



NEWS FROM A BETTER CITY

WINTER 2014

Looking Back on a Successful Year

A Better City's Top Accomplishments from 2013

The past year has kept all of us at ABC busy, working on projects and preparing for bigger ones to come keeps us on our toes. This past year we saw a lot of changes happening around Boston, construction cranes and new buildings are dotting the skyline, bridges, roads and transit improvements are being worked on and Boston and the region is seeing strong economic growth. ABC has been involved with many of those changes and we'd like to share with you our achievements.

[Read about all of our accomplishments this year on our website.](#)

Transportation Achievements



The Massachusetts Legislature passed major transportation finance legislation in 2013, and ABC was involved at every step to help shape it and make sure the best bill possible was passed. The new legislation will provide \$426 million in new revenue for transportation investments by its fifth year. ABC is monitoring the implementation of the legislation is tracking MassDOT's progress as the newly funded programs begin to roll out.

A major part of the transportation legislation was mandating that the state gas tax will now rise with inflation, following an immediate three cent rise. Indexing the gas tax to inflation provides a constant and significant source of revenue for transportation improvements. Prior to this increase, the gas tax had not increased for 20 years. Tying future increases to inflation will help transportation revenues keep pace with construction cost increases and will ensure that the tax is a more reliable funding source. A coalition has been created to oppose the indexing of the tax, and is aiming to get a question on the next ballot to repeal the measure. ABC is working with Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA) to build community support to create a response to the gas tax indexing opponents, and work to show that it is an important tool for maintaining our transportation systems into the future and strengthen our economic position.

Major transportation infrastructure projects were started in 2013. The three year reconstruction of the Longfellow Bridge began last summer. ABC was in close communication with MassDOT, the Highway Division, and the project engineers, and actively monitored and evaluated the implementation of the first stage. Work on the Callahan Tunnel also began in December 2013, which is scheduled to be finished in March of 2014. ABC is part of the multi-agency traffic management working group for the project. ABC continues to work on mitigating the impacts on large scale infrastructure projects, keeping Boston and the region "open for business."

Environmental Achievements

Energy efficiency, sustainability initiatives, planning and preparing for climate change continues to be a major priority of ABC's and has been a major focus of city policy. Starting this year, the City of Boston will begin to enforce its Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance. Commercial buildings of 50,000 square feet or more will be required to report their energy usage to the city. When the ordinance was being created, ABC organized a focus group, provided testimony to the commission drafting regulations and is monitoring the roll out. ABC's impact has both shaped the regulations to be more responsive to the needs of the commercial real estate sector and has provided technical support to the commercial real estate sector as well.



Our Challenge for Sustainability led the formation of a new Green Business Engagement National Network. The Network consists of over 40 programs from around the country that run business engagement programs similar to ABC. The first national meeting of the network was planned and hosted by ABC here in Boston. Participants will continue to collaborate and share best practices through a webinar working group. The Challenge for Sustainability continues to grow, now impacting over 27 million square feet in Boston and the region. The scoring system in the

Challenge was changed to put greater weight on a participants greenhouse gas reductions, in order to better align with the City's goals of reducing emissions 25% by 2020.

ABC's Transportation Management Association also grew this past year, helping them to prevent more than 49,900 vehicle miles traveled. Additionally, member of the TMA, John Hancock, was nationally recognized when one of their employees won the 2013 Employee Transportation Champion award at the Association for Commuter Transportation International Conference.

Land Development Achievements



Boston has seen significant growth in the past few years; one of the neighborhoods with the highest amount of growth in the waterfront district in South Boston. ABC is managing a new \$1,000,000 Transportation Plan for the South Boston Waterfront. Partnering with the Massachusetts Convention Authority, Massport, MassDOT the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the

Boston Transportation Department. The Transportation Plan will assess the transportation demands of the neighborhood and propose the best way to accommodate future growth. ABC is working with state and city leaders and will establish a plan that will set near, next and long term goals and actions.

2014 Work Plan

You can see that 2013 was a busy year for us and 2014 is shaping up to be just as exciting. You can read more about our full work plan on the website, but here are a few major issues we will be tackling this year:

- **Transportation:** Monitoring the implementation of last year's transportation finance legislation, and also preparing for the growing ballot initiative campaign to repeal the gas tax inflation. Working with City and State officials as construction continues on major pieces of our transportation infrastructure. Some big projects we'll be monitoring include the Callahan Tunnel Reconstruction, the Longfellow Bridge, the Bowker Overpass, and the Commonwealth Avenue deck reconstruction over I-90. In all of these projects ABC will be involved developing and implementing mitigation strategies to manage the impact during construction.
- ABC is also helping Mayor Walsh in his transition effort with Rick Dimino, President & CEO, co-chairing the Transportation Transition Committee with Vivien Li of the Boston Harbor Association.
- **Land Development:** Working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority and other interested parties in development of an updated Chapter 91 Municipal Harbor Plan for the Downtown Waterfront.
- **Environment:** ABC will continue to work with city and state officials to advance sustainability strategies. We will continue to work on the Commercial Real Estate Working Group of the Green Ribbon Commission, providing leadership and guidance, as well as supporting the Climate Action Plans of the City of Boston, City of Cambridge, and the Commonwealth.

[Read more about our full work plan on our website.](#)

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