

The Boston Globe

Boston making some progress on transpo goals, but pace needs to pick up, report finds

Fewer traffic related deaths, but still too few bike lanes.

By [Adam Vaccaro](#) Globe Staff, Updated March 13, 2020, 7:03 p.m.



The BlueBikes rental program has expanded in Boston. LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

Boston has made some progress on some crucial elements of Mayor Martin J. Walsh's transportation plan for 2030, but still has its work cut out in other areas, according to an advocacy group pushing for a less-car-centric city.

A report from the Livable Streets Alliance commended Boston for progress in making the roads safer, a key aspect of Walsh's "Go Boston 2030" plan. Traffic fatalities are down 50 percent in under five years, from 20 in 2015 to 10 in both 2018 and 2019. Livable Streets also credited city officials for a massive expansion of the BlueBikes rental program to nearly every corner of the city.

But there has been less progress on other goals, such as making commutes more reliable or convincing more drivers to take transit, bike, or walk to work, the report also found. Nor is Boston moving quickly enough to reach its goal of a vastly expanded network of protected bike lanes; Boston has a target of having protected bike lanes or paths within 5 minutes of every resident by 2030 but so far that is only true for about 27 percent of the city, according to Livable Streets.

"There's just so little progress on the protected bike network. In terms of miles being built per year that we're not going to meet the 2030 goal if the city doesn't ramp up," said Stacy Thompson, the group's director. "From our perspective, that is frustrating."

The report did not address some of the major infrastructure projects, some of which — like subway-like service on the Fairmount Line or to Roslindale — would be more the state's jurisdiction than the city's. Thompson said those more intensive projects will be evaluated in future reports.

But Livable Streets urged the city to push MBTA officials now on some projects that will require the state to take the lead, such as a proposed "key to the city" that would allow travelers to use the same ticketing system for the MBTA, BlueBikes and other transportation modes. The city is falling behind on that goal as the T seeks to implement a new fare collection system in the coming years, the report said.

Boston's chief of streets, Chris Osgood, responded to the report by saying it is still early and that the city is making progress.

"We are now three years into this 13-year plan, and we have already made significant progress," Osgood said. "More than half of the 58 projects and policies are in the implementation or design phase, and we look forward to continuing this work to make transportation in Boston better for all."

The Livable Streets report did give the city high marks for behind-the-scenes work that doesn't immediately impact people's travels, but could help officials implement various projects, such as adding staff and increasing transportation budgets. That could help the city speed things up in the coming years, Thompson said.

"We're making progress, but we're not quite there to truly see all of it by 2030," she said. "But we have all the ingredients to get it done and that is positive."