



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

DELIVERY BY EMAIL ONLY

May 6, 2020

City Councilor Kenzie Bok, District 8  
Chairwoman, Committee on Ways & Means  
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Dear Councilor Bok:

Please accept this letter as WalkUP Roslindale's collective thoughts and recommendations regarding the FY21 Budgets for the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) and Public Works Department (PWD) (Dockets No. 0588-0596). Our testimony focuses on the proposed 5-year capital budget, as it affects spending and projects in our neighborhood of Roslindale. More information on WalkUP Roslindale can be found at the end of this letter.

We wish to highlight and comment upon the following Roslindale capital projects in the budget:

Roslindale/Arboretum Gateway Path

We remain grateful for the City's support for the proposed Roslindale/Arboretum Gateway Path. This path will provide a low-stress walking and biking route between Roslindale Square and Forest Hills. This route will be key to enhancing Roslindale's connectivity to the main MBTA subway system and providing additional non-vehicular access to the Forest Hills station and neighborhood from Roslindale. The pathway will also be an important connection point to the Arboretum for the Archdale and Washington St. corridor communities. The proposed capital budget anticipates expending \$400,000 for further design work and an additional \$50,000 towards the Arboretum Road Green Link. We thank the Mayor and the team at BTD for this commitment and continue to stress the need for the administration and Council to fully fund the complete design and eventual construction of this multi-use path.

Washington Street Bus Lane

We appreciate the City's commitment to build upon the success of the Washington Street morning inbound dedicated-bus lane with plans for an evening outbound dedicated-bus lane. The

Washington Street bus lane has greatly enhanced the commutes for thousands of daily bus riders between Roslindale Square and Forest Hills. The dedicated lane also provides a safe bicycling route for the many bicycle commuters coming from Roslindale and points further south. The need for a similar dedicated lane for the evening commute has been acute. We urge the City to build out a complete lane in partnership with the community to achieve the same success we have experienced with the morning lane.

#### American Legion Corridor Bike Network

We strongly urge the City to expedite the proposed planning and implementation of strategic bike network improvements for the American Legion corridor. We respectfully note that the American Legion corridor has been scheduled for these bike network enhancements for some time. Residents highly anticipate their completion in addition to further traffic calming and Vision Zero treatment along the corridor and at key intersections.

#### Neighborhood Slow Streets – Mount Hope/Canterbury

We eagerly look forward to the construction of the Neighborhood Slow Streets program in the Mount Hope/Canterbury neighborhood. This will be Roslindale's first Neighborhood Slow Streets implementation. We welcome the almost \$9 million planned for total Neighborhood Slow Streets expenditure in the Capital Budget through FY25. We also take this opportunity to reiterate our consistent, long-standing position that every neighborhood deserves Neighborhood Slow Streets implementation and urge the City to expedite that planning on a more comprehensive basis, ideally in regular conjunction with scheduled street and road reconstruction planning.

In addition to highlighting these Roslindale capital projects, we wish to make note of projects we are following that are outside our neighborhood boundaries but will have a significant impact on travel, both for work and other trips, for Roslindale residents:

- Cummins Highway, Mattapan – We thank the Mayor and administration for delegating \$12 million for this key transportation corridor that is in significant need of Complete Streets re-design and treatment. We reiterate prior comments that we hope to see the entirety of Cummins Highway given this Complete Streets treatment in the near future to provide a low-stress pedestrian and bicycling connection between Roslindale and Mattapan Square.
- Centre Street, West Roxbury – We note the inclusion of \$400,000 in the capital budget for work on Centre Street and strongly urge the City to implement the complete planned road diet to create a safe pedestrian and bicycling experience on Centre Street. Roslindale residents travel along and patronize businesses and restaurants up and down Centre Street and wish to create this safe connection between the key West Roxbury and Roslindale Main Street districts.

- Southwest Corridor – We applaud the City for allocating \$250,000 to plan connectivity improvements between the Southwest Corridor and downtown streets and locations. The Southwest Corridor is one of the main routes for bicyclists between Roslindale and downtown. We strongly support improvements to and expansion of the Corridor.
- Blue Bike Network Expansion - We appreciate the allocation of \$1 million for expansion of the Blue Bike network, particularly to our adjacent neighborhoods of Hyde Park and Mattapan. We wish to point out that the expansion of the bikeshare network to these communities will benefit from completion of many of the projects noted in this letter, and would benefit even further from significant changes to Hyde Park Avenue to make it much safer to ride a bike upon.

We especially wish to take this opportunity to thank the many dedicated staff at BTM and PWD who work with our group and the entire Roslindale community to improve our neighborhood. We appreciate that they solicit our opinions, listen to our feedback, and keep open lines of communication with us. We in particular want to highlight and thank all the City of Boston personnel going above and beyond during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We appreciate the elements of the FY21 BTM budget focused on Roslindale and remain willing and able to work alongside the Council, administration, and city staff to enhance our beloved neighborhood.

Sincerely,



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, Roslindale  
Ben Bruno, Resident @ 27 Colgate Road, Roslindale  
Lucy Bullock-Sieger, Resident @ 33 Brookdale Street, Roslindale  
Devin Cole, Resident @ 169 Orange 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  
Margaux Leonard, Resident @ 35 Harding Road, Roslindale  
Mandana Moshtaghi, Resident @ 12 Arborough Road, Roslindale  
Robert Orthman, Resident @ 31 Mendelssohn Street, #2, 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  
Adam Shutes, Resident @ 318 Metropolitan Avenue, Roslindale  
Laura Smeaton, Resident @ 61 Cornell Street, Roslindale  
Marc Theiss, Resident @ 55 Prospect Avenue, Roslindale  
Mark Tedrow, Resident @ 21 Conway Street, Roslindale  
Greg Tobin, Resident @ 1 Sheldon Street, Roslindale  
Nick Ward, Resident @ 35 Harding Road, Roslindale  
Alan Wright, Resident @ 98 Birch Street, Roslindale

Cc: Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston  
Ricardo Arroyo, City Councilor, District 5  
Matt O'Malley, City Councilor, District 6  
Andrea Campbell, City Councilor, District 4  
Michelle Wu, City Councilor - At Large  
Annissa Essaibi-George, City Councilor - At Large  
Michael Flaherty, City Councilor At-Large  
Julia Mejia, City Councilor At-Large  
Joseph Coppinger, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services - Roslindale  
Chris Osgood, Chief of Streets

### **About WalkUP Roslindale**

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, 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](http://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 above) resulting from our mission and principles.