



A Call to Action to Make Roszie the Most Walkable Neighborhood in Boston

May 22, 2018

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL AND BY HAND (city.council@boston.gov)

Boston City Council

One City Hall Square, 5th Floor

Boston, MA 02201

Attention: Hon. Andrea Campbell, Council President

RE: Support Letter – FY 2019 Boston Transportation Department Budget

Dear Council President Campbell:

I write on behalf of WalkUP Roslindale to express our strong support for the Walsh Administration's FY2019 budget proposal for the Boston Transportation Department (BTD).

WalkUP Roslindale, which takes its name from the international movement to foster "Walkable Urban Places," is a collaborative group of residents dedicated to making Roslindale the most walkable neighborhood in Boston. We advocate for a dynamic, livable streetscape and we support positive changes to our public and private built environment that strengthen walkability and other forms of active mobility as means toward better personal and public health, safety, social capital/equity, economic development, and environmental sustainability. We are led by a steering group of about thirty residents and have nearly 1,000 additional supporters. More information about WalkUP Roslindale and our initiatives can be found at www.walkuproslindale.org. We recognize that no single group of people can be said to speak for our entire neighborhood – instead, please take these comments as representing the collective support of our steering group members (indicated below) resulting from our mission and principles.

The BTD budget for FY2019 proposes an increase of \$5 Million annually for key BTD priorities embodied in both the Vision Zero Policy and the Go Boston 2030 citywide mobility plan. Specifically, we support the proposed deployment of these additional funds as follows:

- **\$2 million for sidewalk improvements and roadway resurfacing** to accelerate bringing our streets up to a state of good repair;
- **\$300,000 for cycling infrastructure**, bringing total bike investments to \$1.2 million annually;
- **Two new planners and two new engineers** to focus on designing and implementing key Vision Zero programs, such as Neighborhood Slow Streets, and other priority projects;

- **\$400,000 for the Green Links** program to fund critical bike and pedestrian connections for the city's park and greenway networks;
- **One new traffic signal engineer** to rework traffic signals to improve street safety and efficiency and **two new traffic signal mechanics** to keep signals working as designed;
- **Up to four new maintenance & operations personnel** to ensure that infrastructure added to improve street safety, such as pedestrian delineators and flex posts, are kept in a state of good repair; and
- **Six new BTD staff positions to form a "Transit Team"** led by a "transit coordinator" that will plan, facilitate, implement, and maintain bus and other important transit. Our neighborhood is already experiencing the fruits of the Walsh Administration's commitment to moving our city forward in this area with the ongoing Washington Street Bus Pilot. This pilot, which converts the lane of on-street parking in the northbound direction to a bus express lane during weekday mornings from 5 to 9 am, has shown early success. Travel times for the 9 MBTA bus routes – yes, 9 bus routes – that run from Roslindale Square to Forest Hills – have reportedly been significantly improved (in many cases, reduced by 50% or more) for the vast majority of people (as opposed to just vehicles) that pass through this part of our neighborhood. Volunteers from WalkUP Roslindale have worked side-by-side with Street Ambassadors from Livable Streets Alliance to encourage feedback to the City and with data surveyors from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to collect information on the experience of bus riders and cyclists. We are eager to learn about the overall feedback that BTD is receiving and to work with all stakeholders to make this a permanent fixture in our neighborhood and to extend it to the southbound direction of Washington Street during the afternoon peak period.

Simply put, we believe these interrelated investments will be transformative and greatly expand the City's ability to more rapidly implement dozens of critical street and transit projects. These investments are also an essential prerequisite to realizing the Walsh Administration's critically important new housing goals, and we encourage the Council to work cooperatively with the administration to insure that the City's vision to expand housing opportunity is paired with commensurate investments in transit and active transportation such as walking and cycling.

We also support the funding of this annual increase in BTD's budget by increasing fines for certain vehicular parking violations. We fully concur with the Walsh Administration's analysis that these fines will be beneficial in many ways, including decreasing illegal parking and improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety as well as bus transit performance.

We were further gratified to see that the Roslindale Gateway Path, a multi-use walking/biking trail proposed to run from the Roslindale Village MBTA Station through the Arboretum to Forest Hills that we have championed since our founding, was specifically mentioned as one of the projects that will be funded with the proposed increase for the Green Links program. We look forward to continuing to work with the Walsh Administration, Councilor McCarthy, the Arnold

Arboretum, the MBTA, Livable Streets Alliance, and all of our partners to bring this project to fruition as soon as possible.

In closing, we wish to reiterate our full and enthusiastic support for the Walsh Administration's FY2019 BTB Budget Proposal and urge the Council to approve it unanimously. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,



Matthew J. Lawlor

Resident @ 15 Basto Terrace, Roslindale, on behalf of the WalkUP Roslindale Steering Group

Ricardo Austrich, Resident @ 843 South Street, Roslindale

Lisa Beatman, Resident @ 180 Mount Hope Street, Roslindale

Rachel Blumberg, Resident @ 15 Newburg Street, Apt. 2

Lucy Bullock-Sieger, Resident @ 33 Brookdale Street, Roslindale

Steve Gag, Resident @ 631 South Street, Roslindale

Liz Graham-Meredith, Resident @ 6 Crandall Street, Roslindale

Sarah Kurpiel Lee, Resident @ 65 Cornell Street, Roslindale

Mandana Moshtaghi, Resident @ 12 Arborough Road, Roslindale

Robert Orthman, Resident @ 69 Walter Street, Roslindale

Rebecca Phillips, Resident @ 10 Tappan Street, Roslindale

Adam Rogoff, Resident @ 28 Ashfield Street, Roslindale

Adam Rosi-Kessel, Resident @ 36 Taft Hill Terrace, Roslindale

Rachele Rosi-Kessel, Resident @ 36 Taft Hill Terrace, Roslindale

Laura Smeaton, Resident @ 61 Cornell Street, Roslindale, MA

Iolando Barbosa Spinola, Resident @ 42 Symmes Street, Roslindale, MA

Mark Tedrow, Resident @ 169 Sycamore Street, Apt. 1, Roslindale

Marc Theiss, Resident @ 55 Prospect Avenue, Roslindale

Greg Tobin, Resident @ 1 Sheldon Street, Roslindale

Alan Wright, Resident @ 98 Birch Street, Roslindale

Rick Yoder, Resident @ 180 Mount Hope Street, Roslindale

Copy to:

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Chief of Streets Chris Osgood, City of Boston (chris.osgood@boston.gov)

BTD Commissioner Gina Fiandaca (gina.fiandaca@boston.gov)

Chief of Civic Engagement Jerome Smith, City of Boston (jerome.smith@boston.gov)

Mr. Daniel Murphy, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services (daniel.m.murphy@boston.gov)

All Other District City Councilors and City Councilors at Large (Meses. Edwards, Essaibi-George, Janey, Pressley, Wu, and Messrs. Baker, Ciommo, Flaherty, Flynn, McCarthy, O'Malley, and Zakim).