



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January– December 2017

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

### ALLSTON INTERCHANGE REFINEMENT

In July, A Better City completed further refinement of an All At-grade alternative for replacement of the I-90 viaduct and redesign of rail, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities adjacent to the interchange. We prepared and distributed a detailed report to various stakeholders and to MassDOT for incorporation in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Much of this report is incorporated in MassDOT's DEIR, referred to as the 3k-ABC alternative. We met twice with MassDOT representatives to discuss the content of our report and to verify their understanding of it. At the end of November, A Better City began review and preparation of detailed comments on the DEIR for the project and initiated a campaign to gain support for the All At-grade alternative.

### SEAPORT LEADERSHIP GROUP

A Better City is managing a group called the Seaport Leadership Group (SLG), which is a reorganization of the former "South Boston Business Leaders" working group. In the four months since this group was formed, the SLG is making significant progress to unify the voice of business community in the Seaport area and advance important transportation projects and management for this important economic center. The SLG consists of representatives from 14 businesses located in Boston Seaport area, with the top priorities being implementing recommendations from the 2015 South Boston Waterfront Sustainable Transportation Plan. The SLG made progress on funding, substantial progress on a list of the working group's priorities, and developing an RFP to find an operator of water ferry service from Lovejoy Wharf near North Station to Fan Pier in the South Boston Waterfront. The current plan is to see this pilot water ferry service implemented in the first half of 2018.

### MBTA SIGNAL WORK

A Better City successfully lobbied the MBTA to include Automatic Train Operations ("ATO") into its new Red Line and Orange Line vehicle overhaul after much research and advocacy by Glen Berkowitz. These vehicles are currently in testing and are expected to be put into full operation between 2018-2023. Regarding ATO, it has been publically acknowledged by senior MBTA officials that it will be included in the procurement contract, although that has yet to be issued. We will continue to monitor this important development.



## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

### GREENWAY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Better City has led the process to create a Greenway Business Improvement District (BID). Through regular meetings of the Abutter Committee, we prepared the legal documents and forms to define the Greenway BID's purpose, boundary lines, fee structure, and process for a successful partnership for oversight of future spending on the Greenway. We are currently receiving official endorsement sheets from property owners on this BID Improvement plan. We are currently building momentum and support for the Greenway BID and hope to official submit this proposal to the Boston City Council in the first quarter of 2018. If successful at City Council, the Greenway BID will become the only the second BID in Boston, and be the sixth active BID in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. More importantly, it would establish a long-term sustainable funding structure for the Rose Kennedy Greenway that will protect and enhance the park for the years ahead.

### CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PROPOSALS TO RETROFIT PHILLIP SQUARE SUBMITTED TO THE CITY OF BOSTON

In July, our project team completed and submitted two conceptual urban design proposals for a pedestrian plaza in Phillips Square (Chinatown) to the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). One of these proposals will be implemented as an interim plaza in spring 2018 through a partnership among the City of Boston, a Chinatown-based community organization (community partner), and Cresset Group (funder).

**CITY SIDEWALK CAFÉ REGULATIONS AMENDED** The Public Improvement Commission (PIC) approved an amendment to the City's sidewalk café regulations that would enable food service across the public way. A Better City recommended this amendment to the City during the early stages of this initiative. These changes were incorporated into the interim placemaking standards being developed by A Better City, Boston Transportation Department, and Utile as part of the Public Realm Planning Study for Go Boston 2030.

## ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY PRIORITIES

### RESEARCH AND EVENTS

In A Better City's role as facilitators of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission's Commercial Real Estate Working Group (CREWG), three publications were released in 2017: Sustainable Tenant Fit-Out and Improvement Guide; The Commercial Net Zero Energy Building Market in Boston; and Voluntary Resilience Standards. Two events were co-hosted with the Sustainable Buildings Initiative to launch these publications: a Landlord-Tenant Forum to increase communication between landlords and tenants resulting in increased energy efficiency and sustainability of office spaces; and a panel discussion, A Path



to Zero? The Role of Net Zero Energy Buildings in Boston focused on achieving net zero energy in Boston's commercial real estate buildings.

## **SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS INITIATIVE**

In 2017, A Better City's longstanding Challenge for Sustainability was rebranded as the Sustainable Buildings Initiative. Several peer-to-peer meetings and larger events were hosted throughout the year to educate participants on topics such as energy storage and climate resilience. Additionally, one-on-one meetings were completed with participants in Q1 and Q3 to discuss sustainability and resilience goals and projects; provide updates on A Better City's work; and connect participants with resources they may find helpful. Our Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience toolkits are in the process of being updated and expanded as an additional resource for participants. Finally, in 2017, A Better City closed out a grant from the Barr Foundation and began a three-year matching grant from the Devonshire Foundation, procured exclusively to support the Sustainable Buildings Initiative.

## **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND ADVOCACY**

Working with the Unit Advisory Committee, A Better City finalized its first-ever Energy and Environmental Policy Agenda. A Better City worked towards its policy goals by advocating for legislative change, providing expertise to government administrators (at the federal, state, and city levels), and ensuring its members are aware of and engaged with governmental opportunities. As part of our engagement efforts, A Better City co-hosted two webinars focused on energy and climate policy in Massachusetts, and proposed legislative changes to the Renewable Portfolio Standards. A Better City also joined two relevant coalitions in 2017: the Alliance for Clean Energy Solutions and the Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Coalition.

## **COLLABORATIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROCUREMENT**

Building off the success of our facilitation of a landmark Collaborative Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) among three of our members, A Better City held a workshop and individual meetings to explore replication of this initiative. The 2016 PPA continued to receive recognition and publicity in 2017, including two internationally-recognized awards: a Solar Power Portal Award for International Solar Project, and the Center for Resource Solutions' Green Power Leadership Award in the Market Development category.

## **UNIFIED PAYMENT SYSTEM IN THE COMMONWEALTH**

A Better City completed research in support of the recently announced new fare collection system for the MBTA. We provided a concept of operations document, initial system design documents, and a summary of meetings held with transportation planners, transit operators and TMAs. Results from these meetings were included in the development of the new fare collection system's vendor RFP so non-MBTA transport providers can be included in the future.