



B

CITY of BOSTON

BLUE HILL AVE

Update on Action Plan and grant opportunity

June 7, 2021

Mayor Kim Janey



Overview

Process Update

- Pause for reflection
- Better Coordination
- Engage youth

Action Plan Recap

- Why change Blue Hill Ave?
- Safety, Mobility, Public Realm
- Short Term Actions
- Longer Term Vision and Action Plan

Opportunity: REACH Grant

- Funding Opportunity
- Basic Elements
- Timetable
- Community input

PROCESS UPDATE: RELATED CITY of BOSTON PROJECTS



Planning and
Development Agency



Neighborhood Development



Parks and Recreation



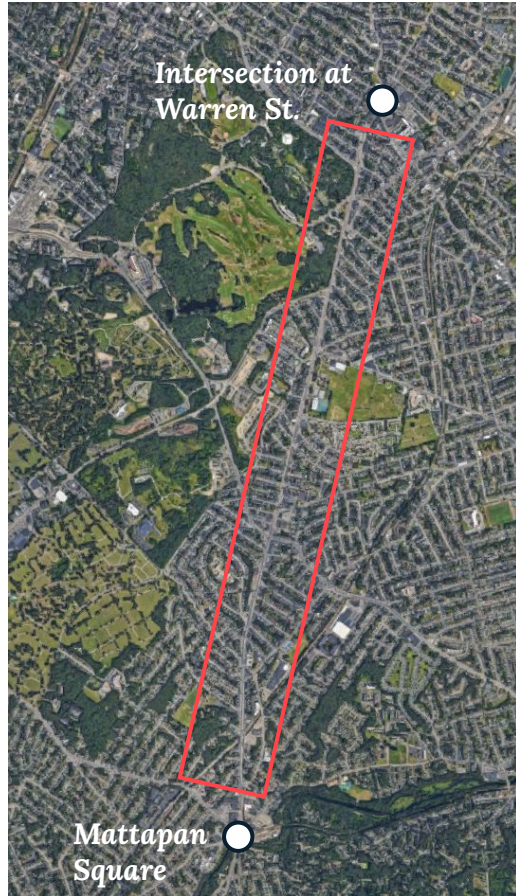
Public Works



Transportation

- **BPDA PLAN: Mattapan**
Community-lead plan for Mattapan's future growth
- **DND Blue Hill Ave Action Plan**
Spark economic development, business growth opportunities, and foster the entrepreneurial spirit in the community
- **Boston Parks Franklin Park Masterplan**
Crafting a vision for the upcoming \$28 million investment
- **Cummins Highway**
Reconstruction to improve safety and access for all transportation modes
- **Warren Street**
Working to reach transit priority goals to combat delays and create safer access
- **American Legion Highway**
Creating slower, safer streets

Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Vision and Action Plan



- **Project Extent**
Blue Hill Avenue: Warren Street at Grove Hall to Mattapan Square

-
- **Connecting Projects**
BTD is currently leading projects along Warren Street and Cummins Highway

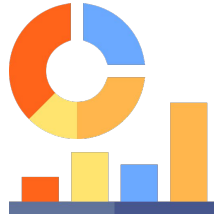
BPDA is leading a planning effort with community groups, DCR, MAPC and Milton focused on greenway connections

WHY CHANGE? BLUE HILL AVE - BY THE NUMBERS



20,000

Weekday Daily Bus Riders



52%

Portion of peak-period roadway users on buses



25 mins

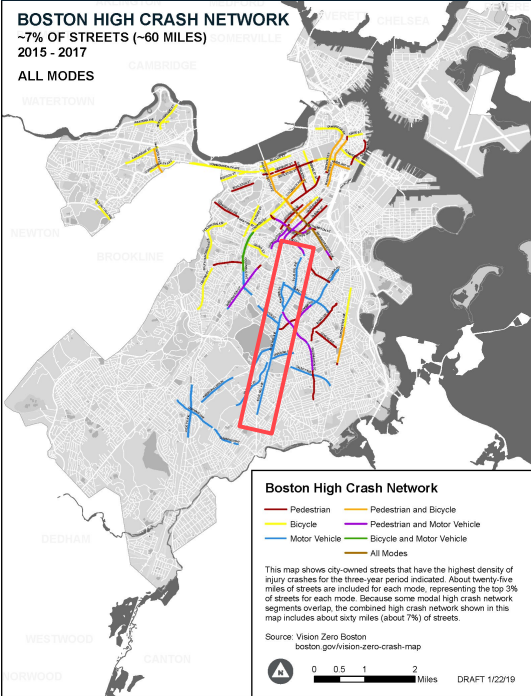
Peak-period bus riders are experiencing delays of up to 25 minutes in either direction

WHY CHANGE?

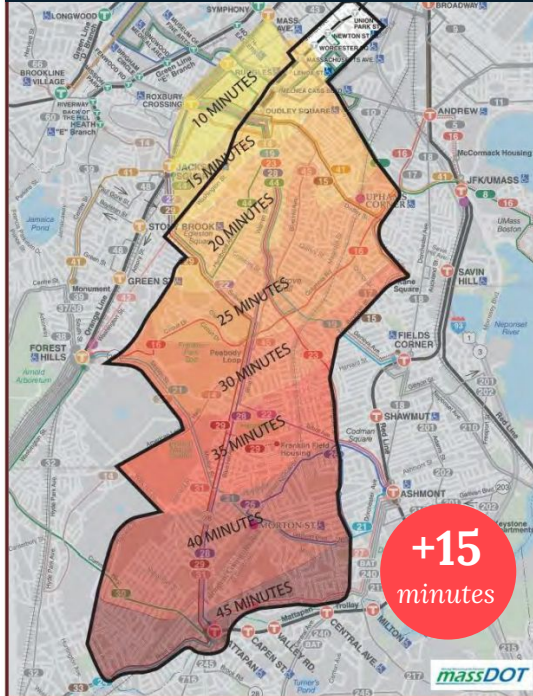
Safety Concerns

BOSTON HIGH CRASH NETWORK
~7% OF STREETS (~60 MILES)
2015 - 2017

ALL MODES



Travel Time Inequities



Community Priority

VISION People's Voice I Boston Today Goals and Targets **ACTION PLAN** People's Voice II Boston in 2030 Projects and Policies

Crosswalk

Mattapan to LMA Rapid Bus

Faster transit connections to the medical district from southern Boston

Project Score

- Access 1
 - Safety 1
 - Reliability
 - Sustainability/Resiliency 2
 - Governance
 - Access 2
 - Safety 2
 - Affordability
 - Sustainability/Resiliency 1
- #19 in weighted Boston only public voting

Project Description

A new transit line with high-quality stops, signal priority, all-door boarding, and some exclusive lanes will create direct transit connections for residents of Mattapan and southwest Dorchester to jobs and medical care in Roxbury, Mission Hill, and the Longwood Medical and Academic Area. This involves a rail-like bus service operating where excess roadway width exists today on one of several potential corridors that will be determined in conjunction with the community. Service would be high capacity and high frequency and could interline with the JFK/UMass to LMA rapid bus corridor (p176) and even the West Station to LMA connection (p203), connecting together southern Boston, the LMA, and Beacon Yards. Future upgrades could separate and structure service initiated as ridership grows.



Implementation

Approximate Cost: \$11 million for design and construction
Potential Funding Sources: City capital budget

Benefits and Issues Addressed

This investment will support economic opportunity along a corridor with heavy bus ridership but unreliable service, while—depending on the alignment—potentially improving other connections that lead into Dudley Square and Downtown as well. Consistent connections from this part of the city are in high demand, as shown by the high ridership on the 95 bus. Poorly served regional routes in the area, such as the 103, have been back out of service with a high-quality station.

Go Boston 2030 Goals:

- Expand access
- Improve reliability
- Enhance safety

to the city's regional roads major in the government and neighborhoods and neighborhoods in the region (e.g., through industry in Mattapan) to improve the region's transportation infrastructure that can



WHAT WE HEARD

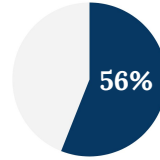
BTD SURVEY FINDINGS

589
responses

71%
locals

Respondents who live in ZIP codes that BHA touches directly

MOBILITY

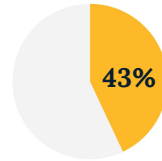


reported feeling that **drivers travel too fast along BHA**

Double Parking

is a major cause of chaos + congestion

SAFETY

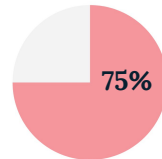


reported being, or knowing someone, in a **crash** on BHA

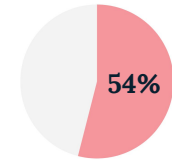
Morton Street

Most frequently listed unsafe intersection

PUBLIC REALM



want **more trees and greenery** along the corridor



want **real-time bus arrival displays**

LIVABLESTREETS ALLIANCE ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS



7

Engagement
Events

200

Community
Voices

PUBLIC REALM

Most frequently desired enhancements:

1. Real-time Bus Arrival Info. Display
2. Better Street Lighting
3. More Street Art

“I want to see more of my neighborhood’s history along Blue Hill through art.”

MOBILITY

Top challenges to traveling along Blue Hill Avenue:

1. Overcrowded buses
2. Inconvenient weekend bus schedules
3. Unreliable bus service
4. Poor bus etiquette
5. Vehicle traffic/congestions
6. Poor road conditions

Strong desire for **bike infrastructure, bus lanes, and for every bus stop along BHA to have a shelter.**

“Nothing would improve my BHA experience more than a lower bus fare.”

MATTAPAN SQUARE - sidewalk comfort and accessibility

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Mattapan Square deserves a design that ensures the **safe, comfortable movement of pedestrians**, and that builds on existing assets such as **street trees, lighting and seating** to create an **enhanced pedestrian experience**

MATTAPAN SQUARE - access and identity



Mattapan Square should feel safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities to walk, ride a bike, and take transit. It's design should reflect the arts, culture and history of the place and the people who live, work, go to school, gather, and enjoy being part of the Mattapan community.

Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan

The Blue Hill Ave. Transportation Action Plan seeks to *improve quality of life* for corridor users in *partnership with local residents* to *address inequities* and *reimagine how the corridor functions*



SHORT TERM ACTIONS: SAFETY, MOBILITY

Completed & On-Going



56% of respondents reported feeling that drivers travel too fast along Blue Hill Ave

- **Speed Feedback Sign Installation**
Southbound on Blue Hill Ave. at Walk Hill
- **Crosswalk and Bus Stop Enhancements**
Throughout the corridor and neighboring communities
- **Improved signal timing - bus, pedestrian priority**
At major signals along Blue Hill Ave.
- **Bike Box**
At the intersection of Warren Street and Blue Hill Ave.
- **Curbside Regulation Changes**
To better serve current curb uses and minimize double parking

SHORT TERM ACTIONS: PUBLIC REALM

Completed & On-going



- **New Benches**
Introduced to Mattapan Square and along the corridor
 - **Expand the City's PaintBox Program**
Hired local artists to paint city utility boxes along Blue Hill Ave
 - **Replace the Banners**
Along the median in Mattapan Square
 - **Murals in publicly visible locations**
Add to the variety of visual experience and art along the corridor
-
- **Sidewalk Murals**
In front of the Grove Hall and Mattapan Libraries
 - **Replace Existing Trash Cans**
Along the corridor with cans that have lids and recycling containers
 - **Continue to expand the City's PaintBox Program**



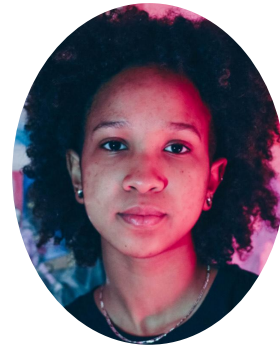
Mushen Kieta



Wilton Tejeda



Gary Chen



Ananda Toulon



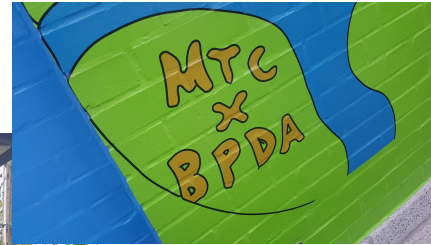
Mattaya Fitts



Murals in publicly visible locations

BPDA's PLAN: Mattapan Public Art Project has sponsored murals at the Mattapan Teen Center and at the William E. Carter Post. Other public art is being planned in coordination with BTD and the Office of Arts and Culture.

Mattapan Teen Center, by local teen artists



In the pipeline:

- **Mural by artist Jeremy Harrison at the William E. Carter Post**
- **Mural in Grove Hall**

Future Grove Hall mural site



An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in Boston, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, trees, and a wide road with a median. The image is overlaid with a red square in the top left and a black banner at the bottom.

B

CITY of BOSTON

LONGER TERM VISION

LONGER TERM VISION GOALS



- *Prioritize public and active transportation*
- *Provide safe, inclusive connections*
- *Rejuvenate the corridor*
- *Serve the needs and centers people who live, work and gather here now*

LONGER TERM VISION: BICYCLING



- **Consistent, protected bicycle connections**
- **Physically separated from motor vehicles & parking**
- **Easily legible with clear signage and green lane markings where needed**
- **Bicycle signals where needed**
- **More greenways and better connections to them**

LONGER TERM VISION: TREES



**Median Beautification
Concept**

3 out of 4 survey respondents want a greener BHA.

Additional planting will be explored at remaining medians and sidewalk locations



**Street Trees
Protected**

Payette, Greater Grove Hall Main Streets



LONGER TERM VISION: PUBLIC REALM

“I want to see more of my neighborhood’s history along Blue Hill through art.”



- *BHA doubles as a critical traffic corridor and a public art gallery*
- *Public realm serves all and represents the community’s identity*
- *Urban tree canopy is maintained and expanded to elevate local air quality and improve experiential quality along the roadway*

Safety, Accessibility, Artistic Representation, Green Space

LONGER TERM VISION: CENTER RUNNING BUS LANES

54% of survey respondents desire real-time bus arrival information along the corridor

- **Reliable, Efficient Service**
- Off-board Fare Collection
- Real-time Bus Info. Display
- Shelter Protection
- Bus Signal Priority
- Maximum Bus Travel Time Savings from Center-Running



25

minutes

Rush hour bus travel time between Mattapan Station and Nubian Square



422

parking spots

Amount of parking maintain between Babson in the south and Warren in the north



SELF-

enforcing

Due to the location of the bus lanes away from the parking lane, this concept is less plagued by double-parking and is largely self-enforcing.

LONGER TERM VISION: CENTER RUNNING BUS LANES

Example: Bus Priority and pedestrian safety improvements on Columbus Ave (in construction)

Before: Shared lanes encourage speeding during off-peak hours and delay buses during peak hours



Before: Bus riders wait on narrow sidewalk with no place to sit



After



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: RAISE GRANT



- **FEDERAL RAISE GRANT: Up to \$25 million**
Center running bus lanes would be competitive
The City would apply, with input from MBTA
APPLICATION DUE IN JULY
- **City Capital Funding**
We have dedicated funding for this effort and will prioritize this project in budget processes moving forward
- **MBTA Coordination**
Prioritizing funding towards this project



B

CITY of BOSTON

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION



Mayor Kim Janey