



A
BETTER
CITY 

2023
YEAR IN
REVIEW

WELCOME

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A Better City Members and Stakeholders:

In 2023, A Better City worked collaboratively with the business community, with advocates, and with leaders in the State House and City Hall to tackle some of Greater Boston's most pressing challenges—from transportation and infrastructure needs, to land use and development opportunities, to energy and environmental concerns.

To spotlight just a few accomplishments, A Better City has built strong relationships with the new MBTA leadership to identify the safety, service, and staffing improvements—as well as financing solutions—needed to get the system back on track. We helped execute the successful #DitchTheDrive campaign of transit alternatives to mitigate the impact of the Sumner Tunnel closure and supported the development of competitive federal funding applications for the transformative I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. We also continued our solution-oriented approach to streamlining building climate policies at the city and state level, graduated the second cohort of PowerCorpsBOS building operator trainees, and advanced our research and advocacy around extreme heat mitigation, among dozens of other achievements.

Additionally, thanks to the support and counsel of our Board of Directors, A Better City managed a smooth leadership transition, as Rick Dimino stepped into an emeritus role after serving 28-years at the helm of A Better City. We are immensely grateful for Rick's legacy and for his continued contributions—which are plentiful!

As we enter 2024, we are steadfastly focused on advancing the policies and projects needed to strengthen our region's economic competitiveness and to build a better city and region for all. Thank you for your partnership, support, and passionate commitment to realizing a brighter future for Greater Boston and beyond.

Sincerely,



Kate Dineen
President & CEO



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OUR TEAM



CAITLIN ALLEN-CONNELLY

Senior Advisor on Transportation
Joined in September 2019

As Senior Advisor on Transportation at A Better City, Caitlin leads the Transportation and Infrastructure Cluster and conducts research and advocacy to advance safe, reliable, and affordable public transportation as well as state-wide decarbonization goals. In this role, she engages with a wide range of external partners, including advocates, state officials, and MBTA staff and leadership. Prior to joining A Better City, Caitlin held advisory and program management positions at the United Nations and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development focused on climate change and inclusive growth. She also led efforts at Cradles to Crayons to define and elevate clothing as a recognized basic needs insecurity. Caitlin is a Boston native who relied on the MBTA to get around growing up, and she continues to live a car-free life whenever possible. As the mother of two wonderful human beings, Caitlin is committed to doing her part to make their world a better, safer, more equitable place. She holds a B.A. in International Affairs from the American University of Paris and is a board member of TransitMatters.

GLEN BERKOWITZ

Project Manager
Joined in September 2017

Glen's work currently focuses on transportation analyses and studies related to both mass transit and highway infrastructure. His work includes helping the MBTA transition to electric buses and modernize its bus facilities; encouraging the MBTA to implement advanced train control signals and related technology to improve capacity, rider comfort and reliability on the Red and Orange Lines, and assisting with A Better City's efforts on the I-90 Allston Interchange Project. Prior to working at A Better City, Glen ran a renewable energy consulting and development start-up. Previous to that, he helped manage traffic and transportation issues on Boston's Central Artery/Tunnel Project for nearly 20 years. He has a J.D. in Law from Suffolk University, and has been a member of the Massachusetts Bar since 2002. He also holds a Master's in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a B.A. in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine.



OUR TEAM

KATE DINEEN

President & CEO
Joined in May 2019

Kate is the President & CEO of A Better City—she served at the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer from May 2019 to April 2023. Prior to joining A Better City, Kate worked for the New York State Governor’s Office, serving as the Chief of Staff for State Operations, Assistant Secretary for the Environment, and Deputy Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery after Superstorm Sandy. She was previously U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s Policy Director and has worked in the non-profit and media sectors. Kate is an Advisory Council Member for the Tufts University Center for State Policy Analysis and was a Non-Resident Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School Homeland Security Project. Kate is also a leading advocate for reproductive rights and was recognized as a 2022 Bostonian of the Year Honorable Mention. She holds a Masters in City Planning from MIT and B.A. in English from Williams College and lives in Boston with her family.



ISABELLA GAMBILL (SHE/HER)

Assistant Director of Climate, Energy, & Resilience
Joined in April 2019



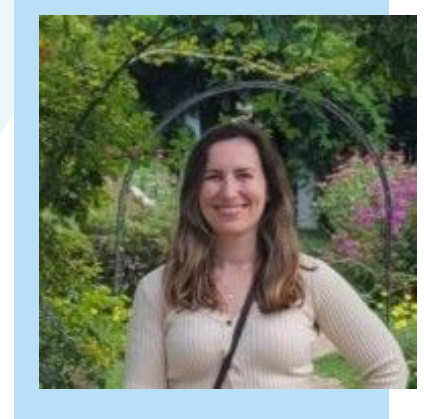
Isabella leads our extreme heat and legislative policy work across climate (both mitigation and adaptation) and clean energy priorities at both the city- and state-levels in Massachusetts. Prior to joining A Better City, Isabella served as a Policy Officer for the Secretariat to the United Nations’ Biodiversity Law and Governance Initiative and participated in the 14th Conference of the Parties to the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity, in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. She also served as a Carbon and Biodiversity Offsetting Intern to one of the world’s leading biodiversity offset consultancy firms, and more locally, as a Program Coordinator for Land Conservation at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Isabella sits on the Board on the External Advisory Board of UMass Boston’s Sustainable Solutions Lab and the Board of Visitors at Fenway Health. She holds an MPhil in Conservation Leadership from the University of Cambridge, and a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Wellesley College.

OUR TEAM

LEANN KOSIOR

Membership & Business Development Manager
Joined in January 2023

In her role, Leann oversees membership engagement, relations, and outreach. Leann also manages A Better City's marketing initiatives ranging from report and website design to email communication. She collaborates with each department at A Better City to produce informed conversations and unique events. Leann strives to deepen relationships with each member organization through listening sessions, collaborative programming, and relaunching of the Emerging Leaders program. Prior to joining A Better City, Leann specialized in customer success at Business Wire. Leann has also worked on digital and print advertising for USA Today and in New York City in healthcare advertising. She is a passionate advocate for sustainability and transit in her neighborhood; Brighton, participating on the board of a local park to increase accessibility and expand urban tree canopy. Leann received a BBA from the Parsons the New School of Design.



BRIAN LILL

Manager of TMA Operations & Engagement
Joined in September 2023

Brian joined A Better City in September 2023 as our Manager of TMA Operations & Engagement. In his role, Brian supports A Better City's Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), which serve over 100 member organizations, and is excited to continue to drive change towards a sustainable future. Prior to joining A Better City, Brian specialized in public healthcare at Public Consulting Group working with hospitals, EMS providers, and essential workers to secure funding and services for his clients. Brian holds a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Temple University where he studied Economics and Community Development.

OUR TEAM

SCOTT MULLEN

Transportation Demand Management Director
Joined in June 2020

As Transportation Demand Management Director, Mully leads the transportation unit that develops innovative TDM programs for delivery to over 60 member companies through our multiple Transportation Management Associations. Mully was a startup employee at several groundbreaking transportation companies and helped in the formation and growth of the shared transportation industry: carsharing at Zipcar; bikesharing via Hubway (now Bluebikes); and most recently, micromobility at Lime. Mully is an elected Town Meeting Member in Arlington, where he and his family live, and is an appointed member of the Town's Zero Waste Committee. He was a charter Board member of the LivableStreets Alliance and is currently Board Secretary of Commonwheels. Mully holds a B.A. in Philosophy from Merrimack College.



THOMAS J. NALLY

Senior Advisor
Joined in October 1989

Tom manages the role of A Better City in the MassDOT Allston I-90 Multimodal Project, monitors and contributes to work on other roadway, bridge, and transit projects, and directs work of the Land Use and Development Unit on the public realm and other projects. As Planning Director of the Artery Business Committee, predecessor to A Better City, on behalf of the business community, Tom managed work on construction mitigation, traffic management, and project design of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, and chaired the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Urban Ring Project. Previous experience includes senior positions in the Massachusetts Division of Capital Planning and Operations. He currently serves on the Economic Development Advisory Board and is President of the Greater Point Neighborhood Association in Brookline. Tom is a Registered Architect and holds a Bachelor of Architecture Degree from Cornell University and Master of Architecture in Advanced Studies and Master in City Planning degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

OUR TEAM



TOM RYAN

Senior Advisor on Policy, Government, & Community Affairs
Joined in November 2015

Tom helps to coordinate policy development, legislative advocacy, and relationships with public officials and related stakeholders, with a primary focus on transportation finance issues and the Greenway Business Improvement District (Greenway BID). Tom brings eleven years of experience in Massachusetts state government in both the Executive and Legislative branches, including five years managing the Commonwealth's capital infrastructure budget. He has worked in research positions for the successful political campaigns of President Barack Obama, Governor Deval Patrick, and Congressman Seth Moulton. He holds a Master of Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. in History from Bowdoin College.

ELIZABETH A. SULLIVAN

Administrative Director
Joined in April 1995

Betty manages all finance and administration responsibilities for A Better City and A Better City Initiative. Before joining the Artery Business Committee, as the organization was originally known, Betty worked in a variety of roles in human resources, banking, marketing, and event management in the Greater Boston region. She has a Master of Science in Adult & Organizational Learning and a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Suffolk University.



OUR TEAM



YVE TORRIE

Director of Climate, Energy, & Resilience
Joined in October 2013

Yve fosters emissions reductions and climate preparedness planning in Boston and the region's commercial real estate and business sectors, overseeing the programming, policy, research, education, and events of the Energy & Environment unit. She also leads the Commercial Real Estate Working Group for the Boston Green Ribbon Commission. Previously, Yve worked at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where she managed two environmental programs. The first focused on educating the public about climate change science, and the second promoted the development of sustainable systems of production and consumption. Yve received a Master of Arts in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University in 2006 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Geography from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. In 2018, she became one of the first Certified Climate Change Professionals (CC-P®) from the Association of Climate Change Officers.



CHRISTINE YI

Project Manager, Data Analysis & TMA Programs
Joined in October 2020

Christine develops TDM data analysis and research and leads TMA programming and communications to commuters. In her role, she leads data visualizations and analyses to promote TDM, designs commuter programming, and cultivates outreach and communication strategies. Her previous experience includes the City of Boston's Office of Financial Empowerment, where she supported financial literacy programming, and at BlueHub Capital, where she aided social impact measurement. Christine holds a B.A. in Sociology and Economics from Wellesley College.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

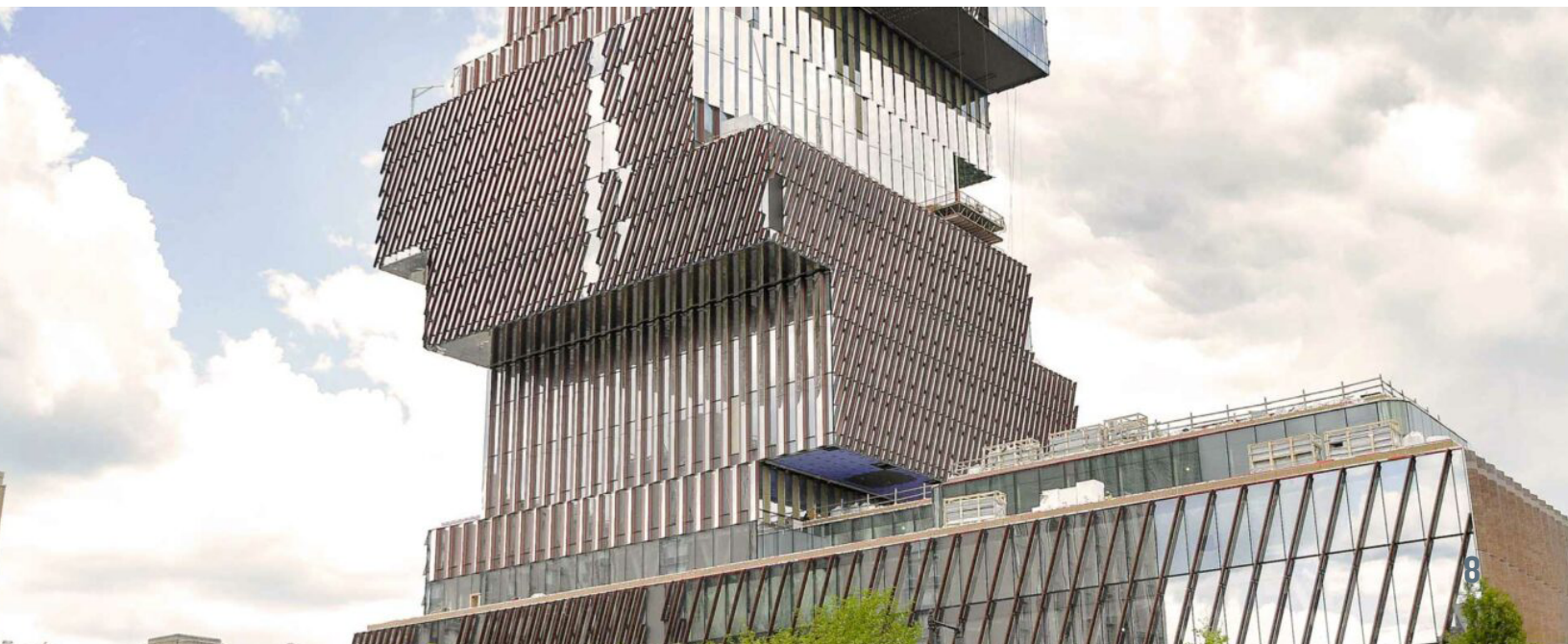
EQUITABLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: In 2023, two cohorts of [PowerCorpsBOS](#) students have successfully completed the building operations training and in-service learning program. The PowerCorpsBOS, Roxbury Community College, and A Better City teams developed this curriculum, taking unemployed, underemployed, and marginalized youth aged 18-30 through a six-month training program aimed at preparing participants for entry-level positions in building operations. Part of the program is two days of in-service learning in large buildings per week. Nine of the twelve participants in the first cohort and all eight participants in the second cohort had in-service learning placements in A Better City member buildings. Lessons learned from the first cohort have resulted in all but one of the graduating participants in the second cohort being offered either extended internships or full-time positions after graduation. Based on member feedback, the program is now regarded as a viable pathway to employment within their buildings, and in some cases, employers are developing additional training and professional growth opportunities to support the advancement of PowerCorpsBOS graduates. This project meets A Better City's equitable workforce development goals as well as the need to scale up a new generation of skilled workers in smart building technology to help large buildings comply with emissions reduction requirements. This work has been made possible by support from the Linde Family Foundation and the Barr Foundation.

EXTREME HEAT: Since A Better City's Extreme Heat Working Group was formed in December 2022, the coalition has been working with the City of Boston to help implement community heat resilience solutions in partnership with Boston businesses and institutions. In May 2023, A Better City released two publications on extreme heat: a [primer](#) that summarizes work to date on extreme heat and urban forestry in Greater Boston and suggests how businesses can support extreme heat solutions, and a companion document of [case studies](#) showcasing some of the ways in which A Better City members and partners are meeting the moment with innovative strategies to support community heat resilience. During the summer, A Better City partnered with the Boston Green Ribbon Commission and City of Boston to launch an extreme heat safety communications pilot, deploying heat safety resources in the ten most commonly spoken languages in Boston across existing employer networks in multiple sectors. A Better City also recently mapped the relationship between heat, urban tree canopy, air quality, and social vulnerability across Boston neighborhoods to help prioritize sub-neighborhood districts for first-phase heat investments that maximize co-benefits across multiple kinds of resilience. Finally, to help support long-term heat resilience through urban forestry, A Better City has been an active member of the recently launched Boston Tree Alliance co-led by the City of Boston and Mass Audubon, seeking to increase tree planting and enhance tree equity across neighborhoods, focusing on environmental justice communities. This work has been made possible by support from the Boston Green Ribbon Commission, Barr Foundation, and Paul & Edith Babson Foundation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CITY LEVEL BUILDING POLICIES: Throughout 2023, A Better City engaged members in the City of Boston's Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO 2.0) regulatory process for existing buildings. Synthesizing and amplifying member expertise and feedback, A Better City has shaped BERDO regulations that were finalized in December 2023. In addition, the City of Boston has asked A Better City to chair a Commercial Real Estate Working Group to advise the BERDO Review Board on potential issues that arise for commercial real estate stakeholders and provide reports and updates to the Review Board. A Better City was also engaged with the City of Cambridge amendment to the Building Energy Use and Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) for existing buildings, providing comments and testimony that highlighted the challenges of BEUDO's compliance timeline. A Better City continues to follow the emergence of similar building performance standards in other jurisdictions, and to push for alignment and coordination across jurisdictions whenever possible.

STATE LEVEL CLIMATE POLICIES: In 2023, A Better City deepened both formal and informal collaboration with the Healey-Driscoll Administration, serving on the [Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee](#) and the recently convened [ResilientCoasts Task Force](#). In October 2023, the Healey-Driscoll Administration released a five-year update to the 2018 State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, now re-branded as the [ResilientMass Plan](#), reflecting many A Better City recommendations, including elevating extreme heat to an urgent and increasing climate threat and the prioritization of frontline environmental justice communities. Additionally, A Better City continued to track and provide substantive comments on priority initiatives like the Clean Energy Transmission Working Group, Clean Heat Standard, and Grid Modernization Advisory Council, as well as the Better Buildings Act. In December 2023, A Better City hosted a [briefing with member company National Grid](#) to understand their Electric Sector Modernization Plan, which outlines the critical investments needed over the next five years, ten years, and beyond, to meet the Commonwealth's climate change, clean energy, and equity goals as established in the 2050 Clean Energy and Climate Plan.





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THREE-YEAR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLANS: In November 2023, A Better City hosted a working session to discuss Commercial & Industrial (C&I) recommendations for the 2025-2027 [Three Year Energy Efficiency Plan](#) that included an analysis of progress to date on the 2022-2024 Three Year Energy Efficiency Plan deliverables. As a result of the working group, recommendations for the 2025-2027 Three Year Energy Efficiency Plan were submitted to the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC). In addition, EEAC members invited A Better City to sit on the C&I Working Group that reports and provides recommendations to the EEAC. At an A Better City member's urging, the Working Group established an HVAC Taskforce to expedite changes to the current C&I custom pathway as HVAC projects with the potential for the largest greenhouse gas reductions are taking a very long time to get approved. The taskforce kicked off in mid-November with the aim to complete recommendations to the C&I Working Group and the EEAC early in 2024.

EQUITABLE CLIMATE FUNDING: Throughout 2023, A Better City continued to advocate for the development of new equitable climate funding tools, participating in a steering committee that helped to develop a business plan for a climate bank. In June 2023, Governor Healey, the City of Boston, and legislative partners officially announced the launch of a Massachusetts Community Climate Bank, which will initially focus on decarbonizing affordable housing with \$50 million in seed funding committed from the Department of Environmental Protection. A Better City will continue to push for opportunities to expand the scope of the climate bank to include decarbonization of BERDO 2.0 compliant buildings, as originally envisioned, and to consider resilience funding opportunities. A Better City has also been actively involved in the Sustainable & Equitable Funding Coalition, seeking to explore opportunities for equitable climate funding across both mitigation and adaptation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

GREENWAY BID ACTIVATIONS: In 2023, the Greenway Business Improvement District (BID) continued to support the needs of the parks and surrounding corridor in downtown Boston. The BID approved additional funding to increase public art and programming to appeal to office workers, tourists, and residents. The BID funded a successful [evening lighting project](#) to animate and activate the large mural at Dewey Square. The BID also provided funding for recreational projects to enhance Chin Park in Chinatown, miniature golf and music for an after-work fall festival, and winter lighting throughout the Greenway. This money is in addition to the annual BID support for maintenance and horticulture that make the area a first-class destination.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT: At the city level, A Better City engaged with City of Boston leadership to discuss short- and long-term downtown revitalization strategies, as well as the future of planning and development across the city. A Better City member perspectives helped to shape the City's Downtown Residential Conversion Incentive Pilot Program, as well as the Squares + Streets planning initiative, and feedback continued to emphasize the importance of proactive engagement with the business community, as well as investment in the transportation infrastructure that enables people to live, work, and play in Boston. At the state level, A Better City engaged with Healey-Driscoll Administration leadership to emphasize the importance of streamlining the waterways and Chapter 91 regulatory environment to advance resilient development, and the Waterways Resilience 1.0 draft regulations were released in December.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GREENING THE BLUE LINE: Supported by the Stone Living Lab, A Better City, Civic Space Collaborative, and Weston & Sampson completed an analysis of the MBTA Blue Line corridor in the segment between Wood Island and Orient Heights Stations to identify five sites that are vulnerable to potential coastal and stormwater flooding. To address that vulnerability, the team prepared conceptual designs that include elements such as rain gardens, wet meadows, and inland wetlands to provide holding and filtration for stormwater and raised boardwalks where heavy flooding occurs. The team presented initial findings at the Stone Living Lab Conference in April and the Climate Beacon Conference in October.

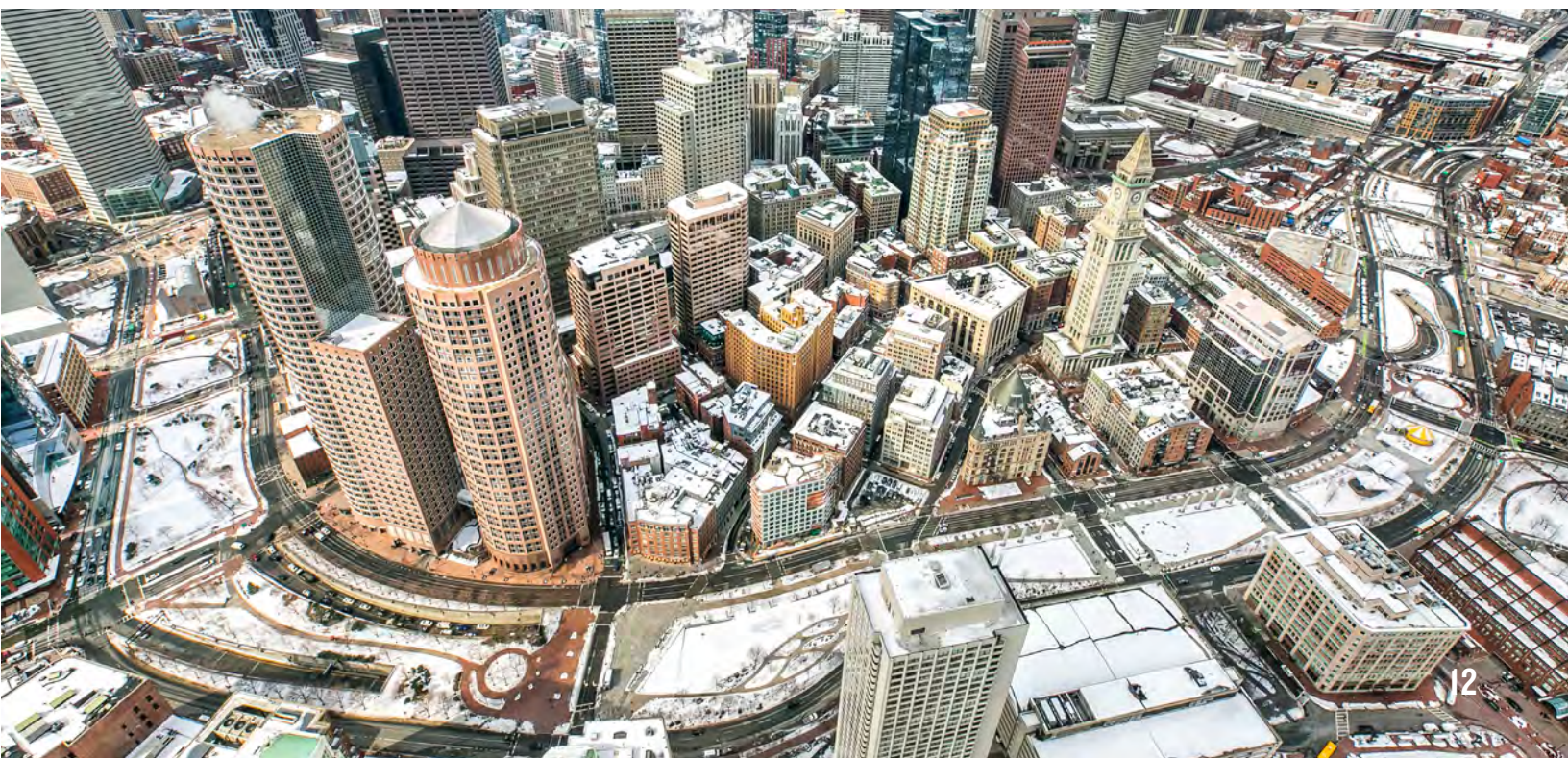


ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

MBTA SAFETY, SERVICE, & STAFFING: Throughout 2023, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) continued to face major safety, staffing, service, and governance challenges. A Better City deepened relationships with the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and the MBTA, offering guidance and technical support as appropriate. A Better City ramped up advocacy efforts, consistently delivering testimony at MBTA Board Meetings, as well as select MassDOT Board Meetings and hearings before the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Transportation. The team continued to collaborate with transportation advocates, including the Transit Is Essential Coalition, to raise awareness and call for urgent action to address safety, service, and staffing issues severely impacting riders and leaving the regional economy at risk. A Better City published a regular report, *Snapshot: MBTA Safety, Service, and Staffing*, to keep members and stakeholders up to date on key MBTA performance metrics and data trends.

MBTA MODERNIZATION, FORTIFICATION, & EXPANSION: A Better City continues to advocate for the forward-looking capital investments needed to modernize, fortify, and enhance the Commonwealth's transportation system, including service improvements and electrification of the Commuter Rail, bus fleet and facility modernization, and the Red Blue Connector. To this end, A Better City collaborated with TransitMatters on a joint report, [*Reimagining Regional Mobility: Productive, Equitable & Decarbonized Regional Mobility*](#), published in February 2023. Further, the team worked with Boston University Spark students to begin development of an innovative database and visualization tool to look at historic and future MBTA Commuter Rail rider trends and schedules, which could result in a predictive tool to inform Commuter Rail schedules going forward. Additionally, A Better City is active in many working groups, including the and the MBTA's Policy Development Working Group, advancing critical policy issues like low-income fares, bus lane enforcement, and alternative service standards.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SUMNER TUNNEL CLOSURE & OTHER ALTERNATIVE SERVICE CAMPAIGNS: In 2023, A Better City played a major role in supporting MassDOT and the MBTA with the development and execution of alternative transportation service to support commuters and riders during periods of disruption, including the full closure of the Sumner Tunnel. A Better City served on the Principal and Mobility & Transportation working groups, planning the menu of alternative service options for the two-month Sumner Tunnel closure. A Better City worked closely with the Healey-Driscoll Administration and transportation advocates to promote the Sumner Tunnel #DitchTheDrive campaign and prepared weekly updates on the closure for members. Additionally, A Better City provided extensive feedback on the MBTA's ambitious 14-month Track Improvement Plan to address speed restrictions and other State of Good Repair work on all subway lines.

FAIR SHARE TRANSPORTATION ADVOCACY: In 2023, A Better City led a coalition advocacy campaign urging decision makers to dedicate at least fifty percent of the new Fair Share surtax revenue to transportation, prioritizing public transit needs. Governor Healey and legislative leaders largely followed this concept, with the final state budget including over \$200 million for the MBTA, also including important programs to address station accessibility repairs, improvements to subway track and signals, and advancement of the design phase for the Red Blue Connector. A Better City staff held multiple meetings with the Governor's budget team to discuss additional ways this Fair Share surtax money could help support transportation challenges in Greater Boston.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION FINANCE PLANNING: As the MBTA struggles to address safety, service, and staffing challenges, the agency is facing an operating fiscal cliff in FY25 and grappling with a nearly \$25 billion State of Good Repair backlog that doesn't account for decarbonization, resiliency, and modernization needs. As such, A Better City continued to assess and advocate for different solutions to address the MBTA's unique and pressing operating and capital budget gaps and emerging needs, including federal grants, new sources of revenue, and new procurement tools. In February 2023, A Better City released two reports on public-private-partnerships: [*Public-Private Partnerships for the MBTA*](#), which serves as a primer on P3s and aims to deepen the MBTA's capacity to engage in the full range of P3s in the future, and [*Public-Private Partnerships Station Redevelopment for the MBTA*](#), which proposes two distinct methods of collaboration between the MBTA and developers.

I-90 ALLSTON MULTIMODAL PROJECT ECONOMIC IMPACT & FINANCING: A Better City and partner AECOM supported MassDOT in the development of competitive applications to two federal grant programs: Mega and Reconnecting Neighborhoods & Communities. These applications included a compelling Benefit Cost Analysis, as well as a new finance plan demonstrating the state's ability to match federal funds and complete the project in a timely manner. Federal funding decisions are expected to be announced in early 2024. To inform this work, A Better City hosted an in-person panel event in June 2023 to explore how the project will unlock economic opportunity and enhance mobility in Greater Boston and beyond and discuss the findings of A Better City's [*Economic Benefits of the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project Report*](#).



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I-90 ALLSTON MULTIMODAL PROJECT DESIGN & STAGING: In early 2023, A Better City worked with partners to develop a new construction staging concept designed to minimize temporary roadway and bridge construction, reducing traffic impacts and saving time and cost over the original concept. The fundamentals of the proposed concept were adopted by MassDOT and incorporated in applications for federal funding. Additionally, A Better City published a report in February 2023 that offers a menu of preliminary recommendations on traffic mitigation measures for the Allston I-90 Multimodal Project, [Menu of Mitigation Measures – Addressing Transportation Impacts: I-90 Multimodal Project](#). A Better City continues to collaborate with the People’s Pike Coalition to refine project elements and tasks in advance of the environmental studies targeted for issuance in summer 2024. In the fall of 2023, the City of Boston invited A Better City to join the Beacon Park Yard Regional Framework Plan Coalition to establish a regional, community vision for dense urban development in an area that will be unlocked by the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project.

TDM LEADERSHIP & ANALYSIS: The A Better City Transportation Demand Management (TDM) team played a critical role in planning for the Sumner Tunnel closure and other transportation disruptions in 2023. Beginning in March, the team worked collaboratively with MassDOT and MBTA partners and leveraged relationships with key stakeholders, including representatives from Uber and Lyft, to help design robust mitigation strategies in advance of the summer 2023 Sumner Tunnel closure and to lay a strong foundation for the round two closure in 2024. In October, the MBTA’s 16-day closure of the Ashmont Branch and Mattapan Line created the opportunity to leverage funding from the [Better Bike Share Partnership](#) grant program to demonstrate the power of bikeshare as a mitigation strategy. Working in partnership with the City of Boston, MBTA, Keolis, and local advocates, A Better City implemented a coordinated strategy to connect Red Line riders with free alternate service on the Fairmount Line via free Bluebikes—check out a summary [here](#). As nearly 60% of subway stations and 70% of Zone 1A Commuter Rail stations are co-located with Bluebikes, A Better City will continue to urge the MBTA to thoughtfully integrate bikeshare into mitigation planning throughout the 2024 Track Improvement Plan.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TMA OPERATIONS & INNOVATION: In 2023, the TDM team was thrilled to resume in-person meetings with members of A Better City's two Transportation Management Associations (TMAs). In June, the team convened members of the A Better City TMA for an e-bike demo at the new Hood Park campus in Charlestown. Then in November, the team gathered members of A Better City's Allston Brighton TMA for an onsite tour of the WGBH studios. Both events were followed by substantive discussions of TDM challenges and the work ahead, and each concluded with an informal reception and continued conversation. A Better City's TMA programming expanded again in 2023 with the addition of more bike clinics, new commuter webinar resources, and continued leadership among other TMAs in the region on Water Transit Month, Car-Free Day, the Clean Air Pledge, and more. In 2023, the TMA team also welcomed a new Manager of Operations & Engagement and started to reposition the team to put data analysis and in-person engagement at the fore in 2024. Read more about these accomplishments [here](#).





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EQUITY IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Throughout 2023, A Better City prioritized the implementation of the Equity in the Built Environment Action Plan, which was released in March 2021. The Equity in the Built Environment Working Group, first convened in June 2020, continues to meet at least quarterly to advance the objectives of the Action Plan. In addition to the previously adopted mission statement and event guidelines, in 2023, A Better City launched a formal survey effort to better understand the demographic makeup of the A Better City Board and to set gradual benchmarks for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion over time; published a land acknowledgement to recognize the indigenous peoples of Greater Boston; and expanded a stakeholder mapping effort to help visualize A Better City's current reach and to identify opportunities for new partnerships. Additionally, each unit adopted an Equity Vision Statement to guide the development of policy agendas and work plans. Importantly, and in alignment with the Action Plan, each unit within A Better City has integrated equity-focused priorities, including:

- **equitable workforce development** training and job placement in building operations with PowerCorpsBOS, Roxbury Community College, and A Better City member buildings;
- **extreme heat resilience** initiatives to help protect vulnerable populations, safeguard critical infrastructure, and bolster our regional economy;
- **public transit investment** advocacy to prioritize public transit service that meets the needs of transit-dependent riders;
- **low-income fare** advocacy to expand MBTA reduced fare options to nearly 60,000 lower-income riders who currently lack access;
- **alternative service** advocacy to ensure all MBTA riders have accessible alternatives during service disruptions; and
- **community-based climate resilience** research to bring green infrastructure solutions to the Blue Line corridor in East Boston.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MEMBERSHIP, MARKETING, & COMMUNICATIONS

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT: A Better City continues to field membership inquiries, while prioritizing supporting and maintaining existing memberships. In the past year, A Better City has welcomed Bay Cove Human Services, Coast & Harbor, Sasaki, STA Design, and Synergy as new members.

NORMAN B. LEVENTHAL AWARDS: Named in memory of A Better City's founding director, the Norman B. Leventhal Awards recognize the leaders and innovators who have made significant contributions to our built environment. In 2023, A Better City honored a particularly impressive slate of civic leaders and visionaries that are continuing to build a better city for all. Thank you to our [2023 event sponsors](#), without whom this event would not be possible. Watch the full event program, as well as the awardee videos and acceptance speeches [here](#).

- **City Builder:** Rick Dimino, President Emeritus of A Better City
- **Environment:** Kathy Abbott, President & CEO of Boston Harbor Now
- **Distinguished Leader:** Ted Landsmark, Distinguished Professor of Public Policy & Urban Affairs and Director of the Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern
- **Land Use:** Alex Krieger, Professor Emeritus at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and Principal at NBBJ



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MEMBERSHIP, MARKETING, & COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS & PROGRAMMING: In 2023, A Better City held four Board of Directors meetings, four Executive Committee Meetings, and over 35 membership engagement programs, including A Better City Conversations with key decision makers and new offerings like A Better City Building Tours and Author Talks. Speakers included decision makers like Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer, Secretary Rebecca Tepper, Secretary Yvonne Hao, Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt, MBTA General Manager Phil Eng, and MBTA Safety Officer Patrick Lavin. Additionally, A Better City relaunched the Emerging Leaders Program to engage young professionals under forty. A Better City also published six [major reports](#), nearly 60 [blog posts](#), and more than 55 email blasts.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT: In 2023, A Better City ramped up media engagement and outreach, offering expert commentary and amplifying member perspectives on a wide range of topics. A Better City leadership was quoted in more than 200 articles across dozens of publications, including Bloomberg CityLab, The Boston Globe, The Boston Business Journal, Banker & Tradesman, Politico, Axios, and State House News, and featured on TV and radio outlets, including GBH News, WCVB, WHDH, WBZ, and NBC 10. Key topics included the Sumner Tunnel closure, MBTA safety, service, and staffing, climate and clean energy policy, and real estate development challenges. Additionally, the organization's own leadership transition created the opportunity to highlight the contributions of former President & CEO Rick Dimino in several profiles.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

GRANT DEVELOPMENT: In 2023, A Better City continued grant development efforts to diversify funding sources and identify strategic new opportunities to leverage the organization's expertise. A Better City is grateful for continued support from the Babson Foundation, Barr Foundation, Linde Family Foundation, and Stone Living Lab. Additionally, A Better City forged new partnerships with the Better Bike Share Partnership and the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism thanks to collaboration with the Boston Public Market and Greenway Conservancy.





LOOKING AHEAD

As we enter 2024, we reaffirm our commitment to enhancing the Greater Boston region's economic health, competitiveness, equitable growth, sustainability, and quality of life for all communities. Our team will continue to focus on advancing the transportation and infrastructure, land use and development, and energy and environmental policies and projects needed to ensure that Greater Boston is more competitive, more vibrant, and more equitable.

Our region cannot survive, let alone thrive without a safe, reliable, accessible transportation system. The MBTA is facing ongoing budgetary challenges, as well as a State of Good Repair infrastructure backlog that has more than doubled since 2019—and that doesn't account for the investments needed to decarbonize, fortify, and expand the system. In 2024, A Better City will continue to advocate for the safety enhancements, service improvements, and staffing levels needed to get the system back on track, while leaning in on the development of a comprehensive statewide transportation finance plan. A Better City will continue to advance strategies to secure funding and permitting for transformative projects like the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project, as well as improvements to the commuter rail system with Regional Rail Phase One, the Red Blue Connector, and Bus Fleet and Facility Modernization. Through our Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) and broader membership, we will continue to partner with the region's major employers to improve sustainable commuting options, including by advocating for new MBTA fare products and active transportation incentives.

In the face of increasing economic uncertainty and shifting regulatory frameworks, smart planning and development policies and incentives will be needed to guide investment and development across the region. In the year ahead, A Better City will continue to work with city and state leaders to streamline the development process, while advancing shared affordability, climate, and equity goals, including by leveraging opportunities created by the MBTA Communities Law. We will also continue our management of the Greenway Business Improvement District to drive public realm activation and revitalization in the downtown corridor.

LOOKING AHEAD

The future economic prosperity of our region depends upon our ability to implement smart climate solutions to mitigate and adapt to the worsening impacts of climate change. In 2024, A Better City will continue to spearhead efforts to shape climate and clean energy policies, including in the buildings and electricity sectors, ensuring that the business community is at the table and part of the solution. We will also focus on advancing equitable workforce development efforts within large buildings, implementing new strategies to combat extreme heat, and supporting opportunities to build more resilient infrastructure.

Across our areas of focus, A Better City will continue to collaborate with our elected and public officials at the city, state, and federal levels. We have already established deep, productive working relationships with the Healey-Driscoll Administration and Wu Administration, which are poised to make tremendous strides in the year ahead. Moreover, we will intensify our efforts to ensure that Greater Boston is well positioned to take advantage of the unprecedented federal infrastructure funding that remains available.

Finally, to ensure that A Better City remains nimble and well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of our members and our region, we are launching an update to our organization's strategic plan. We look forward to soliciting and synthesizing vital input from members and partners alike to sharpen our value proposition and strengthen our impact.

Thank you for your partnership and for your passion—we look forward to working with you to build a better city and region for all.

Sincerely,



Kate Dineen
President & CEO



