

ONLY  
BUS



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# Get it Rolling

A brief summary to mobilize bus improvements in Greater Boston

**Don't have time to read the whole guide?** Here's a quick look at our suggested steps to implement bus priority projects in your area. These steps were drawn from thirty in-depth interviews with stakeholders involved in the six different projects, which you can read more about in our case studies.

Every project's recipe will be different, and will require different ingredients, as well different amounts of each. The steps below offer a framework for considering strategies to improve bus transit. Not all will apply to your situation, and not all will follow the same order as we have them listed here. These steps are not prescriptive, but instead offer direction based on the experience of people involved in the six local bus improvement projects that were studied.

## ● Define the problem and identify possible solutions

A good first step to a successful project is to define the problem you are trying to solve. If data is available, such as parking data or bus (or bus passenger) delay, use it to understand where there are opportunities for improvements and what those improvements might look like. *(Get it Rolling, Page 12)*

## ● Review current local, regional and state plans

Planning documents can help in identifying the right corridor and can also be a rich source of support for your project. Among the documents you should review are local, regional, and state plans. If your initiative is – or can be – connected, even tangentially, to an existing plan, that connection can enhance your proposal's credibility. *(Get it Rolling, Page 14)*

## ● Investigate available funding sources

Public entities, transit agencies, and private foundations all provided crucial funding. However, direct capital funding is not the only financial support – it can be highly advantageous to find funding for engagement, communications, and data collection via parking studies or bus rider surveys. *(Get it Rolling, Page 17)*

## ● Use data to tell your story

Data is as critical for building support and getting your project done as it is for defining your problem and identifying your solution. Quantitative data can detail metrics and qualitative data can tell the story of why bus improvements are needed from the perspective of everyday riders. Data can show how projects are centered in a community experience. *(Get it Rolling, Page 20)*

## ● Begin internal conversations with key stakeholders

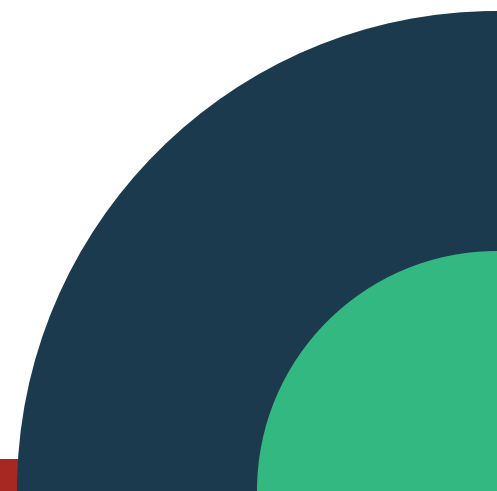
Make an honest assessment of internal support for your project as early as possible. This will help you map out your path. Consider the talking points that may persuade these stakeholders. Focus on one striking data point that may be persuasive to many decision-makers. *(Get it Rolling, Page 26)*

## ● Create a list of partners

All bus projects should include collaboration with the MBTA or your local RTA, but there are many other groups – internal to a municipality and external – that may be helpful in getting a project done. *(Get it Rolling, Page 29)*

## ● Agree on and document project goals with partners

It can be helpful to draft and agree on a set of project goals and outcomes at the beginning of the project. This will help keep the project in line with its original intentions, especially if opposition or challenges arise. Determining a single point of contact to manage the process and the project partners can be helpful. *(Get it Rolling, Page 31)*



### ● Use existing practices to make change feel easier

Communicating that your project is consistent with current practices and priorities may make it more palatable for other municipal staff and partners. You may be able to achieve success by breaking a bus project down into its more familiar basic components. *(Get it Rolling, Page 33)*

### ● Create a community engagement strategy

Getting input from community members can improve your project and can itself build support. When thinking about asking for input, it's important to first determine what your goals are. Should outreach inform project decisions, evaluate decisions that have already been made, or both? *(Get it Rolling, Page 35)*

### ● Create a communications strategy

Any transportation communications strategy include making accurate, up-to-date project information available and easy to find, and to communicate regularly and effectively with the public and key stakeholders. *(Get it Rolling, Page 38)*

### ● Consider incorporating public art and interactive materials into your project

Public art at bus stops can enhance user experience and artistic communications materials have been influential in shaping positive public opinion and encouraging public engagement. *(Get it Rolling, Page 41)*

### ● Determine design and engineering needs

Plan for multi-modal changes, not just bus improvements. If a project can also improve the experience for people walking, biking, or using other modes, those elements should be incorporated to ensure the project has multiple benefits. *(Get it Rolling, Page 44)*

### ● Create an implementation plan

Who has the authority and responsibility to decide on the implementation of the project? Work with your partners to decide how the project should role out. *(Get it Rolling, Page 47)*

### ● Create a list of implementation tasks and materials needed

It is useful to create a list of tasks and materials that will be necessary for making the intervention a reality. *(Get it Rolling, Page 49)*

### ● Determine operations and management of the new infrastructure

There will be on-going management tasks and decisions. Decide ahead of time, in partnership with the MBTA or your local RTA, who (and what vehicles) will be able to use the lane – and how to manage usage on a day-to-day basis. *(Get it Rolling, Page 51)*

