



A
BETTER
CITY 

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

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WELCOME

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January 2025

A Better City Members and Stakeholders:

In 2024, A Better City worked alongside you—and with the Healey-Driscoll Administration, State Legislature, and Wu Administration—to develop solutions to 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 highlight just a few accomplishments, beginning with transportation and infrastructure, A Better City executed a multifaceted campaign—including producing an educational video—to help secure a \$335 million federal grant to advance the once-in-a-generation I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. We also developed innovative transportation finance strategies, took a leadership role on the Governor’s Transportation Funding Task Force, and provided critical feedback to MBTA leadership to support the completion of the Track Improvement Plan to remove all slow zones from the subway system for the first time in 20 years.

On the climate front, A Better City continued to improve building climate policies at the city and state level, and served on an array of stakeholder coalitions and state-convened commissions and working groups. Additionally, we joined with partners to launch the third cohort of PowerCorpsBOS building operator trainees, as well as the inaugural B-COOL Temperature Sensor Pilot to address the significant data gaps in measuring live temperature data across Boston’s hotspot neighborhoods.

With a continued focus on land use and development, A Better City oversaw Greenway Business Improvement District operations, rolling out new efforts to support public art, activation, and tourism on The Greenway. We also intensified efforts to shape City of Boston planning and development initiatives and state regulations to support housing and commercial development.

WELCOME

Moreover, to ensure that A Better City remains nimble and well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of our members and our region, we launched an update to our organization's strategic plan that will sharpen our value proposition and strengthen our impact in the coming years. We are grateful for the thoughtful participation of so many members and partners in this rigorous process.

We enter 2025 with a renewed focus on advancing the policies and projects needed to create a more vibrant, competitive, sustainable, and equitable city and region for all. Thank you for your partnership, support, and commitment to Greater Boston!

Sincerely,



Kate Dineen
President & CEO
A Better City



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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.

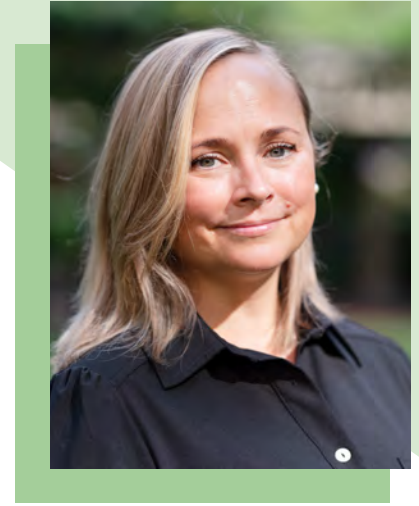


OUR TEAM

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 serves on numerous commissions and boards and is an Advisory Council Member for the Tufts University Center for State Policy Analysis. Kate was named to the 2024 Boston Business Journal Power 50 list and to the 2018 City & State Magazine 40 Under 40 list. Outside of her work at A Better City, Kate is a leading advocate for reproductive rights and was recognized as a 2022 Boston Globe Bostonian of the Year Honorable Mention. Kate holds a B.A. in English from Williams College and a Masters in City Planning from MIT, and was a Non-Resident Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School Homeland Security Project. She 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, and 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.

AMIR WILSON

TMA Coordinator & Spatial Data Analyst
Joined in March 2024

TMA Coordinator & Spatial Data Analyst, Amir Wilson, began his tenure with A Better City TMA and Allston Brighton TMA in March of 2024 in the role of supporting TMA operations and the delivery of commuter programming to our Partners' employees and tenants. Amir is particularly excited to significantly expand and enhance our commuter mobility data tools and to launch our brand-new digital resources for shared and active mobility.

Amir graduated from Boston University in 2023 as the recipient of the CAS College Prize for Excellence in Earth and Environment and one of the recipients of the Student Sustainability Leadership Award. He holds a Master of Science in Remote Sensing & Geospatial Sciences from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and a Bachelor of Arts in Earth & Environmental Science from the College of Arts and Sciences at Boston University.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

EQUITABLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: In May 2024, the City of Boston’s [PowerCorpsBOS](#) building operations training program—which is a partnership with A Better City and more than dozen A Better City member businesses and institutions—launched a third cohort of students. Based on feedback from A Better City building partners and others, the program was extended in 2024 from six months in duration to 10 months in duration. The third cohort began with four months of soft skills training, followed by six months of concurrent technical training in HVAC, electrical, and building automation, as well as in-service learning. Across all cohorts of PowerCorpsBOS, the goal is for graduates to transition to entry-level employment upon completion of the program. The building operations program continues to be popular with PowerCorps students, who understand the potential career advancement opportunities, and also with building partners, who see the program as a viable pipeline for new and skilled talent. As a result, in 2024, the building operations program was fully subscribed with 15 students enrolled. Additionally, all building partners that participated in the second cohort, as well as some from the first cohort, opted to participate in the third cohort. In September, A Better City released a report, [Building Our Future: Lessons Learned from Partnering with the PowerCorpsBOS Building Operations Training Program](#), which synthesizes the lessons A Better City learned over the last two and a half years of this partnership, and how these lessons have been applied to future cohorts. This work has been made possible with support from the Linde Family Foundation and the Barr Foundation.

EXTREME HEAT: Throughout 2024, A Better City advanced a multi-pronged approach to understand the impacts of extreme heat and to develop solutions to mitigate impacts to vulnerable populations, critical infrastructure, and the regional economy. In the summer of 2024, A Better City launched the [“B-COOL” Temperature Sensor Pilot](#) in partnership with the City of Boston’s Office of Climate Resilience, Boston University’s School of Public Health (BUSPH), and The Boston Foundation to address the significant data gaps in measuring live temperature data across Boston’s hotspot neighborhoods, which can be 10-15 degrees warmer than surrounding neighborhoods. A total of 15 temperature sensors were deployed across heat island environmental justice neighborhoods (Chinatown, Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, and Roxbury, as well as Allston-Brighton and Jamaica Plain for comparison), including at several member and partner properties. Findings from this pilot will be presented at a public event hosted by The Boston Foundation on January 22nd. A Better City also partnered with the Applied Economics Clinic to explore extreme heat policy best practices and recommendations for Massachusetts, with a [policy brief](#) and related [background report](#) published in December. Additionally, A Better City will also be a subcontractor on a Wellcome Trust three-year grant led by BUSPH to study heat protocols and policies across Boston, New Orleans, and Phoenix, with the goal of linking positive health outcomes to different heat interventions. Finally, in response to growing interest for an Executive Order on extreme heat, A Better City sent [recommendations](#) to Governor Healey for statewide heat action in October. To guide and advance this work, A Better City twice convened the Extreme Heat Working Group, a coalition of 50 member and partner organizations formed in 2022. A Better City’s heat work is generously supported by the Barr Foundation, The Boston Foundation, and the Babson Foundation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LARGE BUILDING DECARBONIZATION POLICIES: At both a city and state level, A Better City has engaged and leveraged the expertise of members on various policies related to large building decarbonization, submitting twelve public comment letters and expert testimony in 2024. Within Boston, A Better City provided comments on remaining regulatory items under the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) and began leading the BERDO Commercial Real Estate Working Group, hosting five meetings throughout 2024. A Better City also provided comments and engaged in Boston's Zero Net Carbon zoning process, which is still underway. A Better City was also asked by members to engage in the Building Energy Use and Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) regulatory process in Cambridge by providing comments in November. At a state level, A Better City convened a member focus group in March to understand their experience in implementing the updated Stretch Energy Code and new Specialized Municipal Opt-in Energy Code, which resulted in further engagement with the state and a comment letter in April. In September, A Better City provided comments on the Commonwealth's Large Building Energy Reporting Regulations, which have similarities to the City of Boston's first Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance from 2014. As of this publication, changes to the Energy Codes are pending review by the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy (TUE), and final Large Building Energy Reporting Regulations have been filed with TUE.

STATE LEVEL CLIMATE POLICIES: In 2024, through participation in policy coalitions, stakeholder engagement meetings, and the submission of written testimony, A Better City successfully advocated for the Climate Bill on Clean Energy Permitting & Siting and the \$3.96 billion Mass Leads Act, which were passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in November. As a result of the 2024 Climate Bill, summarized in a recent [blogpost](#), Massachusetts clean energy projects now have a first-ever deadline for permitting decision-making and an option for consolidated permitting, which was A Better City's priority recommendation to help address renewable energy permitting backlogs, with delays as long as eight or more years in some cases. The \$3.96 billion economic development bill also known as the Mass Leads Act, summarized in a recent [blogpost](#), also provides support and bonding authorizations for the advancement of climatetech businesses in Massachusetts, as well as other considerations for economic development across life sciences, public infrastructure, workforce development, and business competitiveness. Additionally, throughout 2024, A Better City deepened both formal and informal collaboration with the Healey-Driscoll Administration, serving on the Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee, Energy Transformation Advisory Board, ResilientCoasts External Task Force, and ResilientMass Finance Advisory Committee.





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THREE-YEAR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLANS: Throughout 2024, A Better City participated in the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council's (EEAC's) Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Working Group and HVAC Taskforce, both of which were instrumental in providing recommendations to the draft three-year plan. This work continued to be informed by the member perspectives gathered in A Better City's November 2023 focus group regarding recommendations for the 2025-2027 Three Year Energy Efficiency Plan. The HVAC Taskforce's main focus was on expediting the current C&I custom pathway, as HVAC projects have taken a long time to be approved yet have the potential for the largest greenhouse gas reductions. At the EEAC's October monthly meeting, EEAC Councilors adopted a resolution to recommend that the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approve the draft 2025-2027 Three Year Energy Efficiency Plan and the Public Administrators formally filed that plan to the DPU at the end of October. A recent [blogpost](#) summarizes A Better City's recommendations and how they have been addressed in the final plan.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

GREENWAY BID: A Better City continues to play a central role in Greenway Business Improvement District (BID) operations, including serving as a point of contact for abutters, the Greenway Conservancy, and other public and private partners. In 2024, A Better City helped to launch new efforts to support public art, activation, and tourism on The Greenway. A Better City partnered with the Boston Public Market and The Greenway Conservancy to develop a marketing campaign supported by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism to encourage out-of-state travelers to visit the Greenway corridor during the shoulder season. Additionally, the Greenway BID approved \$350,000 to create The ARTBeat of the Greenway program. This effort included public art and public programming through five art exhibits located throughout the entirety of the Greenway with marketing designed to engage downtown office workers and the surrounding neighborhoods.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT: In 2024, A Better City intensified efforts to shape City of Boston planning and development initiatives and State regulatory processes. At the city level, through comment letters and focus groups, A Better City members helped to shape the Article 80 Modernization process, actively commenting on the initiative's Action Plan and the Squares + Streets planning initiative. Additionally, A Better City shared member perspectives with City leadership regarding the proposal to file a home rule petition to allow the City to temporarily change Boston's property tax classification structure. At the state level, A Better City provided feedback on the Waterways Resilience 1.0 draft regulations and emphasized the importance of streamlining the waterways and Chapter 91 regulatory environment to advance resilient development.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE LEGISLATIVE WINS: A Better City's advocacy and support helped to advance several new laws this past session. Most noteworthy is the new plan harnessing the Fair Share (aka Millionaire's Tax) surtax to increase MassDOT's borrowing capacity for capital infrastructure projects. This new program generated an additional \$1.1 billion for the statewide transportation system. The state budget also includes increased support for the MBTA's operating budget and funding to create an expanded income-eligible fare program at the MBTA. In September, Governor Healey signed into law a bill that creates a \$250 million matching fund to help support federal infrastructure grants awards, which will help to supply state funds for large infrastructure projects in the next few years.

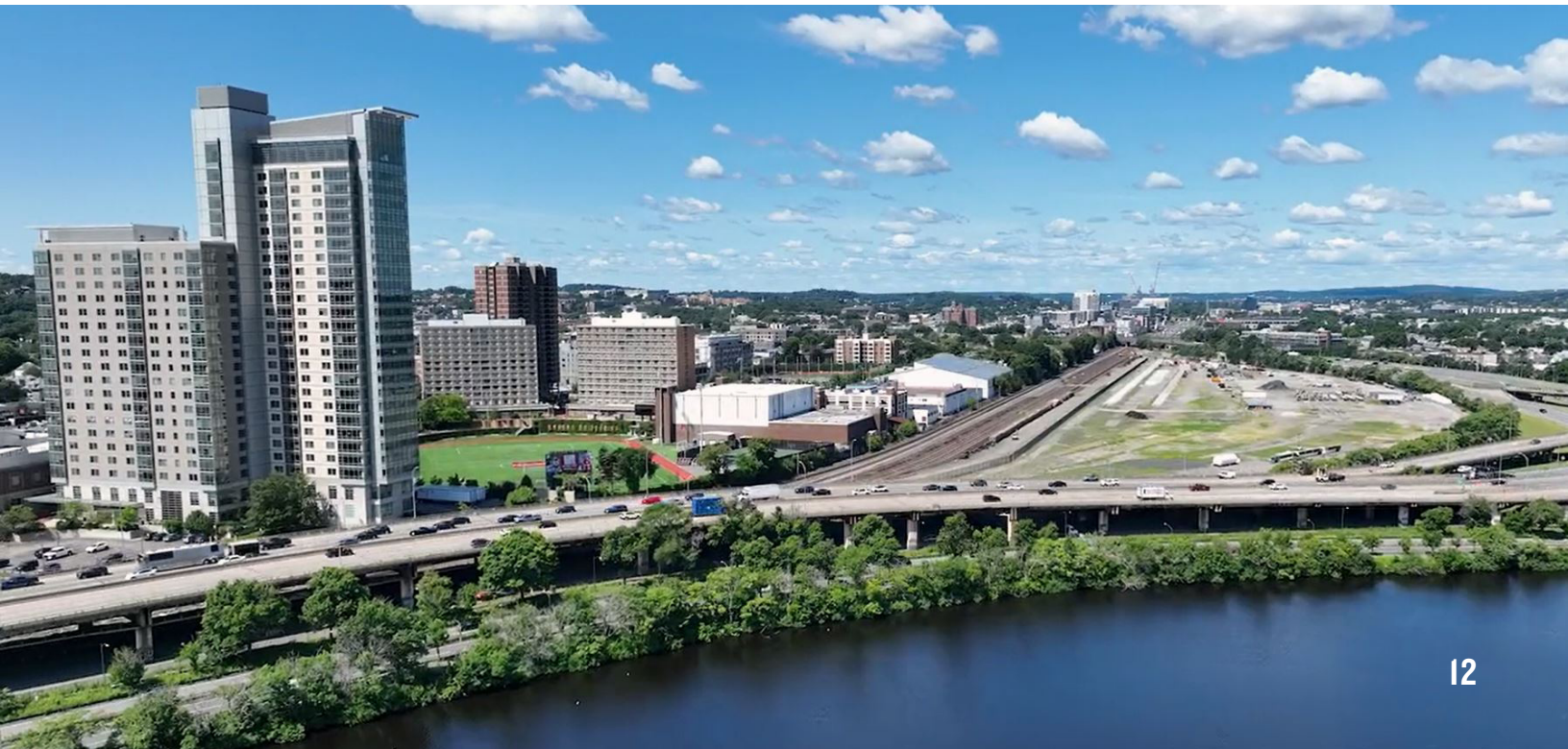
GOVERNOR'S TRANSPORTATION FUNDING TASK FORCE LEADERSHIP: Governor Healey established the Transportation Funding Task Force to develop recommendations for a long-term, sustainable transportation finance plan. Over the past several years, A Better City has actively called for this kind of assessment to address the current and future needs of the Commonwealth's transportation system, and the increasing challenges related to climate emissions and resiliency. The Governor appointed A Better City President & CEO Kate Dineen to serve on this task force, which includes leaders from both the public and private sectors. Soon after the Task Force meetings began, A Better City took a leading voice to encourage state government officials to capitalize on many short-term opportunities and raised awareness of the need for new revenue and investments necessary to support the longer-term needs of the Greater Boston economy. A Better City is helping to shape the final recommendations of this group so that it is more than a toolkit of commonly known transportation funding ideas. The final report will be released in January 2025. Through this work, A Better City has reinforced its relationships with Task Force members and top officials in the Healey-Driscoll Administration.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS REPORT: A Better City published the report [*Making a Comeback: A Review of Federal Infrastructure Grants and the Competition for Federal Funds*](#), which analyzes competitive infrastructure supported by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, covering over \$200 billion in awarded grants nationwide. This report showed that Massachusetts ranked 17th nationally in total grant funding awarded, and between October 2023 through September 2024, the Commonwealth ranked 7th in the nation for securing infrastructure grant funding. The report compared Massachusetts to the key swing states in the 2024 election, examined grant allocations by different federal agencies, and provided a breakdown of over one hundred infrastructure grant programs.

I-90 ALLSTON MULTIMODAL PROJECT FEDERAL GRANT: In early 2024, A Better City executed a successful advocacy campaign to help secure \$335 million in federal funding for the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. Working in partnership with public, private, and community partners, A Better City launched a multi-pronged strategy to advocate for the approval of MassDOT's application for federal funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods grant program. In late January, A Better City released a six-minute [*video*](#) explaining the scope, benefits, and urgency of the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. This video featured testimony from Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, Governor Maura Healey, State Representative Mike Moran, Mayor Michelle Wu, Chief of Planning and Director of the Boston Planning and Development Agency Arthur Jemison, and other leaders from the business and transit advocacy community. The video was made possible by generous support from the Barr Foundation and partnership with Denterlein and Good Life Productions. Additionally, A Better City assembled a business coalition letter to the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation showing support for the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. Signatories included A Better City, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Kendall Square Association, Longwood Collective, MassBio, Massachusetts Business Roundtable, Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, and Worcester Regional Chamber. Weeks later, the full Congressional delegation expressed their support for the project to U.S. DOT officials.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I-90 ALLSTON MULTIMODAL PROJECT DESIGN & STAGING: A Better City successfully advocated for the establishment of working groups to support timely decision making in the design and environmental review of the I-90 Allston Multimodal project. In June, MassDOT announced the establishment of four working groups—Throat Area/Charles River, Multimodal Local Street Network, Multimodal Local Connections, and Rail and Transit—to support focused discussion on design tasks and decision points in regular frequent meetings through the summer, aiming to complete required tasks that will allow obligation of federal funds for the project by September 2026. A Better City has participated in all four groups and is actively working on alternatives approaches to resolve challenges associated with rail configuration layover yard concerns. Additionally, A Better City continues to develop and refine conceptual solutions to address services impacts to the Grand Junction line and has actively participated in sessions held by the City of Boston on the planning framework for Beacon Park Yard.

MBTA TRACK IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM & BEYOND: A Better City monitored the ongoing MBTA Track Improvement Program (TIP) and provided real-time feedback to the MBTA on alternative service, keeping members informed of shutdowns. In September, A Better City welcomed MBTA Chief of Staff Katie Choe to update members on the TIP and its relationship to the Federal Transit Administration Safety Management Inspection in 2022. In December 2024, the MBTA successfully completed the year-long TIP program to remove all slow zones and increase weekday scheduled trips. It also reduced wait times by 31% on the Red Line, 21% on the Blue Line, and 15% on the Orange Line. Kate Dineen, President and CEO of A Better City, attended a celebratory event hosted by Governor Healey in December 2024 to commend the MBTA for the program's success, emphasizing its positive impact on riders and the regional economy. A Better City continues to work with the Transit Is Essential Coalition to advocate for vital service improvements across the system.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SUMNER TUNNEL REHABILITATION & ALTERNATIVE SERVICE OPTIONS: In June 2024, A Better City released [The Light at the End of this Tunnel: Lessons Learned from the 2023 Sumner Tunnel Closure for the MBTA, Commuters, & Our Region](#). This report provided input for MassDOT and the MBTA as they prepared for the July 2025 month-long shutdown of the Sumner Tunnel. The shutdown aimed to complete the rehabilitation of this critical infrastructure connecting the North Shore and East Boston to downtown Boston. As in 2023, A Better City participated in working groups on transit mitigation and communications, actively contributing both before and during the closure. A Better City also communicated progress to member companies and institutions and monitored the project throughout the month. The shutdown proceeded smoothly, and the project was completed on schedule. This successful rehabilitation extended the projected life of the tunnel by 75 years.

MBTA COMMUTER RAIL PROCUREMENT: In 2024, A Better City prioritized research and advocacy for the next MBTA Commuter Rail procurement, which is expected to be the largest contract in the Commonwealth and the largest contract of its kind in North America. A Better City advocated for a contract that decarbonizes the network, improves speed, reliability, and equity, and addresses environmental justice concerns. To guide this work, A Better City established an internal advisory committee to leverage member expertise and perspectives. In December, A Better City convened an in-person event, Investing in Our Commuter Rail, Investing in Our Future. The event featured MBTA Board of Directors Chair, Tom McGee; MBTA Commuter Rail Executive Director, Mike Muller; Keolis Commuter Rail Services Boston CEO, Abdellah Chajai; and an expert panel of A Better City members, including Alstom, AECOM, Arup, and HNTB. Additionally, A Better City developed preliminary feedback for the MBTA on the procurement structure and process, emphasizing the need for a contract that encourages competition, considers a consortium approach, offers an attractive contract term that incentivizes innovation, includes clear requirements for infrastructure upgrades aligned with the state's climate goals, and maintains excellent service. A Better City will continue to focus on this important issue in 2025.





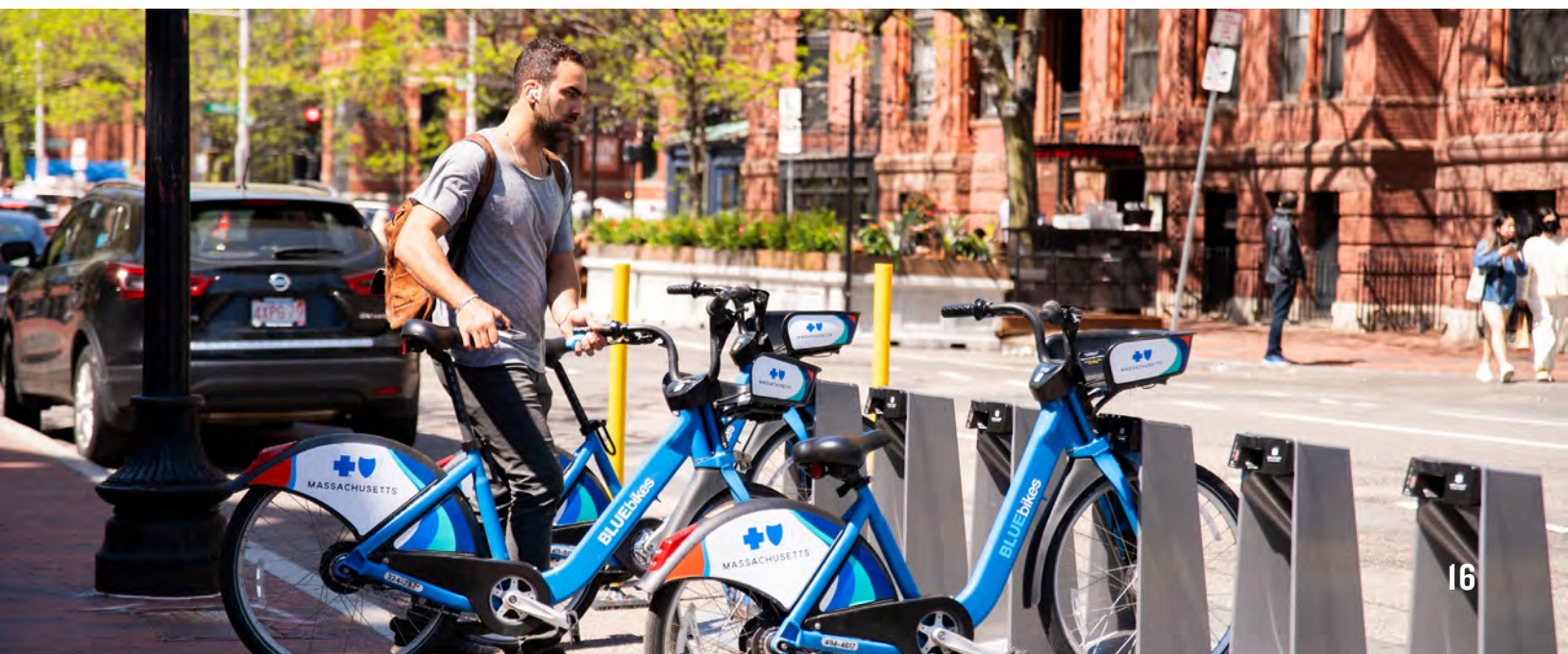
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

REGIONAL RAIL ADVOCACY: Throughout 2024, A Better City intensified strategic efforts to advocate for improved commuter rail service in the near term and for a modernized and decarbonized regional rail system in the long-term. A Better City joined with TransitMatters to urge the MBTA to establish a Rail Modernization Working Group, which the MBTA agreed to convene in early February 2025. A Better City also supported the MBTA's Fairmount Line Decarbonization Pilot, which will fully decarbonize the line by 2028 using and testing battery electric multiple unit (BEMU) technology. In November, A Better City hosted MBTA Commuter Rail Executive Director, Mike Muller, for a conversation with members to discuss the goals, structure, and timeline for the Fairmount Line Decarbonization pilot, which is a crucial first step toward: decarbonizing the commuter rail network; improving service delivery; and addressing environmental justice concerns.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT: In 2024, A Better City's Transportation & Infrastructure cluster focused on decarbonizing the transportation sector. To further this goal, the team closely examined the Commonwealth's progress in deploying electric vehicle infrastructure to support the state's 2050 net zero targets. In late October, A Better City brought together Senior MassDOT officials, Amazon, and Friends of Post Office Square for a conversation, *The Roadmap to Net Zero by 2050: Transitioning to Electric Vehicles in the Commonwealth*, to explore the status and timeline of the Massachusetts National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan. Amazon shared their sustainability program, highlighting successes and obstacles encountered during their nationwide conversion to medium- and heavy-duty electric fleets. Participants also learned about building infrastructure deployment for office spaces. Earlier 2024, A Better City senior staff participated in a panel hosted by Zip Car, *Paved Paradise: The Impact of Parking on the Environment*, and emphasized the crucial need to shift away from personal vehicles towards public transportation as a cornerstone of the Commonwealth's decarbonization strategy. Additionally, A Better City leadership serves on the Commonwealth's Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee, co-chairing the Transportation Working Group, and participates in the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinating Council.

TDM LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION: The A Better City Transportation Demand Management (TDM) team stayed deeply engaged during the MBTA's ambitious Track Improvement Program (TIP) that tackled a decades long maintenance backlog during significant service disruptions throughout 2024. At weekly meetings with the Boston Transportation Department and stakeholders from across the city, the team helped design and promote custom communications unique to each major repair surge, encouraged the city and MBTA to integrate Bluebikes and related resources as key mitigation options when appropriate, and to provide multiple language support on all collateral. The team used these resources—which included calendars, alternative travel options, and general TIP progress reports—to help our partners and their commuters navigate each disruption. The team also rode the system often to measure headways and dwell times for comparison to the published information available online. In addition to these brief highlights, you can dive deeper into all that the TDM team has accomplished in 2024 in their Year in Review [here](#).



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EQUITY IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Throughout 2024, A Better City continued to build upon the successful 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. This year, in alignment with the Action Plan, each team within A Better City has expanded and deepened equity-focused priorities, including the following:

- **equitable workforce development training** and job placement in building operations with PowerCorpsBOS and A Better City member and partner buildings
- **extreme heat resilience initiatives** to help demonstrate differences in lived heat experiences, and to explore solutions that protect vulnerable populations, safeguard critical infrastructure, and bolster our regional economy
- **energy burden advocacy** to support those who pay disproportionately high percentages of their income to energy bills
- **public transit investment advocacy** to prioritize accessible, reliable, frequent, and affordable service across all modes, meeting the needs of all riders, especially those in environmental justice communities
- **alternative service advocacy** to ensure all MBTA riders have accessible alternatives during service disruptions
- **MBTA Income-Eligible Reduced Fare Program** promotion to expand MBTA reduced fare options to nearly 60,000 lower-income riders who currently lack access





SPOTLIGHT: POWERCORPSBOS

Thank you to A Better City's PowerCorpsBOS partners—making in-service learning and job placement a reality! Learn more about the PowerCorpsBOS Building Operations program [here](#) and [here](#). This work has been made possible thanks to the Linde Family Foundation and the Barr Foundation.

PowerCorpsBOS Partners

- Beacon Capital Partners
- BioMed Realty
- Boston Medical Center
- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- BXP
- C&W Services
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Equity Residential
- JLL
- LC Anderson
- Massachusetts General Hospital
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Northeastern University
- Related Beal
- Schneider Electric
- The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- WS Development



SPOTLIGHT: EXTREME HEAT

Thank you A Better City's B-COOL partners for their generous collaboration and willingness to host temperature sensors for the summer 2024 temperature sensor pilot in partnership with the City of Boston Office of Climate Resilience, Boston University School of Public Health, and The Boston Foundation. Learn more about the B-COOL pilot project [here](#).

B-COOL Partners

- Arnold Arboretum (Harvard University)
- Bay Cove Human Services
- Boston Children's Hospital
- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Boston Green Academy
- Boston Medical Center
- Charles River Community Health
- City of Boston's Urban Forestry Division
- Franklin Park Zoo
- Greenway Conservancy
- Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition
- Museum of Science
- UMass Boston

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MEMBERSHIP, MARKETING, & COMMUNICATIONS

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT: A Better City continues to welcome new members that bring diverse perspectives, while also deepening engagement with current members through enhanced programming and listening sessions. In 2024, A Better City welcomed Alstom, Argus, Athenahealth, Boston Building Resources, Boston Public Art Triennial, Franklin Templeton, NBBJ, Rasky Partners, and Zoo New England.

NORMAN B. LEVENTHAL AWARDS: Named in memory of A Better City's founding director, the Norman B. Leventhal Excellence in City Building Awards recognize the leaders and innovators who have made significant contributions to our built environment. In 2024, A Better City honored a diverse and accomplished slate of civic leaders that are continuing to build a better city for all. Thank you to our [2024 event sponsors](#), without whom this event would not be possible. Watch the full event program, including awardee videos and their acceptance speeches [here](#).

- **Distinguished Leaders:** James Keefe, Principal, Trinity Financial and Patrick Lee, Principal, Trinity Financial
- **Environment:** Dr. Atyia Martin, CEO and Founder, All Aces Inc.
- **Land Use:** John P. Sullivan, Chief Engineer, Boston Water and Sewer Commission
- **Transportation:** Gautam Sundaram, Practice Leader, Principal, ASLA, Perkins&Will, and Kishore Varanasi, Senior Principal and Director of Urban Design, CBT Architects

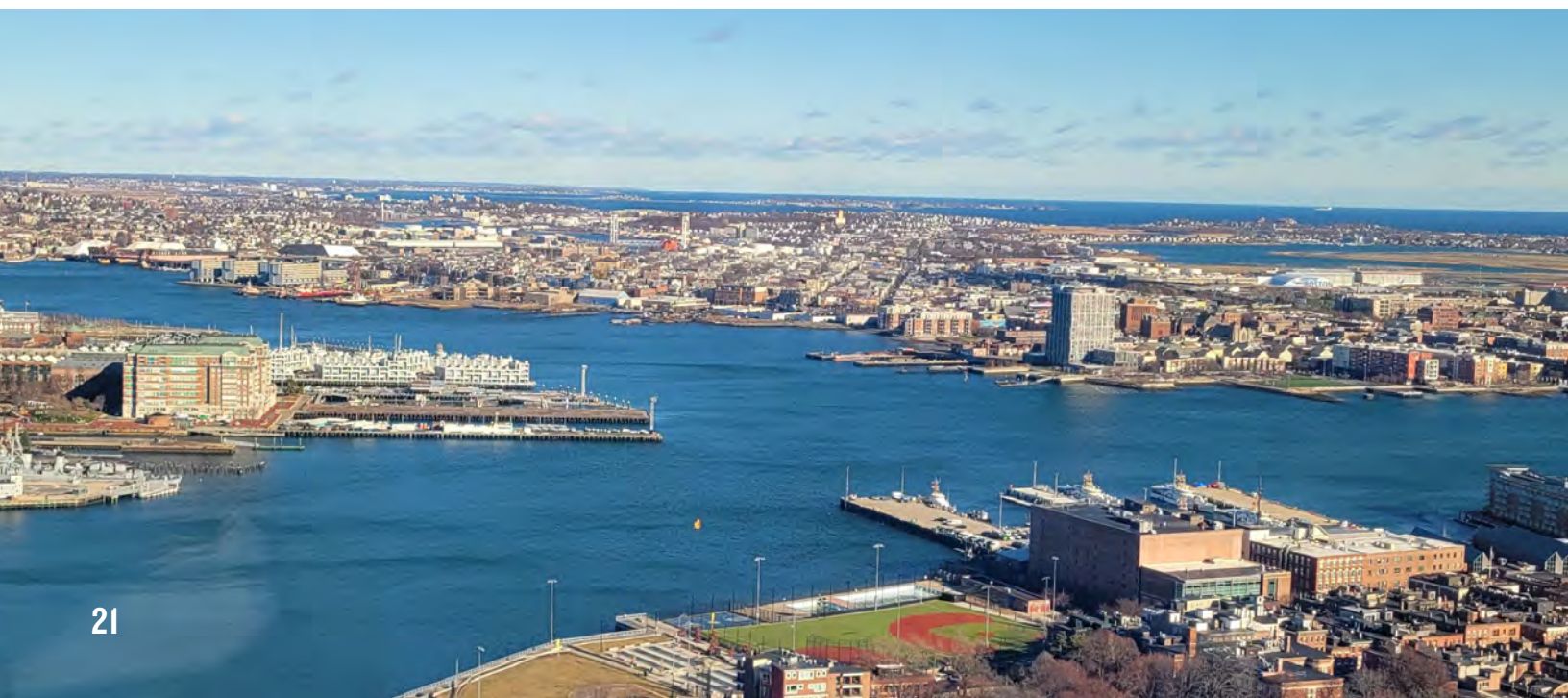


ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MEMBERSHIP, MARKETING, & COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS & PROGRAMMING: In 2024, A Better City held four Board of Directors meetings, and four Executive Committee meetings, and more than 40 membership engagement programs, including briefings, focus groups, conversations, and site visits. Through this programming, A Better City connected members with an array of key decision makers, including: Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Transportation Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt, MBTA General Manager Phil Eng, MassCEC CEO Emily Reichert, Boston Planning Chief Kairos Shen, Boston Climate Chief Brian Swett, Boston Climate Resilience Director Chris Osgood, Boston Planning & Zoning Director Aimee Chambers. A Better City's relaunched Emerging Leaders Program for young professionals included tours of Sasaki's headquarters, the Lot Lab contemporary public art installation, and the new Lyrik development. A Better City also convened two substantial in-person panel events, featuring member expertise: Roadmap to Net Zero 2050: Transitioning Electric Vehicles in the Commonwealth, and Investing in Our Commuter Rail, Investing in Our Future. Additionally, A Better City published five major [reports](#), nearly 35 [blog posts](#), and nearly 55 email blasts.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT: In 2024, A Better City continued to bolster media engagement and outreach activities, offering expert commentary, securing thought leadership opportunities that help shape coverage and policymaking, and amplifying member perspectives on an array of topics. A Better City leadership was quoted or referenced in nearly 100 articles and segments, totaling over 62 million digital impressions and representing an increase in A Better City's share of voice compared to regional peers. A Better City received national coverage in Bloomberg Businessweek TV and radio, as well as regional coverage in The Boston Globe, Banker & Tradesman, Boston B-Side, Boston Business Journal, Boston.com, Commonwealth Beacon, GBH, Masslive, NBC10, NECN, Politico, State House New Service, WBUR, and Yahoo. Key topics included the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project, federal grants, MBTA service diversions, staffing, and service improvements, and climate and clean energy policy. Additionally, A Better City President & CEO Kate Dineen was recognized as a Boston Business Journal [2024 Power 50 Movement Maker](#).



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

GRANT DEVELOPMENT: In 2024, A Better City continued grant development efforts to diversify funding sources and to identify strategic new opportunities to leverage the organization's expertise. A Better City is grateful for continued support from the Babson Foundation, Barr Foundation, and Linde Family Foundation, as well as the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism thanks to a collaboration with the Boston Public Market and Greenway Conservancy. A Better City is also grateful to again partner with The Boston Foundation and to build a new relationship with the Wellcome Trust. Additionally, A Better City's Allston-Brighton Transportation Demand Management team forged a new partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

STRATEGIC PLAN: A Better City advanced an update to the organization's strategic plan with the help of consultants from Empower Success Corps and a member-led Strategic Planning Advisory Committee. The analysis included interviews with nearly 50 external stakeholders, as well as listening session with four benchmark organizations across the country. The final plan aims to sharpen the organization's value proposition and to strengthen its impact, ensuring that A Better City remains nimble and well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of our members and our region. The plan is expected to be approved by the A Better City Board in early 2025.





LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we will remain focused on advancing our mission to engage the Greater Boston business community and civic institutions in developing solutions and influencing policy through research and collaboration on transportation, climate, and land use issues. Our vision is to create a more vibrant, competitive, sustainable, and equitable city and region for all.

We continue to reinforce that our region cannot survive, let alone thrive without a safe, reliable, accessible transportation system. In 2025, A Better City will work to implement the recommendations of the Governor's Transportation Funding Task Force, while actively supporting the MBTA's efforts to get the system back on track, including vital work to upgrade signals, power infrastructure, and stations. A Better City will ramp up research and advocacy to inform the upcoming commuter rail procurement and ensure that the next commuter rail contract delivers decarbonized, frequent, reliable, and affordable service. Additionally, our team will encourage the Commonwealth's transition to electric vehicles, including infrastructure deployment, vehicle adoption, and grid readiness, as well as overall decarbonization of the sector. Further, A Better City will continue to develop strategies to advance the transformative I-90 Allston Multimodal Project, even in the face of federal uncertainty. Through our Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) and broader membership, we will work with the region's major employers to enhance sustainable commuting options, including through first and last mile connections and guided commutes.

Climate change is a worsening existential threat and our region's equitable growth hinges upon our ability to decarbonize and to adapt to now certain climate impacts. In 2025, A Better City will continue to lead efforts to shape smart climate and clean energy policies informed by the expertise of the business community, including buildings policy and grid modernization. We will continue to focus on enhancing equitable workforce development initiatives within large buildings and advancing new strategies to better understand and address extreme heat and will pursue new opportunities to improve emergency preparedness and build climate resilient infrastructure.

LOOKING AHEAD

Smart planning and development policies will be needed to support development and growth amid economic and regulatory uncertainty. In the year ahead, A Better City will continue to work with city and state leaders to troubleshoot planning and development challenges with an eye toward enabling strategic planning, streamlining permitting, and catalyzing new construction starts. Additionally, we will continue our management of the Greenway Business Improvement District to drive public realm activation and revitalization in the downtown corridor.

Thank you for your collaboration and for your commitment—we look forward to working with you to build a better city and region for all in 2025 and beyond!

Sincerely,



Kate Dineen
President & CEO



