



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
Michelle Wu

July 24, 2026

Dear Residents,

We remain devastated by the loss of Louisa Gag, a remarkable public servant, advocate, colleague, and friend. Louisa loved Boston and devoted her life to making our city better every day. I know many Bostonians are personally mourning this unfathomable loss while also continuing the fight for safer streets—a movement shaped by Louisa’s leadership, creativity, and compassion. I am grateful to everyone who has shared feedback and ideas with our administration in recent days and months.

Residents deserve clarity about our vision for streets that are safe, beautiful, and family-friendly. I am writing today to detail our immediate response to the crash that took Louisa’s life, our approach to delivering street safety improvements for all roadway users, and the work ahead.

Our Immediate Response

Our first focus has been supporting Streets Cabinet staff. I have asked Chris Osgood, Senior Advisor for Infrastructure and former Chief of Streets, and Tali Robbins, Deputy Chief of Policy, to support the Streets Cabinet full-time. They started in these roles on Monday, July 13th, providing guidance and direction on policy, planning, and major capital projects, and they will meet monthly with leaders of advocacy organizations to facilitate ongoing, direct dialogue. Over the coming weeks, I am also convening a group of advisors to assess the Streets Cabinet’s organizational structure, staff capacity, and resource needs. This group will advise on ways to improve and accelerate the delivery of safer streets and critical services.

In close coordination with the ongoing law enforcement investigation, the City will conduct a comprehensive safety and urban design evaluation of the Tremont Street corridor in Mission Hill to identify important fixes.

Our team has also been reviewing bike lanes that use or previously used flex posts to determine where cast-in-place or other more durable barriers will be installed. We will expand the use of more durable protective barriers wherever feasible, including by coordinating upcoming resurfacing with installations later this year. And we are installing quick-build barriers in priority locations where more permanent construction is not possible this year, such as the cycle tracks around the Boston Common and the Public Garden, and along Western Avenue.

The Boston Police Department has determined that a large truck was involved in the crash that took Louisa's life. Trucks and other heavy commercial vehicles have been involved in the majority of fatal crashes involving cyclists over the past decade and a significant share of fatal pedestrian crashes. The City's truck side-guard ordinance applies to City vehicles and those contracted for City projects, but we need protections for all trucks and large commercial vehicles on Boston's streets. In the coming months, we will work to advance more comprehensive truck safety legislation, strengthen side-guard enforcement, review City routes used by heavy commercial vehicles, and assess additional safety measures to prevent future crashes.

Safe, Beautiful, Family-Friendly Streets

Every neighborhood must have well-designed, well-maintained streets and beautiful, welcoming public spaces for families and businesses to thrive. More than a decade ago, Boston became a Vision Zero city, committing to eliminate fatal and serious traffic crashes. Since then, we have made significant progress to make our streets safer, but we still have much work to do. The City's [Vision Zero dashboard](#) is currently updated with data through June 2026. Going forward, we will update the dashboard monthly and expand our analysis to target locations and conditions for needed interventions. We will continue to use data to help guide our transportation policies and investments with the following goals:

- **Reliable, Well-Maintained, and Resilient Streets**: Street safety starts with well-maintained infrastructure. Over several years, the City fell behind on annual roadway resurfacing, allowing road conditions to deteriorate. In 2025, we worked to address that backlog, resurfacing 50 miles of roadway, and we are on track to match that pace this year. Repaving is a critical opportunity to install essential safety upgrades, including those that were identified through prior planning efforts. We will continue to pair resurfacing work with safety, accessibility, and public realm improvements. Every day, we strive to fulfill constituent service requests promptly and effectively, and we also use that 311 data to proactively identify potential hotspots for potholes, safety hazards, and damaged bike lanes. Because so many of our roadways are impacted by essential utility repairs that require opening up the street, we will prioritize holding utility companies accountable for timely,

high-quality road repairs after their work is completed. Boston's Climate Action Plan sets clear goals for cleaner, greener, and more resilient transportation and public spaces, and that plan should be read as an important part of our Streets vision.

- Protected and Connected Cycling Network: Our administration has filled in critical missing pieces in our bike network, building nearly 20 miles of bike lanes in the last five years. Many of these efforts relied on quick-build materials, such as flex posts, to deliver improvements quickly. While these materials are useful as interim measures, they are easily damaged and cannot serve as an effective foundation for a permanent network. Moving forward, we are transitioning to more durable and effective bike lane protections, such as cast-in-place concrete barriers, like those recently installed on Congress Street. These barriers cost less than fully-constructed curbs while providing substantially greater protection and requiring less maintenance. However, critical gaps remain in the protected network, creating unacceptable risks for bike commuters and discouraging others from choosing to ride at all. Given changes in the federal funding landscape, we will focus on completing more critical connections and intersection upgrades rather than concentrating resources on a small number of long corridors. Closing critical gaps will deliver exponential benefits for the entire network.
- School Zones and Pedestrian Safety: Investing in safe sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and roadways improves safety and mobility for everyone—particularly for residents with disabilities, seniors, and other pedestrians. Over the past four years, we constructed 6,448 curb ramps and 1,435 speed humps. In 2025 alone, the City reconstructed 30,000 square feet of sidewalk, and this year we are on track to reconstruct an additional 75,000 square feet and add 26 raised crosswalks. But after decades of deferred maintenance, there are still thousands of curb ramps and hundreds of miles of sidewalk that need to be built or fixed. As we fully deploy our budget on these upgrades every year, we prioritize those that are most urgent and most used. We have a special focus on ensuring that children can walk and bike safely to the places where they gather, play, and learn. We will double down on safety improvements in school zones and expand our successful safe routes to schools effort to libraries, parks, playgrounds, and community centers.
- Targeted, Effective Enforcement: Even the most well-designed streets become unsafe when vehicles are double-parked or blocking bike lanes, crosswalks, or sidewalks. The City is ramping up targeted enforcement efforts at high-risk locations and working to improve our technology and response time. We are developing an improved mobile app to report traffic and parking violations to the City, so that enforcement officers can act on reports in real time and issue tickets

while the offending vehicles are still at the site of the violation. Parking enforcement officers will also use bikes to patrol streets more efficiently and respond more quickly, and we will publish data on tickets issued so the public can understand where enforcement is happening. We will continue to advocate for statewide legislation that authorizes the Boston Police Department to use camera enforcement for speeding and red-light violations, as well as photo enforcement for parking violations. And as we work with the MBTA to roll out camera enforcement for bus lanes and bus stops, we are moving forward with plans to procure technology for school bus camera enforcement.

- **Technology to Tackle Traffic:** Effective enforcement must be paired with better traffic management, using new technologies to reduce congestion hot spots that create frustrating and unsafe conditions. The City has used AI to optimize traffic signals at more than 200 intersections—reducing unnecessary delays from stop-and-go traffic—and we will pursue signal upgrades to deliver even more refined signal timing. We are also using data to redesign curbside management and loading areas to better support local businesses while improving safety and access. On our fare-free bus routes, all-door boarding has reduced the time buses and riders spend at stops on key congested routes, and we look to expand the use of transit signal priority wherever possible.

Improving How We Plan and Deliver Capital Projects

Over the last several years, we completed several major projects, including Centre Street in West Roxbury, Cummins Highway in Mattapan, Dudley Street in Nubian Square, and the Bill Russell Bridge, that deliver long-overdue safety and mobility improvements. But our staffing, maintenance, and operational capacity did not always keep pace to fully support all the newly installed infrastructure, and we developed a pipeline of more planned, designed projects than the City budget currently has the capacity to deliver or maintain. Especially in a constrained fiscal environment, it is essential that each street investment is carefully prioritized, designed to be well-integrated into the neighborhood, and built to last.

Because our streets serve so many users and purposes, the design process must incorporate a wide range of different experiences to inform tradeoffs and choices. Meaningful community engagement should not delay a project until unanimous agreement is reached, nor become merely a box to check before rushing to implementation. Community engagement is how we address tradeoffs fairly, cultivate trust through genuine dialogue, and arrive at the most effective design details. Good design is critical to our mission of delivering safe streets.

Last year, I directed a review of recent projects to understand feedback from neighborhood groups who, after projects had been completed, continued to share that specific concerns had not been heard or effectively addressed through the community process, and that the final designs resulted in negative impacts that could have been mitigated. Across multiple projects, we heard that our approach did not incorporate the full range of stakeholder concerns during the design process, and that the quick-build focus, with promises to make fixes later, damaged trust when no further engagement or changes took place after construction was completed. That review was a point-in-time snapshot and was not meant to document the full range of residents' perspectives. Going forward, our standard is that community members should fully understand the available choices and tradeoffs, help shape design details through an iterative process, understand how and why decisions are made, and continue giving feedback after infrastructure is installed so further adjustments can be considered.

We also reviewed internal processes across City departments and identified gaps holding back early and effective collaboration on design, capital delivery, and community engagement. Over the last year, representatives from nearly every team within the Streets Cabinet participated in more than a dozen meetings to redesign the capital project delivery process by establishing clear checkpoints for projects to move from conception to planning, design, and construction, with defined responsibilities and decision points at each step. This process will ensure that we integrate the technical expertise of other departments who operate and maintain our streets, support community members of all ages and abilities, and engage with residents and businesses about their daily quality of life.

As these processes were being retooled, the team redoubled efforts to catch up on deferred maintenance and state of good repair work while we strengthened our internal planning, engagement, and project delivery systems. This internal reset has taken longer than anticipated but, thanks to the hard work of our teams, it has produced a stronger process, and we have an ambitious slate of projects in planning and design. As in recent years, our capital funds for Streets will continue to be fully deployed--carefully balancing state-of-good-repair work with larger capital projects to ensure project delivery is sustainable over the long term.

With this process in place, we are already strengthening collaboration with the MBTA to improve mobility and safety along Rutherford Avenue, Columbus Avenue, and Blue Hill Avenue. Planning and design are also moving forward for Egleston Square; along with renewed engagement for Columbia Road, Downtown Crossing, Maverick Square, Roslindale Square, and other areas. We are also in the middle of a busy 2026 construction season. Residents can stay up to date on active Streets Cabinet projects at this [dashboard](#), with additional projects to be added as we map out the 2027 season.

Projects slated for completion in 2026:

- Cummins Highway Reconstruction (Mattapan)
- Beacon Street Safety Upgrades and Resurfacing (Brighton)
- Dartmouth Street Safety And Mobility (Back Bay)
- Hyde Park Ave North Segment Resurfacing and Safety Improvements (Jamaica Plain)
- Lost Village Transportation Safety Improvements (Charlestown)
- Lower Roxbury Neighborhood Safety Improvements (Roxbury)
- Thoreau Path Reconstruction Project (West End)
- Washington Street Bike Lane Buffer Upgrade and Resurfacing (Downtown)
- Harrison Ave Reconstruction (South End)
- Bluebikes expansion (Hyde Park, Roslindale, and West Roxbury)

Projects slated for completion in 2027:

- Ellis Elementary School Safe Routes to School (Roxbury)
- Jones Avenue Neighborhood Street Improvements (Dorchester)
- Congress, Sleeper, and A Street Reconstruction (South Boston Waterfront)
- And more to come in 2027.

Boston should be a city where every resident and visitor can move comfortably and confidently, enjoy beautiful public spaces, and feel part of a community that is home for everyone. We will carry forward Louisa's legacy by working to make this vision a reality. There is much more work ahead. I look forward to getting it done together.

Sincerely,



Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston