



News from A Better City

Spring 2013

Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



In This Issue

[Transportation](#)

[Land Development](#)

[Environment](#)

ABC's Blog



[To Right the Financial Ship, New Sources of Funds are Necessary](#)

02-22-2013

At a meeting with ABC, Sec Davey said not to get bogged down too much in the details of transit finance. The key he said, is that we cannot afford our current system. New sources of funds are necessary. With the plan calling for...

[Doug McGarragh: Tolling & the Transportation Funding Debate](#)

02-12-2013

A featured blog post by

Transportation

Transportation Finance Plan

In early April, the House Speaker and Senate President, joined by the Chairs of the Ways and Means Committees and the Chairs of the Joint Transportation Committee, released a Transportation Finance Framework in response to months of efforts by many business and advocacy groups to address the Commonwealth's transportation financing challenges. Since that time, both the House and the Senate have passed their versions of transportation financing legislation, and a conference committee has been selected to work through to a final version. The work in process is a significant step forward for transportation funding in the Commonwealth, solving the operating deficit problem at the T for at least several years, and making other necessary investments in the state of good repair of our transportation infrastructure. Our April [policy brief](#) describes the bills in more detail.

Longfellow Bridge Reconstruction

The ABC [Transportation and Construction Committee](#) and ABC staff and consultants have met with MassDOT officials and their consultants and representatives of the White/Skanska/Consigli Joint Venture, the Design Build entity that will complete [reconstruction of the Longfellow Bridge](#). The committee held a vigorous discussion of traffic issues on May 1, listing 17 points that should be addressed in the near term. MassDOT has agreed with ABC's recommendation to hold one or more traffic workshops with key stakeholders to discuss the status of the traffic management plan and address issues prior to the first traffic diversion currently scheduled for July. Holding a workshop in the immediate future will provide an opportunity to: understand the issues, constraints, and opportunities; ensure that all parties are on the same page with information on projected traffic volumes; understand the implications and measures taken to mitigate the impact of traffic changes and potential detour routes; and ensure that we are comfortable that adequate contingency plans have been developed before major traffic changes are put in place.

Bus Optimization Study

ABC and our consultant VHB have concluded the first year of this two year study funded by the Barr Foundation that includes review of best practices in bus operations in cities across the world. The study has also reviewed innovative practices being employed by the MBTA to facilitate operational reliability and reduce trip time in Boston's congested streets.

The next phase of work includes preparation and evaluation of a case study for a bus corridor in Boston. Working with criteria developed with the MBTA, the study has identified a three mile long corridor that includes several bus routes. The recommended corridor runs along Washington Street from Forest Hills to

Doug McGarrah of Foley Hoag LLP takes a deeper look into the issue of tolling within the larger transportation funding debate...

[Road Work Ahead](#)

02-05-2013

We recently hosted MassDOT Highway Administrator Frank DePaola at ABC's first executive committee meeting of 2013. We asked him about the Callahan Tunnel and other work that will effect traffic in...

[Looking Ahead to Spring: 2013 on the Greenway](#)

01-22-2013

The ABC Greenway Abutters committee hosted Greenway Conservancy Acting Executive Director Jesse Brackenbury last week for a preview of things to come on the Greenway in 2013...>

[Weighing "The Way Forward" versus "The Cost of Doing Nothing"](#)

01-16-2013

As has been widely reported, on Monday Gov. Patrick and Sec. Davey released *The Way Forward: A 21st Century Transportation Plan* before a packed ballroom at UMass Boston. ABC was there for the announcement and now we've had a chance to digest the details of the plan, and what it means for transportation in Boston and statewide...>

[The Year Ahead](#)

01-02-2013

Happy new year! It's been nearly a year since ABC launched its first-ever blog...But I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight what we see as the major projects in our core areas of transportation, land development and the environment...>

Roslindale Square, Belgrade Avenue to Centre Street in West Roxbury, ending at LaGrange Street. The corridor carries an estimated weekday ridership of about 20,000 passengers per day. The corridor will be used as a pilot for application of improvements to reduce travel time, produce consistent headways, reduce conflicts with bus lanes, and improve the experience of passengers. The study will produce a conceptual design for implementing the improvements.

ABC's recommendations will be modeled to determine projected results. When recommendations are implemented in the future, we will measure and evaluate actual performance and results.

Land Development

Municipal Harbor Plan

The Boston Redevelopment Authority has begun the planning process for the Municipal Harbor Plan for Chapter 91 Tidelands in the Wharf District. The Chapter 91 area is adjacent to the Rose Kennedy Greenway corridor, and the planning process will build upon the guidelines developed for the entire completed in 2010. New zoning provisions will also be prepared for this portion of the Greenway district planning area.

In March, ABC participated in the large public meeting, site walks, and a morning long charrette on the subject. On April 24, the BRA hosted the first meeting of the Advisory Committee for the process. The committee, which includes ABC [Greenway Abutters Committee](#) co-chair Bud Ris and ABC President Rick Dimino, heard an explanation of the principles and nuances of Chapter 91 and the Municipal Harbor Plan approach at the initial meeting. Meetings will be held monthly. The next Advisory Committee meeting will held on May 22, during which the planning area and context as well as the *Greenway Use and Development Guidelines* will be reviewed.

Environment

City Council to Vote on Proposed Energy Reporting & Disclosure Ordinance

The Boston City Council is scheduled to vote May 8th on Mayor Menino's proposed Building Energy Reporting & Disclosure Ordinance. ABC has worked closely with the City's Environment Department and City Council over the past year to ensure that this new program is implemented in a way that recognizes the considerable investments in energy efficiency enhancements that have been made by property owners over the years. As part of these efforts, ABC, through our work with the Boston Green Ribbon Commission, hosted a series of four focus groups attended by more than 40 commercial real estate representatives to provide direct feedback to City officials to help shape the language of the proposed ordinance. We are pleased that most of the concerns raised during these meetings and additional working sessions hosted by the City Council were directly addressed within the final

Climate change directly threatens the economic competitiveness, infrastructure and quality of life in the City of Boston. The commercial sector represents more than 50 percent of Boston's community emissions and many in the City's business community have aggressively pursued energy efficiency opportunities that improve their bottom lines while reducing their carbon footprint. While these voluntary efforts are laudable, they are not enough. This ordinance is a critical component of engaging the broader community in the important work of fulfilling the City's climate action goals.

Visit Our Website



[ABOUT](#)

[transportation](#)

[land development](#)

[environment](#)

[BLOG](#)

This ordinance is founded on the simple principle that you cannot manage what you do not measure. Energy benchmarking has proven to be a cost effective means of identifying energy savings opportunities in a building portfolio. A recent study of 35,000 buildings by the U.S Environmental Protection Agency found that, nation-wide, buildings that consistently benchmarked their energy performance using the EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager tool reduced energy consumption an average of 7 percent annually. We estimate that if similar results were seen in Boston as a result of this ordinance, Boston's businesses and institutions would save, on aggregate, \$30 million on their utility bills by the third year of this program.

ABC Receives Funding for TDM Projects

ABC received funding from the Barr Foundation for several transportation demand management (TDM) projects, studies, policy initiatives, and research around the topic of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from mobile sources. Projects include a report on best practices for state rideshare regulations and city commute trip reduction ordinances; a study on the feasibility of utilizing new rideshare technologies for The Ride; a program to educate and assist businesses with providing the transportation fringe benefit to employees; a mobile source GHG calculator for businesses; and a study on the feasibility of a single fare media for transit, Hubway, carsharing, tolls, and parking. The grant provides funding for two years and ABC will begin to work on several of these projects over the next couple of months.

Building a Resilient City: Preparing our Infrastructure for Climate Change

With the current state of transportation in Boston, combined with the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy still being felt on New York City's infrastructure, now is a more critical time than ever to address the issue of resiliency regarding Boston's infrastructure. Recently, ABC hosted [Building a Resilient City: Preparing our Infrastructure for Climate Change](#). Leaders from city, state, NGO, and the business community, came together for the first of three panels on addressing the vulnerability of Boston's transportation infrastructure in the midst of current and future threats from climate change and sea level rise. Speakers included Michael Cantalupa, Viven Li, Fred Laskey, Brenda Enos, and Frank DePaola. More details and presentations from the event can be viewed [here](#).

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to dstraus@abettercity.org by adepompolo@abettercity.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

A Better City | 33 Broad Street | Suite 300 | Boston | MA | 02109