



One Center Research

## Massachusetts Highlights Alternative Transportation Achievements

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Hubway bike Sharing Boston

As warm spring temperatures finally welcome us in Massachusetts, pedestrians and bicyclists emerge from a long winter's hibernation. Lucky for many of these pedestrians and cyclists, they are greeted by new infrastructure, trails, and programs implemented by the Baker-Polito Administration and the City of Boston.

All throughout 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) worked to improve pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure to get more people using alternative modes of transportation. In November 2017, their work seemingly paid off, when Massachusetts was nationally recognized by the League of American Bicyclists for being the fourth most bicycle-friendly state in the nation.

The report took into account each state's infrastructure, funding, policies, programs and education on bicycle friendliness when creating the rankings. It is no wonder Massachusetts ranked so high on the list as huge strides have been made in the past year to fund alternative transportation.

For example, Governor Baker created an Interagency Trail Team with MassDOT, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Their goal is to create a unified network of biking trails throughout the Commonwealth.

So far, \$1.5 million has been dedicated to fund designs of the 10-mile Northern Strand Community Trail running through Everett, Lynn, Malden, Revere, and Saugus. There has been \$12.2 million distributed to 33 municipalities in order to improve over 200 intersections and crosswalks, as well as add or improve over 16 miles of sidewalks and trails. At least eight other trails or intersections have also been completed, improved, or added this year. There has been an increase in education for bike safety through videos, conferences, and safety campaigns like, "[Scan the Street for Wheels and Feet.](#)"

The Baker-Polito Administration also increased funding to \$3.2 million per year for the DCR to give out grants for those who wish to construct or maintain trails across Massachusetts for the next two years.

This summer, as part of this healthy and supporting alternative transportation initiative, Boston's Hubway, a bike sharing system throughout Boston and surrounding municipalities, is expanding to over [70 locations](#) that were suggested by Boston's citizens. Proposed maps can be seen on the [Boston Bike Share website](#) or the scheduled 11 open houses throughout Boston. After receiving final comments and opinions on the proposed site expansions, the stations will be created and ready for use.

Boston Hubway currently has over 1,600 bikes at over 160 stations in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville. The program has many affordable options, costing either \$99 or \$50 a year depending on income eligibility, or if one is not looking for a commitment there are 24 and 72-hour options for \$8 to \$15. The bikes can be picked up at any convenient location and returned at another without penalty.

As the temperatures rise, there are plenty of options for Massachusetts's residents to safely consider alternative transportation in their future travels.

According to [Professor Robert L. Ryan](#), FASLA, Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and UMTC Affiliate Researcher, "Boston has long been a leader in alternative transportation through its commitment to the historic Emerald Necklace of parks and trails. Recent efforts to complete this historic vision are the exciting new Emerald Network project."

“The **Emerald Network** is a vision for 200 miles of seamless shared-use greenway paths in the urban core of Boston and its adjacent cities”  
(Source: <https://www.emeraldnetwork.info/> ) that is being proposed by the Livable Streets Alliance and is working in conjunction with the City’s efforts.

Currently, senior undergraduate landscape architecture students at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst under the direction of Professor Ethan Carr, FASLA and Assistant Professor Theodore Eisenman, PhD, MLA are working on conceptual designs for key sections of the Network as part of their senior capstone project for spring 2018.