



2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

A BETTER CITY TMA & ALLSTON BRIGHTON TMA



INTRODUCTION FROM RICK DIMINO, CEO OF A BETTER CITY

Members of A Better City and Allston Brighton TMAs,

As A Better City reflects on the work achieved in 2021, we are proud that the Transportation Demand Management (TDM)/Transportation Management Association (TMA) team has continued to excel in keeping members engaged on the cutting edge of TDM best practices. As a unit of the parent organization A Better City, the TDM/TMA team works to engage member employers and properties in tactical efforts to optimize the transportation patterns of commuters and visitors alike. Introduced as a complement to A Better City's larger policy advocacy work with the founding of A Better City TMA in 1996, the A Better City TMA/TDM unit has transformed the Boston business community's relationship to workforce transportation, as well as mobility, congestion, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Twenty-five years after its founding, A Better City's TMA/TDM unit continues to function as a critical resource to employers and developers looking to ensure proactive approaches in connecting employees and tenants to a wide variety of climate-positive and socially responsible mobility choices. As employers and developers look to shape workplace and location preferences during this time of change and opportunity, the A Better City and Allston Brighton TMAs are key organizations to belong to. A little investment in your annual TMA membership goes a long way—these premium commute mobility service providers establish one-stop-shopping to strengthen mobility choices and transportation benefits to your commuters, while addressing stakeholder and regulatory interests.

The A Better City TMA/TDM unit is proud to be a part of moving Boston forward. We are immensely grateful for the partnership of our members and look forward to achieving continued impact together in 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Dimino". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rick Dimino
President & CEO, A Better City
Boston Transportation Commissioner, 1985-1993

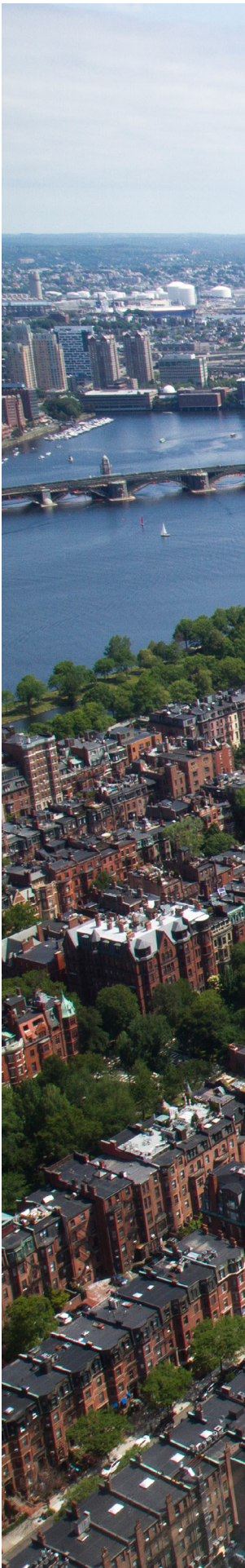


TABLE OF CONTENTS

GET TO KNOW OUR TEAM 1

GROWING OUR MEMBER COMMUNITY 2

Welcoming TranSComm into A Better City TMA 2

Membership Growth 2

Dues Restructuring 2

ENGAGING MEMBERS IN DIALOGUE 3

Membership Meetings 3

A Better City Conversations 4

EXPANDING OUR COMMUTER RESOURCES 5

Commuter Events 5

Commuter Promotions 6

Spotlight on GoMassCommute 8

COLLABORATING TO SHAPE A BETTER TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE 8

Business Organization Transportation Tag-Up Group 9

Barr Foundation 9

Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge 10

Neighborhood Connector Plan 11

BUILDING DIGITAL TOOLS FOR RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE 12

Take the T Toolkits 12

GoMassCommute 13

GET TO KNOW OUR TEAM



SCOTT MULLEN
TDM DIRECTOR

TDM Director Scott Mullen has spent his career enabling individuals and institutions to think outside the car. Mully describes his experience to date as ‘carving chess pieces’, meaning new modes like car-sharing, bike-sharing and micromobility. A native of metro-Boston, he is thrilled to now be working on the chessboard focused on affecting change in his home town. Bike -> Bus -> Train is how he prefers to roll.

MARISSA RIVERA
MANAGER OF TMA OPERATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Manager of TMA Operations & Engagement Marissa Rivera marked one year with the team in February 2021. Her favorite parts of the job are connecting with members working on unique challenges and getting opportunities to design new processes supporting transportation goals. She loves getting around Boston by bike, foot, or bus (sometimes all three!).



CHRISTINE YI
TMA MARKETING & PROGRAM COORDINATOR

TMA Marketing & Program Coordinator Christine Yi has loved working alongside commuters to bring excitement into sustainable commuting since joining the team in October 2020. She loves to learn from commuters on how they’ve mastered their routines and how they get motivated to try new ways to navigate town. Though she’s an avid train rider, she has started to embrace bus and walk trips as well.



GROWING OUR MEMBER COMMUNITY

To continue facilitating a robust and well-connected network of employers, institutions, and building owners working on transportation issues, we have invested particular focus over the year into setting the stage for a growing member community.



WELCOMING TRANSCOMM INTO A BETTER CITY TMA

In May 2021, A Better City TMA formally expanded our service area to include South End members formerly served by TransComm TMA, which was originally established in 1993. Begun in March 2020, the process of incorporating the former TransComm service area into A Better City TMA took place in close collaboration with Boston University Medical Campus and Boston Medical Center, the founding members of TransComm.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Following the redrawing of our service area, the A Better City + Allston Brighton TMA team has engaged with prospective new members across the neighborhoods we serve. With a particular focus on the South End as well as the fast-growing neighborhoods of Allston and Brighton, we have been pleased to welcome 321 Harrison Avenue and 1170-1190 Soldiers Field Road as our newest property-based members.

Are you enjoying your membership and working with our team? Consider writing an endorsement that we can share with prospective new members! Simply email a short blurb about how the TMA has added value to your work to [Marissa Rivera](#).

DUES RESTRUCTURING

We conducted our first dues evaluation effort in five years with the goals of better reflecting the value of the GoMassCommute platform, aligning our membership structure with the City of Boston's new TDM Points Tool, and bringing our employer dues categories in line with those of other metro-Boston TMAs. The resulting structure introduces two new large employer dues categories and allows property-based members to tailor their desired engagement levels by selecting commuter programs on an ad hoc basis.

ENGAGING MEMBERS IN DIALOGUE

2021 has seen rapid changes in street utilization, transportation patterns, and workplace dynamics. As TMA members have navigated shifting timelines and expectations about employee, tenant, and customer transportation needs, we have endeavored to create engaging forums for timely dialogue about shared challenges.

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

In April 2021, we invited all members of A Better City TMA to our first membership meeting since 2019. After pausing full membership gatherings during the first year of the pandemic, this first meeting was an invigorating opportunity to share updates and engage in real-time communication. We built upon this initial event to ultimately hold two virtual membership meetings with each A Better City TMA and Allston Brighton TMA over 2021.

Through these membership meetings, we shared new tools, highlighted key commuter benefits, and facilitated dialogue among members working on transportation issues at their organizations. During our fall virtual gatherings, participating members shared several impressive accomplishments realized over the course of the year – a few highlights are included below:



TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Tufts University has intentionally shifted from parking management to a more holistic approach to campus mobility. This manifested in several ways, including the recent rollout of a new parking system, a relaunch of their shuttle system with enhanced marketing support, and launching a new corporate Bluebikes membership program at the start of the year that has proven to be highly popular among both staff and students.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Boston University launched a new integrated parking permit management and control system early in the year. The new system uses License Plate Recognition (LPR) cameras across all lots to charge a daily rate through payroll deduction, which has resulted in increased day-to-day and week-to-week flexibility in employees' commuting choices.

FIDELITY INVESTMENTS

Fidelity Investments discontinued their pandemic policy of free parking vouchers in the early fall. Coupled with new pilot transportation incentives, this move is expected to reduce SOV commuting while boosting transit and bike use.

*Have you launched a new program or initiative that you are particularly proud of? Don't wait for our quarterly meetings, share the news with our team and we'll help celebrate the win and amplify your efforts!

A BETTER CITY CONVERSATIONS

In addition to virtually gathering members for the above meetings, we organized several A Better City Conversation events featuring panelists working on the cutting edge of TDM issues relevant to our members.

In April 2021, we hosted the designers of BT&D's new TDM Point Program for a presentation and conversation with members. This [new standard in development review](#) officially launched in September 2021 and is now applicable to all new proposed developments over 50,000 square feet. Through our virtual springtime event, TMA members had an early opportunity to hear the system's creators walk through its implementation process and intended impact in detail before posing questions to the panel.

In July, we welcomed several leaders from the MBTA to a conversation on [shaping the post-pandemic commute](#). After hearing panelists present on ridership data, future service plans, fare policies, public outreach campaigns, and pandemic safety measures, participants engaged in lively discussion about return-to-work timelines and their relationship to transit.

Finally, after more than a year of witnessing the City of Boston's efforts to reshape streets to best meet the needs of the public during the pandemic, we engaged representatives from Bluebikes, MAPC, and MassDOT in a virtual discussion about the measurable results of this work. The resulting conversation illuminated several of the positive outcomes that can happen when we [reclaim the street](#) by prioritizing the movement of people on our roadways over the movement and storage of cars.



EXPANDING OUR COMMUTER RESOURCES

In addition to working with our members to shape TDM systems at the institutional level, we work to engage commuters associated with member properties through direct commuter benefit programs, commute planning resources, seasonal promotions, educational events, and more. Over the course of 2021, we have expanded our library of digital resources for commuters and deployed several new and innovative promotional efforts.

COMMUTER EVENTS

Telework and cycling have surged in popularity during the pandemic. Based upon our survey work and anecdotal feedback received from our commuters, we understood that many TMA program participants were having new experiences with these two modes and seeking guidance for first-time challenges. Over 2021, we hosted a series of commuter-focused events to respond to these growing needs and provide flexible education options.

Our earliest event in the year was our virtual [Winter Cycling Workshop](#) hosted in partnership with MassBike. Targeted towards commuters interested in overcoming the barriers of “cold, dark, and wet” to take their bike rides onto the roads, bikes, and pathways year-round. Nearly 50 aspiring winter cyclists have viewed the workshop either as part of the initial attendee group or by accessing the recording in GoMassCommute*.

Did you know you can access videos, how-to guides, and more through our online **commuter resource library**? Whether through our browser portal or smartphone app, you can catch up with all the commuter content that is relevant to you, whenever you like.

As the winter neared its end and tax season approached, we partnered with fellow TMAs in MassCommute to promote a seminar on [Telework and Taxes](#). Our panel covered tips about how furloughs, work conducted remotely from another state, home office expenses, and unused pre-tax transportation benefits could impact first-time teleworkers’ 2020 taxes. Over 50 employees in our TMA network have accessed the seminar over the year.



Winter Biking Lunch & Learn

Join Our Lunchtime Webinar to Learn How to Improve Your Winter Biking Experience From Experts at MassBike!

Thursday, Jan 14
12 - 1PM



Meet Our Speakers!

Dana Ackerman, Taxpayer Advocate from the MA Department of Revenue

James Kozik, CPA from New Century Tax & Accounting Services, LLC

Join Our **Telework & Taxes Webinar**, Thursday 12-1PM



FREE VIRTUAL BIKE SAFETY CHECK

THURSDAY, MAY 13, 12-1 PM ON ZOOM

RSVP AT [TINYURL.COM/BIKESAFETYCHECK](https://tinyurl.com/bikesafetycheck) & [GOMASSCOMMUTE](https://www.masscommute.com)



URBAN RIDING WORKSHOP

12 - 1 PM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

ON ZOOM

A BETTER CITY TMA ALLSTON BRIGHTON TMA MassBike

Photo by Aaron Doucette for TheLab

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Beginning in the early spring, we once again offered our popular annual onsite bicycle tune-up event series to members. Between April and September, we coordinated, sponsored, and created marketing toolkits for sixteen onsite tune-up events serving over 130 cyclists at member properties. To ensure that we provided a useful option for commuters within our network who weren't physically traveling to their workplaces, we also partnered up with MassBike again for a virtual [ABCs of Bike Maintenance](#) session. Another 60+ bike commuters have engaged with this webinar over the year.

Finally, as summer ended and we rolled into September's Bay State Bike Month, we welcomed the executive director of MassBike back for a presentation on [Urban Cycling](#). The workshop covered tips for staying comfortable in an urban environment and navigating common street designs in Boston.

COMMUTER PROMOTIONS

In addition to regularly promoting our six year-round commuter benefits programs in 2021, we released a series of seasonal campaigns targeted to engage new commuters, reward regular program participants, and highlight the diverse benefits of choosing sustainable transportation modes.

"Walking to work is a great way for me to get some exercise and be kind to the planet at the same time."

-Colin, Massachusetts General Hospital commuter

"Love biking, and it's faster than driving!" -Alain, Cushman & Wakefield commuter

We kicked off the new year with our first annual [Clean Air Pledge](#). Understanding that many program participants were still unsure of how or when they would be returning to regular transportation patterns, we designed this campaign to encourage pledge signees to set an intention for exploring a few of the many sustainable alternative options available to them over the year. In reviewing over 120 participants' reasons for signing the pledge, we learned that many care deeply about the environmental impact of their daily transportation choices and appreciate the freedom and fun of active commute modes like biking, walking, or running.

This year, we've enhanced our commuter promotion marketing process and have rolled out a new & improved toolkit to help support your outreach to your commuters. Packed with enhanced descriptions to catch you up to speed, flyers to distribute to commuters, and suggested text and images to include in your newsletters, our new toolkits have it all!

In February, we highlighted some of our passionate Clean Air Pledge signees in a community-building Love My Commute series of social media commuter profiles. Highlight participants received a \$10 TangoCard reward and had the opportunity to share their favorite commute modes, reasons for using them, and tips for getting started.



For Earth Month in April, we ran two promotions that rewarded participants who logged sustainable trips with a tree planted on their behalf via donation to the One Tree Planted foundation. Through this promotion, we engaged 40 commuters and donated 104 trees planted.

In July, we continued our perennial partnership with Seaport TMA to host Water Transit Month in July. This year, we implemented a new pilot promotion strategy using [thematic itineraries](#) to encourage participants to transition back to transit via public ferries. Over the course of the month, the campaign garnered more than 700 participants and earned 25k online impressions.

In September, members of the A Better City and Allston Brighton TMA team worked with a volunteer committee from MassCommute to put on the 27th annual MassCommute Bicycle Challenge. Over the course of the weeklong challenge, participants across the state logged over 700 bike trips and 5,330 miles. Massachusetts General Hospital, MIT, Elkus Manfredi Architects, Assembly Connect, and Boston University led the final team leaderboard, while Boston, Somerville, Cambridge, Brookline, and Medford topped the list of participating municipalities.

We are rounding out the year with a November campaign encouraging commuters to Leaf the Car Behind while raising funds for a local organization fighting food insecurity. Building upon the successful cause-oriented engagement strategy employed in our Earth Month promotions, we look forward to seeing how many donations our program participants can raise through their commuting choices over the month.



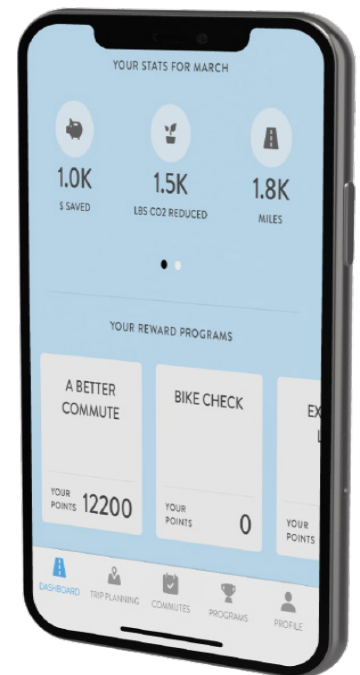
SPOTLIGHT ON GOMASSCOMMUTE

In addition to hosting all of the above commuter resources and promotions, GoMassCommute features a multimodal trip-planning tool that can match commuters interested in forming carpools, bikepools, and vanpools. Help ease your employees' or tenants' return to the worksite in 2022 by connecting them to this useful tool!

Check out our commuter benefits toolkits to help orient your employees, residents, and tenants to GoMassCommute and the exciting programs they have access to!

A BETTER CITY TMA
General Commuter Benefits
Toolkit

ALLSTON BRIGHTON TMA
General Commuter Benefits
Toolkit



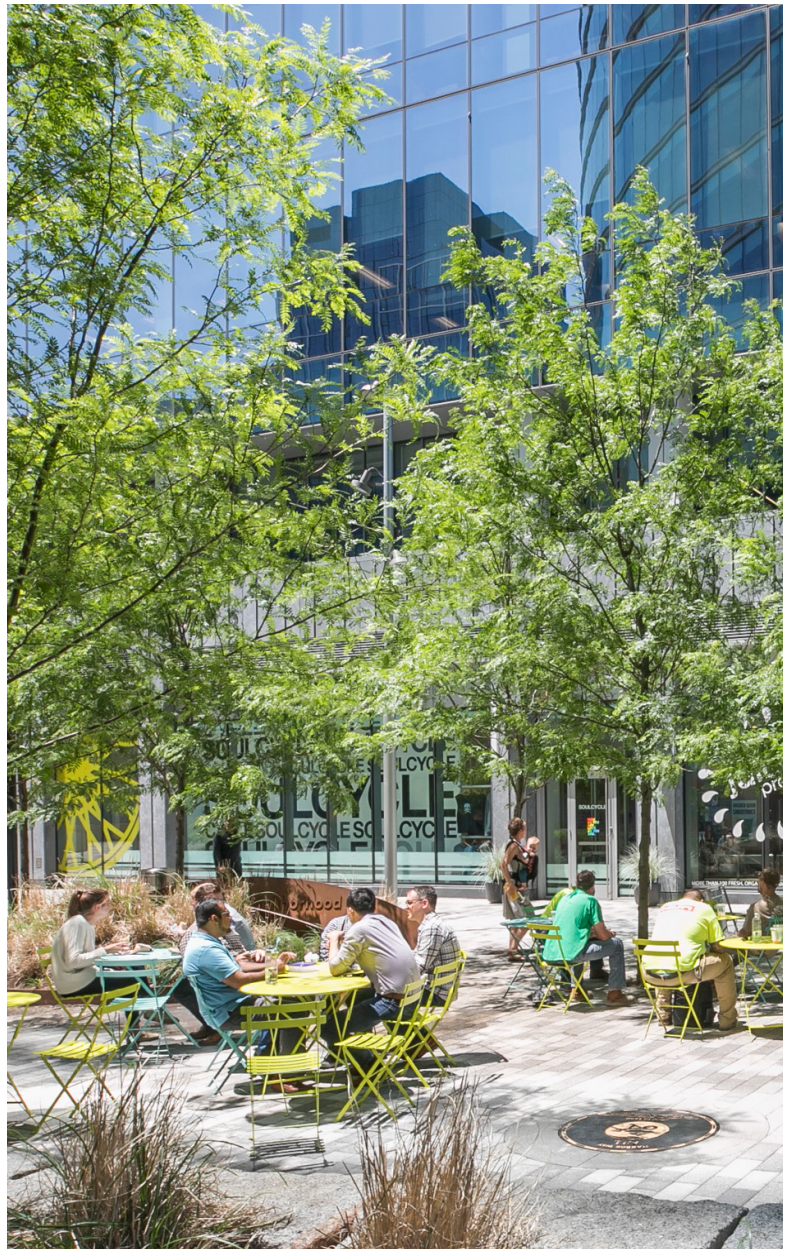
COLLABORATING TO SHAPE A BETTER TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE

Working across the city, we have collaborated with a variety of peer business groups, advocacy organizations, and other local actors to shape forward-thinking responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by massive shifts in transportation patterns over the course of the pandemic.

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION TAG-UP GROUP

Early in the year, A Better City's TDM unit collaborated with the Kendall Square Alliance to organize a biweekly group meeting of organizations working on business-focused transportation issues. Including representatives from the Alliance for Business Leadership (ABL), Assembly Connect, Keolis, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), MassINC, MASCO, MBTA, Seaport TMA, and more, the group has developed into a valuable forum for comparing notes on transportation data, collaborating on surveys, identifying key advocacy topics, and developing concrete tools.

In collaboration with participants of the group, A Better City's TDM unit successfully advocated for the extension of the MBTA's five-day commuter rail flex pass and continues to push for the revival of the Zone 1A fare pilot. The group is currently undertaking an effort to systematically capture and share employer MBTA pass subsidy levels across industries.



According to [the EPA](#), Scope 3 Emissions come from activities not directly controlled by a reporting organization and are often the majority of an organization's GHG emissions.

BARR FOUNDATION

With support from the Barr Foundation, A Better City and Allston Brighton TMAs have been working to identify high-impact TDM measures for employers and property managers seeking to reduce parking demand, enhance employee retention, and limit scope three emissions as workplaces continue to reopen. Over thirty members have opted-in to express interest in collaborating with peer organizations to implement one or more of the strategies identified by our team. Over the coming year, we will continue to engage interested members through focus groups that will facilitate effective implementation of these TDM strategies, uncover lessons learned, and provide a forum for sharing best practices.



BLOOMBERG AMERICAN CITIES CLIMATE CHALLENGE

Building upon our [commuter survey work](#) conducted in late summer 2020 through the American Cities Climate Challenge (ACCC) in partnership with the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) and under funding from the Energy Foundation, we produced two summer 2021 reports projecting future commute patterns from the perspective of both employers and employees.

[Anticipating Post-Pandemic Return to Work trends in Metro-Boston](#), our second report conducted under the ACCC, synthesizes the results of eleven deep-dive conversations with key employers of various size and sector in metro-Boston to yield insights into potential employer-driven commute trends of the future. Our third and final report in this series, [Anticipating Post-Pandemic Commute Trends in Metro-Boston: Spring 2021 Update](#), draws from survey responses provided by over 2,600 commuters to illuminate shifting commuter attitudes towards transit, cycling, and telework between the first and second year of the pandemic. Presented to regional chapter members of the [Association for Commuter Transportation](#) in late summer, data from these reports has continued to inform conversation around the [return to public transportation](#) since publication.





NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR PLAN

In collaboration with the BPDA, BTD, the Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, and developers, institutions, employers, and residents across Allston Brighton, the Allston Brighton TMA team is leading efforts to coordinate and consolidate mobility services throughout this fast-growing neighborhood.

Over the summer, the TDM team formally kicked off the Neighborhood Connector Plan (NCP) effort in Allston/Brighton. A recommendation of the recently published [Allston Brighton Mobility Study](#), the BPDA voted in June to fund the study and chose the Allston Brighton TMA to manage the work of identifying current and future mobility gaps in the neighborhoods and propose some alternatives to help fill them.

In July, we convened a meeting of developers, institutions, and existing TMA members to unveil our plan for the study process. In September and October, we developed a set of Guiding Principles to underpin the effort. These were shared with the public and the development community for feedback and input, and the next step is to define the scope of work for our technical consultants and begin the analysis portion of the project.

This broad NCP effort is in addition to the ongoing effort to consolidate existing shuttle service in the area. Our focus is to identify the key stakeholders and foster collaboration, deep engagement, and commitment not only to the study effort but to broader TDM strategies in general which will benefit the existing and incoming neighbors and workers in the area.

BUILDING DIGITAL TOOLS FOR RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

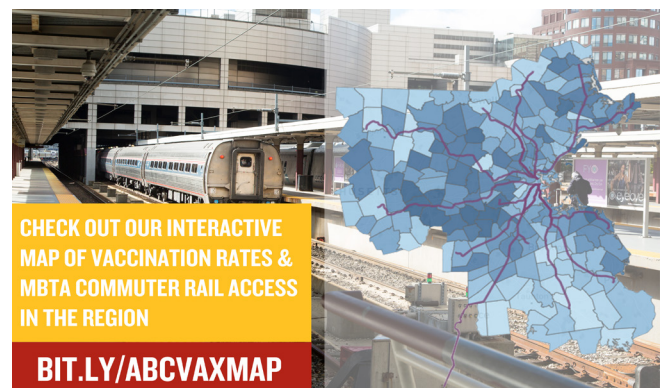
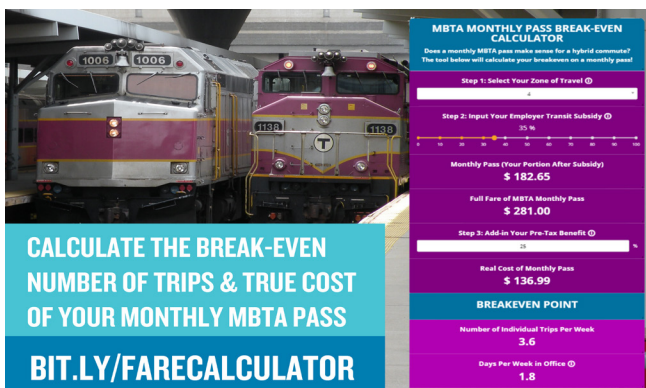
Building upon our work in 2020 and pursuing one of our team’s central goals of increasing our mapping and data analysis capabilities, we have developed and promoted several online resources to assist commuters and companies in their back to the office planning.

TAKE THE T TOOLKITS

As a direct result of the collaboration described earlier in this report, A Better City’s TDM led the development and release of the [MBTA Fare Calculator](#) in late summer 2021. This tool helps uncover the true cost of a monthly pass and the number of full fare trips needed to meet the breakeven point. In the age of hybrid work, the general perception is that monthly passes are not a good value. Using this tool, commuters and employers can “do the math” and see the impact that transit benefit dollars can have on the value of a monthly pass for hybrid commutes. A Better City hosts this tool at bit.ly/FareCalculator but has also made this available to other organizations in the region to promote directly from their websites.

To further inform ongoing conversation about the return to transit, we created an enhanced, interactive visualization of the vaccine rates by municipality within the MBTA service area. Publicly available online at bit.ly/ABCVaxMap, this tool is updated weekly in line with official government data releases. New features added over summer 2021 include links to the MBTA’s Ride Safer website, our latest reports on future commute trends, and the Fare Calculator described above.

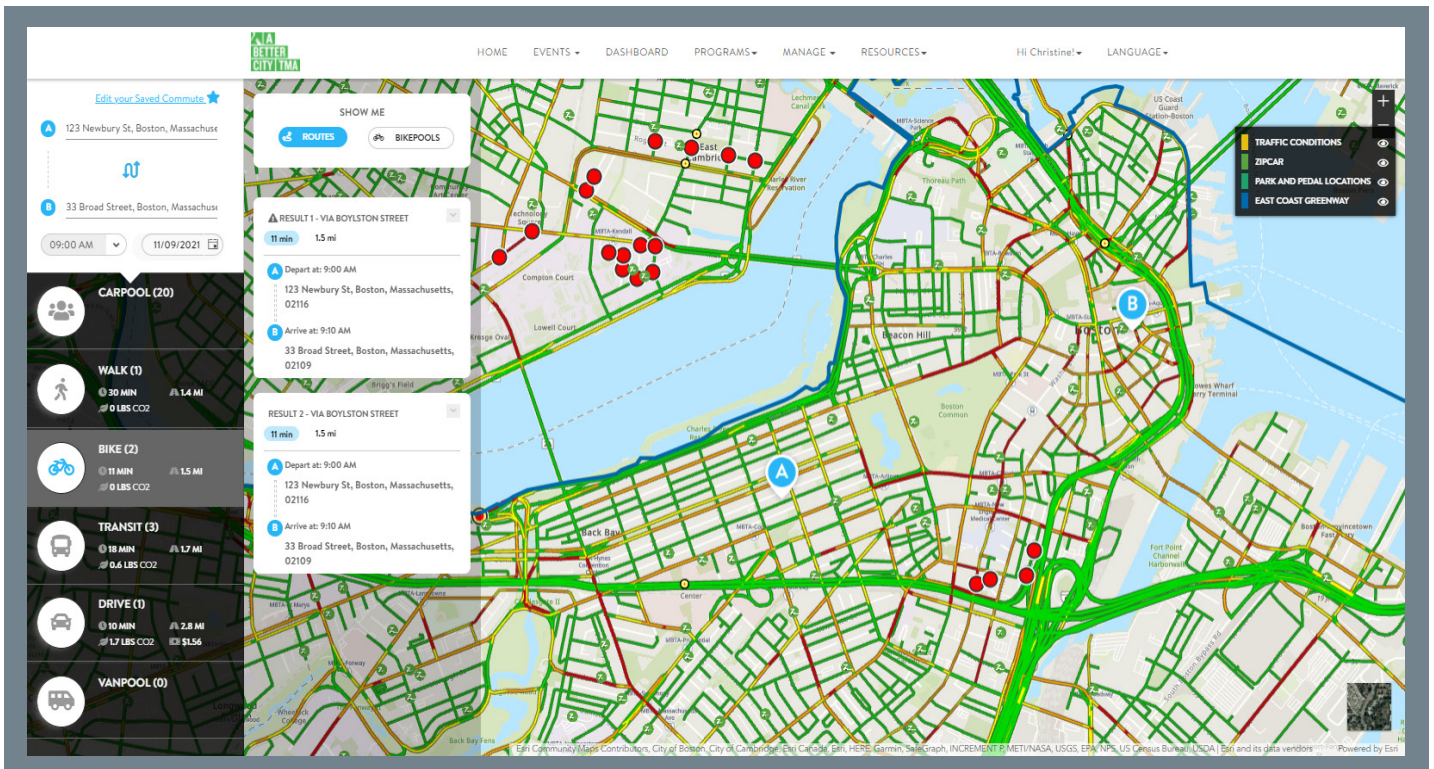
In response to feedback from colleagues at A Better City as post-Labor Day office and school reopenings approached, the MBTA developed and released rider toolkits to demystify the process of returning to transit and respond to pandemic safety concerns. These [employee/employer](#) and [student](#)-focused toolkits feature both of the above tools along with information on updated service levels, useful fare products, system improvements, and COVID-19 safety measures.



GOMASSCOMMUTE

Released to our members in 2020, GoMassCommute is a powerful online platform offering direct commuter services alongside robust reporting capabilities. Members with strong platform participation can organize a vanpool program, administer in-house benefits, send transportation communications, measure scope three emissions savings, and map key employee commute corridors using the tool's admin functions.

In July 2021, we created customized one-page reports for each of our members highlighting key engagement statistics for their dedicated GoMassCommute network. The data in these reports gives quick insight into what you can find as a network administrator in GoMassCommute. If you have not yet activated your network manager profile, please be sure to get in touch with us so we can help ensure that you are reaping the transportation planning benefits of this valuable member resource.



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BETTER
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 **ALLSTON**
BRIGHTON TMA