

Transit Advisory Committee

July 2026

Abbreviated meeting summary

Attendance

Members **Present** (9)

In-person participation (0): No one attended in person

Remote participation (9): Ian Hatch, Pete Septoff, Matt Martin, Miles Robinson, Matthew Mccomiskey, Matthew Kramer (Vice Chair), Katherine Rafferty, Craig Tateronis, Arthur Strang

Absent (11): Bill McAvinney, Jackson Moore-Otoo (Chair), Jim Gascoigne, Melissa Zampitella, Devin Chausse, Annalisa Bhatia, Sandhya Ramakrishnan, Patrick Delaney, Nick Lessin, Clyve Lawrence, Andrew Zhou (Secretary)

City staff (2) Andy Reker (DOT), Marcella Cannatti (DOT)

Others (5) Members of the public

Notes: DOT = Department of Transportation

Welcome and Committee Introductions

Matthew Kramer (MK) opened the meeting and explained that the meeting agenda and location had shifted due to low anticipated attendance. Marcella Cannatti (MC) then took attendance. 8 members were present (one additional member joined late).

Presentation: Implementation Plan Review

MK then handed the meeting to Andy Reker (AR) to present on TAC implementation plan updates. AR's updates included:

- Transit network and service: main update is the Bus Network Redesign
 - TAC recently wrote a letter to the MBTA advocating for Route 68 changes
- EZ Ride launched fare-free service and weekend service in April 2025
- Consultant recently submitted an update on transit delay and reliability study as well
 - Results will be reviewed and shared with TAC soon
 - Focus of the study on the Charles River crossings has also resulted in TAC comments reaching state agencies
- Few updates on the Grand Junction Path/Transit Connector

A member asked if TAC is tracking delivery of the new Red Line carts?

AR answered that it is but the update is in a later section of the implementation plan.

- Real-time transit displays have been ordered for installation at 10 new locations
 - Locations are mostly in Inman Square, River & Western, with a few on Mass Ave
- Transit Priority Lanes/Signals Updates:
 - First/Second Street Study: Most recent implementation plan updates was waiting on MassDOT/MBTA SL extension study, and there has not been much movement since that was completed in 2023
 - City projects (Mass Ave Partial Construction):
 - Recent working group meeting provided updates on project status
 - City is working on updated designs able to meet budgetary requirements (mostly quick build type implementation)
 - Harvard Square area conceptual design conversations are in progress
 - Not much to share publicly but updates will be coming soon
 - Central Square:
 - Plans are related to CSO, which is in early design stage process
 - Figuring out scope; primarily will be quick-build style implementations
 - MBTA accessibility improvement project interacts with this (2 new elevators), so will be curb changes accompanying that.
 - Signal controllers for Concord Ave TSP are programmed
 - They are installed at 6 locations and the city has programmed at least a few
 - Rest of the locations will be done over the summer

A member noted that it might be helpful to revisit the CSO (Cycling Safety Ordinance) overall and get a feel for progress as it relates to the larger project as well.

Another member raised the issue of rerouting the Route 83 bus to connect directly to Alewife MBTA using the multi-use pathway corridors. They noted that folks have complained about more connecting bus lines, but the 83 has been that way forever, and the issue could be solved with routing under the Alewife Parkway using the space of the multiuse pathways coming back to Rindge.

- Station Stops and Shelters
 - TAC heard a presentation from RL manager on the brightening + lightening program
 - Otherwise TAC hasn't heard much from the MBTA on this topic recently
 - Bus Stop Design: some MBTA updates to their design guide
 - MBTA removed a stop type where there is a separated bike lane that uses part of the bus stop to travel through the bus stop at sidewalk level. TAC has taken the position that it's important to consider traffic safety here. A place where there wasn't much, but probably worth saying that this has moved to ongoing advocacy.
 - TAC has been interested in Brattle/Aberdeen intersection
 - Installed in 2025, no improvements
 - One of the biggest drawbacks here has been removal of stop from Mt Auburn/Aberdeen to a location Mt Auburn/Brattle. In the past we've wanted to push for bus stops closer to Mt Auburn/Aberdeen.

- Cambridge Street CSO project: update is addition of 3 floating island bus stops—buses will stop at a boarding island and bike lanes will go between boarding location and sidewalk.

One member asked to clarify whether the bus stops with bike lanes going through them on Cambridge Street are the same ones that were removed from the MBTA's design guide?

AR confirmed that the ones on Cambridge Street are different to the ones removed from the MBTA's bus stop design guidelines.

- Facilities Infrastructure and Technology
 - Bus facility modernization in North Cambridge: Largely complete, opening sometime in fall
 - We had the Focus 2050 presentation from the MBTA
 - MBTA approved their recent CIP
 - Other projects we haven't heard about are:
 - general improvements to RL track, switches and signaling
 - Many years ago this was called RL transformation, with a goal of achieving 3-minute headways. Current minimum is about 5 minutes—maybe 4.5 for brief moments. We haven't heard much from them about this initiative recently, though they generally seem to be doing this kind of work.
 - Haven't heard much about the T's climate action plans, in terms of Cambridge relevance.
 - AFC 2.0 has had a lot of setbacks, so this one should be revisited
- MBTA published their integrated mobility plan
 - Still in the revisit category, might be worth asking for a presentation.
- Prioritization of additional contributions to transit—City and CRA are the targets of this implementation item
 - Main action item is KSTEP projects.
- Regulations for Bus Stops & Facilities:
 - automated enforcement of bus lanes should roll out soon. Might be worth looking at this again and getting an update.
- Updates to City's development Transportation Impact Study guidelines –worth revisiting, given salience to developers.
- Update to Transit Strategic Plan
 - City is working on integrating all modes (Cambridge Access and Mobility Plan). Staffing still needs to be done for this, as well as bringing on consultants.
- PTDM updates: pandemic reporting was spotty, but that is now restarted.
- Fare Free Pilot: That idea in Cambridge hasn't advanced much, but MBTA reported on the reduced fares program
 - Could request a presentation on this.
- Citywide Shuttle Study/Transit Gaps: Have identified a consultant and expect to launch the study this summer.

- TAC has called for local transactions for the Charlie Card store (came up when the store moved to State Street from DTX)—reopening the Harvard ticket office was discussed. Haven't really had a presentation from the T on this, or the retail experience broadly.

MK thanked Andy for his presentation, and asked if any members had questions. None did.

Presentation: MBTA Red Line Closure

MK handed the meeting back to AR to present on the upcoming Red Line closure and shuttle replacement service. Andy shared the following information:

- Temporary closure (10 days) starting Tuesday July 21-July 30. Alewife through Park Street to be closed. Park Street is the shuttle bus transfer location. Fares will be collected at all open red line stations, including Park Street.
- MBTA included in their announcement that they'll be doing floating slab replacement, track work, and signal upgrades. Encouraged use of CR and GLX.
- MBTA will be running free shuttle bus routes, but they encourage use of CR and GLX because 70 minute travel times from Park Street to Alewife are estimated via shuttle bus.
- CR will be free between Porter and North Station (you'll need to be ask to be let in at North Station).
- Slides will be posted online via MBTA webpage.
- City is responding by providing information and exploring potential for other mitigation measures, including free Blue Bike unlocks. Public Works is also working to ensure potholes are filled and street furniture is re-positioned around shuttle stops.

MK said he was glad to hear that the City is helping out so much during the shutdown and asked what the logistics will be for using the commuter rail at North Station for free?

AR said that riders will have to ask for assistance from a staff member to get let out of the boarding area.

City, MBTA, and TAC Updates

AR pointed out that the slides have highlighted City/State projects, but most of the content was covered in the presentation on the Implementation Plan. He asked for questions, and seeing none, handed the meeting back to MK.

MK went over the schedule of upcoming meetings for the committee. Healthpeak will present at the July joint meeting, and the TAC will try to get a quorum for the 8/19 meeting to revise the implementation plan for the coming year.

Public comment

One member of the public called in to comment on the RL Shuttle because that's how they get to and from work in Downtown Boston. They say that it might be worth suggesting to the MBTA that the diversion be put into the rotation for audio announcements on the train. They stations have posters, but making audio announcements, as well, might help. AR responds that he will pass this along to the MTBA.

Version Information

Draft: 7-9-2026

Approval: _