

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January – June 2026

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Completed the successful Built to Lead event series.** Over the fall and winter of 2025 and spring of 2026, A Better City hosted a series of five in-person panel events, [*Built to Lead: Lessons in Building Decarbonization and Resilience*](#). The series highlighted the climate leadership of A Better City member companies and institutions, showcased how they are decarbonizing and fortifying their building stock, uplifted innovative and replicable strategies, and identified challenges to implementation and scalability. Each panel had between four and six expert panelists. The first panel focused on decarbonization in existing buildings, the second on decarbonization in new construction, the third on new technologies and opportunities, the fourth on deconstruction and embodied carbon, and the fifth on lessons in building resilience. The events were well attended and resulted in increased member engagement, membership, and coordination with partners including those in the City and State.
- **Advanced the PowerCorpBOS building operations workforce development program and additional equitable workforce development pathways.** A Better City celebrated the [*graduation*](#) of the fourth cohort of PowerCorpsBOS building operators in March—thank you to building partners BXP, Related Beal, Equity Residential, and Trinity Management. The fifth cohort of PowerCorpsBOS Building Operators began in May—internships in large buildings will begin in October and November, and recruitment for building partners to host interns for this fifth cohort is underway. A Better City is offering additional pathways into large building operations as well, with Action for Equity’s mid-career HVAC&R training, and Franklin Cummings Tech’s HVAC&R training. As the retirement rate for current building operations employees is expected to increase significantly in the next five to eight years, A Better City is deepening member and partner engagement to develop solutions for staffing large buildings in the future. As such, A Better City’s Yve Torrie briefed A Better City membership in May and convened a focus group in June. In addition to the generous funding support received by the Linde Family and Barr Foundations, A Better City is exploring grant opportunities with Action for Equity and C&W Services to accelerate the transition into these building operations pathways and provide longer term support for trainees and employees.
- **Deepened research and coalition building to develop heat resilience solutions.** Last summer, the B-COOL partnership expanded its temperature sensor research to evaluate shade interventions at bus stops, playgrounds, and an outdoor construction site to provide evidence for why built shade should be considered a key heat intervention, both for short-term heat emergency response and long-term heat resilience. A Better City and partners released the [*Shade Effect report*](#) in March, convened the [*Value of Shade webinar*](#) in May,

and presented at the Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI) conference in April. Additionally, the Community Adaptations to City Heat (CATCH) project, led by Boston University School of Public Health to research heat interventions and policy impacts on health across Boston, New Orleans, and Phoenix, completed its Year one accomplishments in June. A Better City and partners presented research findings at the American Geophysical Union conference in New Orleans in December 2025, the National Energy and Utility Affordability conference in Seattle in May, and the CATCH partners released an initial draft of the [Urban Heat Action and Policy Database](#) in June. Also, A Better City participated in the Barr Foundation's Heat Community of Practice, which co-developed a [Heat Resilience Policy Agenda](#) that was released in June. A Better City's heat work is generously supported by the Barr Foundation, The Boston Foundation, the Wellcome Trust, and the Paul & Edith Babson Foundation.

- **Continued leadership in shaping smarter climate policies at the city level, including BERDO/BEUDO regulations and the 2030 Climate Action Plan.** A Better City facilitated a BERDO Commercial Real Estate Working Group in February that identified pain points on purchasing MA Class I RECs for BERDO compliance, successfully advocating for regulatory changes to extend MA Class I REC generation and retirement deadlines by six months. In Cambridge, A Better City has continued to leverage member expertise in the development of BEUDO regulations and procedures. A Better City submitted extensive comments on the City of Boston [Climate Action Plan for 2030](#), which was released in April and includes opportunities for A Better City leadership on building policy, extreme heat, coastal resilience, and more. A Better City continues to serve on the [Boston Tree Alliance](#), and Boston's first [Area Air Quality Summit](#) in May featured work from A Better City members. In late July, A Better City will be convening a briefing with the City of Boston and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the draft [Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study](#) to identify potential strategies to manage flood risk, including projects that would be eligible for up to 65% federal funding.
- **Continued leadership in shaping smarter climate policies at the state level, including state building codes, energy affordability and grid transformation, and water quality.** In 2026, A Better City submitted multiple comment letters on proposed legislation before the Legislature, including Governor Healey's energy affordability bill and the Mass Ready Act or \$3 billion environmental bond bill for climate resilience. A Better City met with Senator Barrett's office regarding the energy affordability bill in March and discussed the need for Mass Save specific to commercial and industrial energy efficiency programs, which in turn help to minimize peak demand and avoid costly peaker plant usage in Massachusetts. A Better City submitted comments to the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) in June in response to modest stretch and specialized energy code changes, highlighting comments made by members at a January focus group with DOER and resulting one-on-one meetings. A Better City is also tracking conversations with the Municipal Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and local municipalities on proposed re-classification of the Charles, Mystic, and Alewife Brook. Finally, A Better City continues to serve on the Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee and Energy Transformation Advisory Board and related working groups.

- **Recognized with 2026 Climate Leader Awards.** A Better City was excited to celebrate the [Boston Climate Leader Awardees](#), where Yve Torrie, A Better City's Director of Climate, Energy, & Resilience, received the Emerald Skyline Award for her leadership in decarbonizing Boston's large new and existing buildings by amplifying the voices of the business community in the development and implementation of building decarbonization policies, and in helping to establish and implement the PowerCorpsBOS building operations training program. In addition, many A Better City members and partners were recognized for their outstanding leadership: Bob Biggio, Boston Medical Center; Norman B. Leventhal Honoree Mela Bush; Dr. Patricia Fabián, Boston University; PowerCorpsBOS partner Franklin Cummings Tech; Mass General Brigham; Museum of Science and Mystic River Watershed Association/Wicked Hot Boston and Wicked Hot Mystic; New England Aquarium; Katie Dafforn, Stone Living Lab & UMass Boston; and Wharf District Council.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Maintained record funding to support the MBTA and statewide transportation programs.** One of A Better City's top legislative priorities is achieving an even distribution of Fair Share surtax funding between transportation and education programs. This year during the state budget process, we saw tremendous success at the State House, considering the uncertainty with the national economy and pressures in the state budget for non-transportation programs. In June, Governor Healey signed the "Fair Share surtax" supplemental budget that provides almost \$600 million to the MBTA. This represents the second year in a row where the legislature passed a supplemental budget that delivered a larger percentage of the Fair Share funding for transportation than for education programs, which helps to move toward a more equitable balance between transportation and education. The funding also continues the record levels of state support for the MBTA operating system needs. Also in June, the Governor signed a transportation bond bill that maintains the MassDOT statewide road and bridge program and recent \$100 million increase to the Chapter 90 program for municipally owned transportation infrastructure.
- **Successfully advocated for expanded transit service and new bar and restaurant options for Summer 2026.** A Better City worked with officials in state government and the City of Boston to offer new restaurant options and expanded transit service to meet the unique events in Summer 2026. A Better City successfully advocated for the passage of a new law that enabled cities and towns to opt into a temporary pilot program allowing public alcohol consumption in designated outdoor districts and extending bar service hours by one hour. Beginning in January, A Better City was a leading voice in support of the MBTA's efforts to expand commuter rail service to Foxborough for the World Cup, establishing the capacity to move up to 20,000 passengers per game, which is more than double the capacity of previous special event trains. These strategies helped Boston shine during this historic summer, boosting the economy and reinforcing Massachusetts' reputation as a premier destination for major events, conventions, and summer tourism.
- **Continued to champion the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project.** A Better City has continued to champion this transformative project, serving on the official project Task Force and providing advice on critical design issues. In collaboration with other stakeholders, A Better City is formulating strategies that will reaffirm support for advancing this project and evaluating finance methods while MassDOT takes a step back to review the cost of the project and engineering decisions. The position of A Better City is that none of the benefits of the project should be sacrificed in the name of cost reductions. A Better City has contributed recommendations on the scope of these analyses as well as potential early actions that could benefit the project area in the near term.
- **Supported strategic investments to improve and expand MBTA service.** In the first half of 2026, A Better City continued to be a leading voice in advocating for the improvement and expansion of our regional transportation system, testifying frequently before the MBTA and MassDOT Boards, and engaging constructively with leaders in the Healey-Driscoll

Administration, Wu Administration, and legislature. A Better City provided extensive comment letters on a variety of topics, including the MBTA FY27-31 Capital Investment Plan, systemwide State of Good Repair, and climate resilience planning, new transit improvement projects in the capital pipeline, and funding for water ferry transportation. In addition to funding issues, A Better City reaffirmed its support for several cornerstone MBTA capital projects, including the North Station Draw One Bridge Replacement Project, Green Line Transformation Core Capacity Program, Arborway Bus Facility, and the Widett Circle Layover Project. Additionally, A Better City also continues to participate in the MBTA Policy Development Working Group, reflecting member perspectives and expertise.

- **Advocated for improved Commuter Rail service and transit-oriented development.** A Better City has continued to advocate for the near-term investments and long-term planning needed to transform the MBTA Commuter Rail into a more reliable, more rapid, and ultimately electrified Regional Rail system. Key efforts included endorsing critical infrastructure projects like the North Station Draw One Bridge replacement and electric fleet procurements for the Fairmount Line and Providence Line and publishing timely analysis on MBTA Communities Law compliance to drive transit-oriented development. Additionally, A Better City hosted an in-person roundtable with MBTA leadership in June to launch the agency's new Regional Rail Modernization Plan.
- **Advanced the *Transportation Dividend* report refresh.** A Better City launched an effort to refresh the frequently cited [*The Transportation Dividend: Transit Investments and the Massachusetts Economy*](#) report, which found that the MBTA generates \$11.4 billion per year in economic benefits, representing a five-time return on investment. The new analysis is updating the core findings of the report and considering the additional impacts on jobs, spending, and development to provide a more complete picture of the economic impact of the MBTA on the region. This analysis is generously supported by Arnold Ventures, the Barr Foundation, The Boston Foundation, and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. With results expected in the summer of 2026, the updated analysis will drive A Better City's ongoing advocacy for further investment in the transit system.
- **Led efforts to safely regulate and expand the use of micromobility solutions.** In 2025, A Better City's Scott Mullen served on the [*Massachusetts Department of Transportation Special Commission on Micromobility*](#) to develop recommendations to expand the use of micromobility vehicles like bicycles, scooters, e-bikes to help achieve shared goals for increasing mobility options, emission reductions, and economic vitality. In February 2026, MassDOT [*released*](#) the commission's final report, and in May, Governor Healey filed the Ride Safe Act, which combines several of the recommendations from the report into a comprehensive bill with a tiered classification regime based on speed. Scott Mullen briefed the MassDOT Board in February, briefed the A Better City Board in March, and [*testified*](#) before the Transportation Committee in support of the Ride Safe Act in May.

- **Expanded the Guided Ride series.** A Better City launched the second season of the [Guided Ride Series](#) in April with a regional billboard campaign, an influencer-led ride with the Streetscape Curator, and a ramped up social media cadence with custom-made video, music, and marketing collateral from three local designers. In addition, the self-serve portal through the Ride with GPS platform now includes routes from partner group, Boston Café Bikers.
- **Secured grants to expand Allston Brighton shuttle service.** The A Better City Transportation Management Association (TMA) team convened Allston Brighton shuttle partners in April to discuss shuttle expansion plans. The City of Boston secured a Federal Highway Administration Grant that will help expand the route and support free weekday service from 7 AM to 7 PM for the public. Additionally, A Better City secured MassDOT funds to provide Saturday service beginning in the fall.
- **Expanded TMA programming and new geospatial analysis tools.** Throughout the first half of 2026, the TMA Team has continued to enhance tools and programming for TMA members, including a new Agile Mile ride matching platform thanks to a MassDOT grant, and an expanded Bike Clinic series that has already logged 18 events. Additionally, the TMA launched several high-profile mapping and analysis projects to identify mobility options for higher education partners, and to identify potential commuter rail service changes to support hospital partners.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

- **Upgraded the Greenway parks and enhanced winter activities in the Greenway corridor.** The Greenway Business Improvement District (BID) partnered with MassDOT on a construction project that transforms the Wharf District parks into brighter, safer, and more welcoming places. This [project](#), which was completed before the summer tourism season, added new park lighting, accessible pathways, and lighting for the large public art mural in Dewey Square. The BID Board of Directors previously supported funding in the winter for winter lighting displays in the North End and two days of free rides on the Winter Ferris Wheel. The BID is focused on ways to deliver a high-quality experience in the Greenway year-round, and these projects continue to make the Greenway one of downtown Boston's greatest assets for office workers, neighborhood residents, and tourists alike.
- **Advanced City of Boston planning and development priorities.** A Better City has continued to engage 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. Priorities include new development incentives, continued permitting reforms, expanded office to residential conventions, and new zoning to support sustainable growth. Additionally, in March, A Better City hosted an in-person [event](#) under the Quincy Market Rotunda to explore the future of festival marketplaces like Faneuil Hall with Mayor Wu and a panel of international experts.
- **Deepened engagement in the City of Everett to support ongoing and future transportation improvements and economic development.** A Better City is working with members and partners to assess the transportation infrastructure investments needed to enable future development in Everett, including Encore Boston Harbor, the Docklands Innovation District, and New England Revolution Stadium. Transportation improvements under consideration to this area include a new commuter rail stop, pedestrian bridges, and improvements at Sullivan Square, in addition to the long-sought extension of the Silver Line from Chelsea, through Everett, to Sullivan Square. Several transportation initiatives are underway for bus, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements along Lower Broadway and continuing into Charlestown on Alford Street, Sullivan Square, and Rutherford Avenue. A Better City aims to shape the planning and development of transportation infrastructure to meet current community needs and to catalyze transformational development.

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS

- **Organized an extensive calendar of programming and publications to engage and educate our members and other stakeholders.** In the first half of 2026 A Better City hosted 21 member [events](#), three Executive Committee Meetings, and two Board Meetings—one featuring MBTA General Manager and Interim Transportation Secretary Phil Eng and the other featuring a fireside chat with the Boston Globe’s Shirley Leung and Jon Chesto. Programming highlights include the popular and impactful *Built to Lead* series of in-person panel events to showcase member leadership in building decarbonization and resilience, as well as the informative *Summer Spotlight* webinar series featuring Meet Boston’s Martha Sheridan, the MBTA’s Erika Mazza, and Conventures’ Dusty Rhodes. A Better City also hosted an in-person event under the Quincy Market Rotunda to explore the future of festival marketplaces like Faneuil Hall with Mayor Wu and a panel of international experts. Additional events included the Museum of Science Train Exhibit Brunch Event, Emerging Leaders Spring Kickoff with the Greenway, Commuter Rail Modernization Roundtable with MBTA leadership, focus groups on building codes and large building operations staffing, briefings on the *Shade Effect* and micromobility commission reports, and a new member orientation breakfast. Additionally, A Better City published 30 [blog](#) posts, 23 email blasts, and two reports.
- **Continued successful member retention and new member recruitment efforts.** A Better City continues to have strong member retention, as well as focus on strategic new member recruitment to broaden our representation across growing and representative sectors of Boston’s economy. In the first six months of 2026, A Better City welcomed CannonDesign, Environmental Health and Engineering, Gilbane, and Metropolis.io to our board.
- **Kicked off preparation for the 2026 Norman B. Leventhal Excellence in City Building Awards.** Named in memory of A Better City’s founding Chair, the Norman B. Leventhal Excellence in City Building Awards recognize the leaders and innovators who have made significant contributions to our built environment. On Monday, December 7, 2026, at the Boston Harbor Hotel, we look forward to again celebrating visionaries and leaders in Boston. Our next slate of awardees will be announced in mid-summer, and you can learn more about sponsorship opportunities [here](#).

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

- **Expanded grant development efforts.** In the first half of 2026, A Better City continued grant development efforts to diversify funding sources and identify new strategic opportunities to leverage the organization's expertise. A Better City is grateful for the support of Arnold Ventures, the Paul and Edith Babson Foundation, the Barr Foundation, the Boston Foundation, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Green Ribbon Commission, the Linde Family Foundation, and the Forest Foundation. Additionally, A Better City's Allston Brighton Transportation Management Association received a MassDOT grant to expand the existing Allston Shuttle service to include Saturdays which will complement the weekday service already in place.
- **Welcomed five summer interns.** Beginning in the spring of 2026, A Better City was fortunate to host five [summer interns](#) to help advance critical transportation, climate, and land use work. Carson Douglas and Luis Hernandez joined A Better City through the new Boston University Launchpad Program for first-year students. Additionally, A Better City welcomed Joanna Gentle, a rising junior at Williams College through the Williams Alumni Sponsored Internship Program; Lizzie Higgins, a rising senior at Mount Holyoke College through the Yale Law School Liman Undergraduate Fellowship; and Emma Larsen, a rising senior at Smith College through the Forest Foundation Summer Fellowship.