Transit Advisory Committee
January 2026
Abbreviated meeting summary

Attendance

Members	***Present*** (14)
	In-person participation (3): Matt Martin, Andrew Zhou, Matthew Kramer
	Remote participation (11): Analisa Bhatia, Arthur Strang, Craig Tateronis, Devin Chausse, Jim Gascoigne, Matthew Mccominskey, Melissa Zampitella, Miles Robinson, Nick Lessin, Patrick Delaney, Sandhya Ramakrishnan
	Absent (7): Bill McAvinney, Clyve Lawrence, David Rangaviz, Ian Hatch, Katherine Rafferty, Pete Septoff, Jackson Moore-Otto
City staff (1)	Andrew Reker (DOT-Transportation Planning); Fernando Aguiluz (DOT-Street Management)
Others (2)	Members of the public (2)

Note: DOT = Department of Transportation

Welcome and Committee Introductions

Matthew Kramer (MK) opened the meeting at 6:04 PM by welcoming members and presenters to the meeting. MK went over meeting etiquette, an overview of the physical room and space, and gave instructions for members of the public joining remotely and in-person. MK reviewed the purpose of the meeting, the code of conduct, and read through the agenda for the meeting.

Andrew Zhou (AZ) took roll – 14 members were present, 7 were absent.

MK asked the committee to approve the last meeting's minutes: 13 voted yes, 1 abstained.

Presentation – Bus Delay and Unreliability Study Background

MK handed over to Andrew Reker (AR) to present on the bus delay and unreliability background study.

AR explained the importance of studying and researching bus travel patterns in the city. He noted that the city prioritizes travel by public transit, street safety and minimizing emissions from transportation. By studying bus routes in Cambridge, the city can prioritize where to put bus infrastructure and allocate bus resources. The city has conducted similar studies in the past and will be conducting an update in 2026. AR mentions that there are good reasons to update this study: a lot of changes to the city's road network, especially the Cycling Safety Ordinance, have

impacted the city and the bus network since the last study. The study assigns a “grade” for the reliability of the city’s road network for buses.

AR explained the methodology of the study:

- the city uses public passenger data from the MBTA to calculate different metrics about bus transit by route and time of day including:
    - median travel times
    - variation in travel time
    - average passenger count
- Median travel time is used to prevent outliers from specific events such as construction from impacting the overall data.
- The city can then compare travel data with less busy and non-peak hours in the day to give better insight on:
    - delay (median vs minimum)
    - variability
    - how many people are affected by this change
- This information is used to calculate a grade for each stop-to-stop segment
- Finally, the grades are turned into charts and diagrams to isolate and identify “locations of concern” for the city to improve in the future

The city has observed that dedicated bus lanes and priority signaling have noticeably improved transit performance, so the city wants to use those as interventions in locations of concern identified by the study.

AR then went over the locations of concern that were identified in previous studies. While many of them were expected, it was helpful to have concrete data to confirm anecdotal evidence. Some of these locations include:

- Mass Ave north of Harvard Sq.
- All crossings with the Charles River
    - JFK Street/Anderson Bridge
    - Western Ave and River St
    - BU Bridge
    - Mass Ave/Harvard Bridge
- All major business districts and transfer locations
    - Harvard Sq
    - Central Sq
    - Kendall Sq
    - Inman Sq

AR noted that other locations have been identified, but because of route changes, especially near Alewife Brook Parkway and Fresh Pond Parkway, the prior analysis may no longer be correct. AR showed a map of the locations of concern but noted that some data about the Alewife Brook Parkway was “wonky”.

AR then opened the floor to questions. He then showed the original data tables from the most recent study, noting that the tables were broken up by AM Peak, Inbound/Outbound, and PM Peak, Inbound/Outbound. The study found that the 83 has some difficulty around Mass Ave, but while multiple stop-to-stop options have a grade of C, none are problematic enough to be noted

as a “location of concern.” Because the study only considered the median ridership, and the 83 is an infrequent route, there was less available data.

AR then showed data for the 66. This only included data for Cambridge, and the study did not reflect that the 66 now uses the bus tunnel. The map shows that the 66 leading into Boston was more of concern than the 66 coming into Cambridge.

Devin Chausse asked to see the 69. The map for this route indicated slowdowns approaching Prospect from the East, and moving in and out of the ends at Harvard and Lechmere. Andrew Zhou asked to see the 1. For this route, locations of concern included the Mass Ave Bridge, MIT, and Central. AR noted that this aligns with his experience, especially that the PM was worse than the AM. AR mentions that while they do not have the analysis, some buses experience unique difficulties on weekends.

TAC members had the following comments and questions. Presenter responses are below the question in italic text

How are passenger counts made?

> *Buses are equipped with an infrared detection system to tell when and where users have entered and left the bus. This data is also usable by the public. Regional transit authorities also have similar systems, but, may not have made these data widely available.*

Are the locations of concern based on delay, or are they weighted by passenger use and variance?

> *Low scores (D/E/F) are usually determined by a combination of two or three of all three factors. Bus routes with only one low “ranking” factor will not typically cause a D, E, or F score by itself.*

Is Route 2 included?

> *No, when the study was conducted there were no stop segments in Cambridge.*

Does the study indicate where we should be including more signal priority?

> *The study only shows locations of concern, but not necessarily what to do in that location. Signal priority is something that the city can consider for these locations. There are also many other tools that the city can use to assist transit, such as eliminating left turns at specific intersections.*

The map shows arrows, which indicates directionality is important. Some of the locations serve two different bus routes, does that indicate the opposite direction does not have as many issues?

> *This is important – the study has noted that some routes use the same segment but have two different scores for that specific route.*

Is the AM/PM information also going to impact the outcomes of the study?

> *The past study considered AM/PM information; but, because of significant changes both to city roads and bus routes, there is a need to update the study.*

Why is the 83 bus on Rindge not seen as a location of concern?

> *I don't disagree, as someone who has had to use that – I can bring up the 83 data to see if something was there, but there is some data that is a little wonky due to buses leaving the road network.*

Can we also look at the 66?

> *Yes.*

Is there anywhere to show the route-by-route data publicly?

> *While the locations of concern are publicly shared, the actual data isn't fully published to the public. If members of the committee ask for it, we can share it.*

How is the future study considering the impacts of the Bus Network Redesign, and is it changing the city's analysis and recommendations?

> *The study will be conducted once we have some of the newer data, which includes changes from the Bus Network Redesign, processed. We should be able to get enough data for locations of concern in places where we already have existing bus service. The study will unfortunately not be able to get data from locations where MBTA buses do not currently run.*

A member requested that the study also consider EZRide data because EZRide's capabilities and use has increased significantly since the last study.

A member of the public asked: Is there one factor that is prioritized?

> *All three factors are considered equally.*

Discussion – Future TAC Activities

MK then opened a discussion about scheduling and committee plans for 2026.

MK listed proposed future site visits, such as Broadway/Cambridge bus stops, Mass Ave north of Harvard, Red Line stations, and the Ames Street bus shelter

One member suggested the William Reid Overpass and the rotary connecting to the BU Bridge.

Another member agreed with this suggestion and noted that the future redesign of that overpass might also be a consideration for a future joint meeting.

MK noted that the dates for the site visits have not been selected. He also encouraged committee members to send any other ideas to the committee officers or Andrew Reker.

City, MBTA, and TAC Updates

AR noted that the map/slides had an error and that there are safety improvements going on in Cambridge St and Broadway (the chart shows Cambridge St where Broadway should be)

Members had the following questions:

Could the committee provide official support for bus priority projects on Charles River crossings, or what would the process for that be?

Someone needs to make a motion, then the committee needs to vote to send a letter and agree on how that advocacy letter could be constructed. There could be a subcommittee created and the subcommittee could deliver its findings to the larger committee, and then the committee can move forward based on those results.

MK asked if anyone else would be interested in joining a subcommittee?

Matt Martin expressed interest

Devin Chausse expressed interest

Miles Robinson expressed interest

AR noted that an ad-hoc committee does not need to be large .

MK made a motion to create a sub-committee to investigate and draft a letter regarding bus priority for Charles River crossings and Alewife. AZ held a vote – 12 members voted yes.

One member said that it would be useful for committee members to discuss and report on transportation locations of concern and opportunities in their own individual neighborhoods.

MK agreed that this would be an excellent idea.

AS added that this could be on a voluntary basis, and individuals could bring this information forward to the committee.

Melissa Zampitella asked for a Can you refresh my memory as to the Shuttle and Transit Gap Study?

- AR: I can send that information to you, yes.

AR gave a brief overview of the upcoming plans for the Bus Network Redesign and current statuses, including changes that were made during the winter holiday:

- 64 extended to Kendall all week long
    - AR said that this is the first time the MBTA has provided Kendall and East Broadway on Sunday with bus service in history
- 69 improved service all week long
- 66/71/73/77 now upgraded to 15-minute headways all week long
- 71/73 are piloting battery electric buses

Public comment

MK opens the meeting to public comment.

No members of the public have a comment.

MK closes the meeting at 7:13 PM.

Version Information

Draft: 2026-1-8
Approval: _