Blue Hill Avenue
Transportation Action Plan!

Alternative Design Approaches
as of June 27, 2023
Background
History of transportation along Blue Hill Avenue

1890s–1930s: Boston developers build dense housing along Blue Hill Ave to easily access the Avenue’s electric trolleys.

1940s–50s: As cars rise in popularity, streetcars are removed and replaced with bus service.

2009–11: The State announces the 28X project, marketed as bus rapid transit. The plan is not implemented.

2011–12: The MassDOT-led Roxbury Dorchester Mattapan (RDM) Transit Needs Study takes place in 10mi$^2$ study area not served by rapid transit. Study asserts the need for high-quality transit service in this area.

2013–19: Further studies take place to investigate transit improvements along Blue Hill Ave (ex. Go Boston 2030) and, in 2019, the City begins the Blue Hill Ave Transportation Action Plan.
Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan Project Goals

**Goal 1:** Improve pedestrian safety along Blue Hill Ave

**Goal 2:** Expand transportation options and reliability

**Goal 3:** Connect infrastructure investments to the work of other City departments and state agencies
Blue Hill Avenue is a lifeline for local residents

During morning and evening rush hour, more than half of people traveling along Blue Hill Avenue are bus riders.

Each weekday, over 37,000 riders get on and off buses on Blue Hill Avenue. That’s almost 2x the number of people who fit in TD Garden, and it is one of the highest ridership rates on any corridor in the MBTA system.

Bus riders on Blue Hill Avenue lose 3,056 hours per weekday to traffic and delays. In that amount of time, someone could walk from Boston, MA to Anchorage, AK and back.

MBTA and City of Boston are working together to substantially increase bus service over the next five years. For example, Grove Hall would see an increase of 193 bus trips per day.
Bus Riders on Blue Hill Avenue

Blue Hill Avenue serves 10 different bus routes:

- **56%** of bus riders on these routes are from low-income households
- **85%** of these bus riders consider themselves a racial or ethnic minority
- **52%** of these bus riders do not have access to a car
- **96%** of people using the buses on Blue Hill Avenue walk or bike to reach the bus
Trees and Greenery on Blue Hill Avenue

The condition of trees along Blue Hill Avenue varies widely:

• Near Grove Hall and in some other locations, trees in the median are flourishing

• In other areas, some of the median trees and vegetation have started to wither

• There are many empty tree pits throughout the corridor

We are committed to making every effort to preserve healthy, mature trees along Blue Hill Avenue in our design. We are also committed to expanding the overall tree canopy on Blue Hill Avenue.

Source: NYC Environmental Protection
Engagement Timeline

- **September 2019**: Survey of Blue Hill Ave users with 500+ responses presented to public.
- **October 2022 to Present**: Monthly online public meetings.
- **January 2022**: Blue Hill Ave Town Hall hosted by Councilor Mejia.
- **January to May 2023**: Drop-in events at Mattapan Station, BPL Grove Hall, BPL Mattapan.
- **February 2022 to Present**: Youth engagement:
  - "Complete Streets Deetz" workshop for grade-schoolers
- **February 2023 to Present**: MBTA bus operator surveys.
- **April 2022**: Accompanied OEOI on small business walks.
- **April to May 2023**: Bus rider survey (April 2023).
  - Bus rider intercept survey (mid-April to mid-May).
  - Mattapan BPL pop-up (until April 11, 2023).
  - Grove Hall pop-up (until April 27, 2023).
- **Ongoing**: Business survey, parking studies, open houses, drop-ins.
  - Real Talk Blue Hill Avenue (4x a week).
## What We’ve Heard: Challenges and Hopes

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<th>Current Challenges</th>
<th>Hopes for the Future</th>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic safety (including speeding)</td>
<td>More reliable buses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Double parking</td>
<td>More frequent buses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of maintenance/neglect</td>
<td>Safer streets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crowded and infrequent buses</td>
<td>Safer biking</td>
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<td>Bus travel times</td>
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<td>Lack of lighting</td>
<td>Better sidewalks</td>
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<td>Cyclist safety</td>
<td>More crosswalks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of parking</td>
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Blue Hill Ave is not a highway and should not look like one—or feel like one—but it does.  
*January 2023, project inbox*

Every operator has had a bad experience on Blue Hill Ave.  
*February 2023, bus operator interviews*

Blue Hill Ave is in need of a major change. I’m frustrated by the long wait times at bus stops, and the buses are normally very crowded.  
*April 2023, Grove Hall drop-in hours*
What We’ve Heard: Questions About Design

- Will the project improve pedestrian access and safety?
- Will parking spaces be preserved?
- Will parking and traffic enforcement in the project area be evaluated?
- Will bus ridership data be examined throughout the process?
- Will the demand for and impact of bike lanes be examined?
- Will the project create new spaces and develop green infrastructure?
- Will the design connect into both existing and planned broader Boston transportation networks?
Design Approach: Multimodal Corridor
Design Approach: Multimodal Corridor

- New, enhanced bus shelters
- Center-running bus lanes
- Public art (bus shelter example)
- Enhanced lighting
- Parking regulation updates
- Protected bike lanes
- Traffic signal retiming
- Tree canopy expansion
- Full sidewalk reconstruction
- Significant green infrastructure
- Pedestrian safety improvements
- Full roadway reconstruction
Multimodal Corridor Design Approach: Mattapan Square to Morton Street

Rendering of the public realm in the vicinity of Blue Hill Avenue and Walk Hill Street
Multimodal Corridor Design Approach: Morton Street to American Legion Highway

Rendering of the public realm in the vicinity of Blue Hill Avenue and Harvard Street/Talbot Avenue
Multimodal Corridor Design Approach: American Legion Highway to Grove Hall

Rendering of the public realm in the vicinity of Blue Hill Avenue and Seaver Street

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION
BLUE HILL AVENUE CORRIDOR -- AMERICAN LEGION HIGHWAY TO GROVE HALL

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

EXISTING

LANE AT INTERSECTIONS

LANE AT INTERSECTIONS

MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR

LANE AT INTERSECTIONS

LANE AT INTERSECTIONS

Legend

Existing

Change

Proposed

ADA-COMPLIANT WHEELCHAIR RAMP

CM STREETS PARKING SPACES

MEDIAN AND SIDEWALK PRESS

LENGTH OF BIKE LANE

Legend

Existing

Change

Proposed

ADA-COMPLIANT WHEELCHAIR RAMP

DE-FACTO PARKING SPACES

MEDIAN AND SIDEWALK PRESS

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ADA-COMPLIANT WHEELCHAIR RAMP

DE-FACTO PARKING SPACES

MEDIAN AND SIDEWALK PRESS

LENGTH OF BIKE LANE
Design Approach: Enhanced Existing Conditions
Design Approach: Enhanced Existing Conditions

Trees

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION

Longer bus stops

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION
Design Approach: Enhanced Existing Conditions

Safer mid-block crosswalks: rapid flash beacons

Safer mid-block crosswalks: curb extensions
Design Approach: Enhanced Existing Conditions

Accessible curb ramps

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION

Accessible crossings

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION
Design Approach: Enhanced Existing Conditions

Street repaving

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition

Sidewalk spot repairs and maintenance

EXAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION

Existing Condition

Enhanced Condition
Have questions or feedback?
Check out our FAQ document!

MORE INFO IN PROJECT FAQs:
bit.ly/bhaFAQs

WANT TO ADD A QUESTION?
bit.ly/bha-question

This is not a complete list of all of the important questions we have received from members of the community. As we receive more questions and are able to answer them, we will update the FAQ document.
Get in touch with the project team!

Email us at bluehillave@boston.gov

Call us at (617) 635-3944