) and new advanced commissioning techniques, shifting the program from a 2021 to a Q2 2019 release.
- The announcement of two performance incentive programs for commercial energy storage projects for summer and winter peak demand management.