



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 16, 2015

Contact: Terence Burke
tburke@denterlein.com
(617) 901-1697

Group Asserts Bus Rapid Transit May be Key to Help Meet Greater Boston's Increasing Transit Needs
Transportation experts, community leaders release report presenting benefits of high-standard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), propose five promising routes in Boston metro area

June 16, 2015 – Boston – The Greater Boston BRT Study Group, made up of transportation experts, planners, and community leaders, released today a groundbreaking analysis showing that Gold Standard, cost-effective Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is possible in Greater Boston and could bring significant benefits to residents, commuters, and the economy. The report is a first step in a larger effort sponsored by the Barr Foundation to explore the possibilities of BRT in the Boston region.

The report, titled [*Better Rapid Transit for Greater Boston: The Potential for Gold Standard Bus Rapid Transit across the Metropolitan Area*](#), offers the first citywide technical analysis of BRT in the nation. The report proposes that integrating Gold Standard, cost-effective BRT into the current MBTA system be part of a suite of solutions being considered to improve transportation and mobility in Greater Boston.

“To really understand BRT’s potential, you need to erase all notions of what a bus is today. It’s an entirely new approach to rapid transit with a proven track record for moving more people, more efficiently,” said Jackie Douglas, Executive Director of Livable Streets and a member of the BRT Study Group. “To remain a world class city, Boston needs a world class transportation system. A BRT and bus priority network is completely different than our current bus system and should be considered in all planning and thinking we are doing to improve our transportation future.”

“As our economy grows, more demands are being placed on our transportation system, which is limited by fiscal and infrastructure constraints,” said Richard A. Dimino, President of A Better City and a member of the Greater Boston BRT Study Group. “BRT is an agile, cost-effective solution that is already successfully improving mobility and economic development in other major cities. We should include BRT in our strategic thinking, planning, and conversations around improving public transit in the Greater Boston area.”

The Greater Boston BRT Study Group was convened two years ago by the Barr Foundation to investigate and study the possibilities of implementing BRT—in particular, Gold Standard BRT, the highest level—throughout Greater Boston. The Study Group partnered with the non-profit Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP), a world leader in the study of BRT systems, to analyze a number of potential corridors in which BRT could reduce congestion on the T, serve underserved communities or groups, provide more direct connections between neighborhoods, and bolster planned future development. Through a comprehensive technical analysis, ITDP and the Study Group prioritized five corridors in which BRT shows particular promise:

- Harvard to Dudley Square
- Downtown to Dudley
- Dudley to Mattapan Square
- Sullivan Square to Longwood Medical Area
- Forest Hills to Readville

The Study Group found many unique characteristics that make Gold-Standard BRT worth including in future transportation options:

- *Agility.* BRT is a highly agile system that connects neighborhoods better than a fixed rail system. BRT doesn't require tracks and connects seamlessly to bike and pedestrian transit, and its lanes are easily plowed during snow.
- *Cost-effectiveness.* Because BRT does not include complex track infrastructure, it costs less to construct and maintain. BRT can on average be up to seven times more affordable than light rail, per mile.
- *Immediacy.* BRT can be implemented more quickly than light rail systems, relieving pressure on the MBTA's aging train and trolley infrastructure.

BRT has never been implemented in Massachusetts, but has quadrupled worldwide in the past 10 years and is beginning to be adopted in major US cities. Gold Standard BRT combines enclosed stations in roadway medians that allow buses to pick up and drop off without crossing into other traffic, exclusive lanes with traffic signal priority, pre-paid fare collection, real-time arrival information, and thoughtful design to rival the speed, capacity, and comfort of the best rail lines.

“As an extension of our commitment to fighting climate change in the region, the Barr Foundation convened the Greater Boston Study Group to take a hard look at whether or not Gold Standard BRT was possible in Boston and if it would produce benefits for residents, commuters, and the economy. The answer is ‘yes,’” said Mary Skelton Roberts, Barr Foundation senior program officer. “The Barr Foundation looks forward to engaging in further conversations with community and business leaders about BRT.”

The report can be found at BostonBRT.org and tagged on social media at [#bosBRT](https://twitter.com/bosBRT) or [@bosBRT](https://twitter.com/bosBRT).

The members of the BRT Study Group are:

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Rick Dimino, A Better City
Jackie Douglas, LivableStreets Alliance
Ben Forman, MassINC
Christopher Hart, Institute for Human Centered Design
Melissa Jones, Boston LISC
Malia Lazu, Future Boston
David Lee, Stull & Lee Inc., Architecture and Planning
William Lyons Jr. – ULI-Boston & The Fort Hill Companies
Lee Matsueda, Alternatives for Community and Environment
Tom Nally, A Better City
David Price, Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation
Jessica Robertson, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Paul Schimek, TranSystems
Darnell Williams, Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts
Chris Zegras, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

###