

# Proposed Overnight Service Pilot

**Need and Opportunity**  
*Presented by City of Boston*

**Fiscal Management and Control Board**  
**July 31, 2017**

## • Need for Service

- Demand for overnight service is
  - **Significant:** 60,000 people are commuting in Greater Boston between 12 a.m. – 5 a.m.
  - **Increasing:** They are working in job sectors that are expanding.
  - **Concentrated:** They are commuting to locations that geographically concentrated.

## • Opportunity

- A new pilot bus service to meet existing demand for public transit from workers traveling between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. in Greater Boston.
- With targeted expansion of NightBus service, we can
  - **Increase Equity:** NightBus could lower the cost (in time or money) for many underserved and low-income commuters
  - **Reduce Emissions:** NightBus would likely shift commuters out of SOVs
  - **Expand Opportunity:** NightBus could expand employment opportunities for the region

## • Public Support

- Sponsors of this pilot are City of Boston, City of Cambridge, City of Somerville, and Transit Matters.
- Broad support from Industry and the Public Sector.

<sup>1</sup> Greater Boston is defined as the communities of Boston, Chelsea, Cambridge, Somerville, Revere, Winthrop, Everett, Medford, Malden, Lynn, Watertown, and Brookline.

- **Proposed Service Options:**

- NightBus Peak

This proposed service will operate only during the hours with highest demand. It will provide service between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. at 30 minute frequencies, and begin service at 4am on designated bus routes with the highest demand.

- NightBus Continuous

This proposed service will extend service on routes with highest demand without interruption through the 1:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. period, at 30 minute frequencies.

- **Proposed service differs from prior overnight services (“late night” and “night owl”):**

- Operates daily between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.
- Exclusively bus service
- Focuses on late night and early morning workers
- Operates only on routes with the greatest established need

## • Economic Opportunity

- Overnight bus service will give workers dependable and affordable transportation to or from work between 1 and 5 a.m., connecting employees to employers and potentially increasing late night employment opportunities.

## • Equity

- The populations most likely to benefit from late night bus service are low income workers with a low rate of access to private automobiles, almost 50% of which are racial minorities.

## • Climate Preparedness

- Every trip taken by public transit has the potential to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and promoting healthy and equitable communities.

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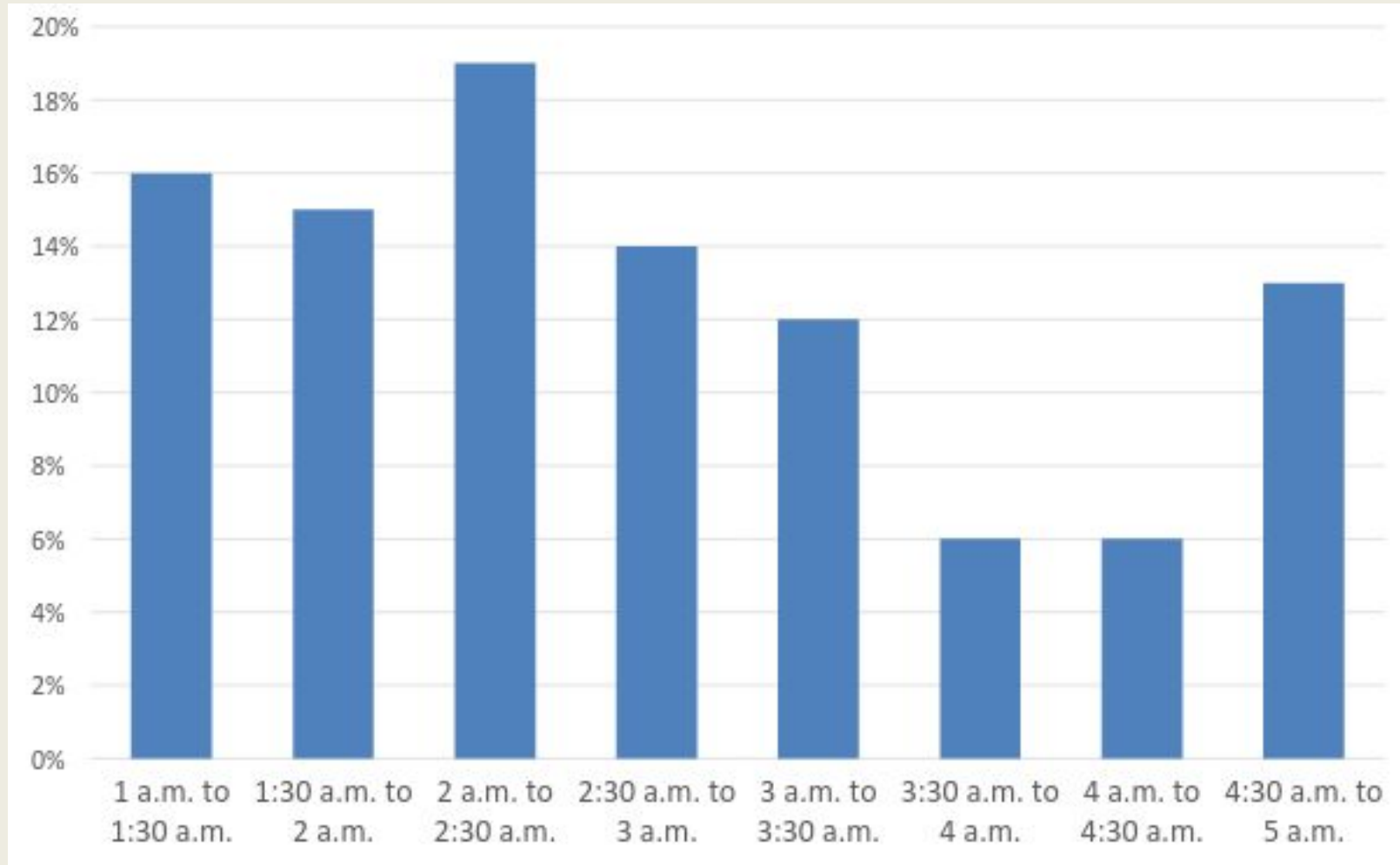
# Need for the Service Pilot

- 26,170 people commute in Greater Boston between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m.
- Another 22,900 people arrive at work between 5:30 a.m. and 5:59 a.m.
- 47,190 workers arrive at work between 4:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. and likely commute home between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.
- Over 15% of households in Chelsea, Revere, Lynn, and Everett do not have access to vehicles. These towns also have median household incomes below \$52,000 a year.
- More than 30% of households in East Boston, Dorchester, Mission Hill, Longwood, and Roxbury do not have access to vehicles. These neighborhoods have household incomes less than \$52,000 a year.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 5-year American Community Survey; BPDA Research Division Analysis.

- Three surveys looked at late night service:
  - a survey of 96 businesses operating late night,
  - an online overnight service survey of 7,000 late night travelers, and
  - an additional (intercept) survey of 5,000 riders.
- Key Results:
  - Employer survey respondents were mostly restaurants, businesses near Logan Airport, health care facilities, hotels, and services such as catering, janitorial, and security. 46% of employers reported the dominant late night commute mode was cabs or Transportation Network Companies (TNCs).
  - Of the approximately 2,000 people responding who leave or go to work between 1am and 5am, 91% said it was “extremely likely or very likely” that they would use NightBus, and 73% said that they would use the service at least three nights per week.
  - Respondents who reported traveling for work between 1 .am. and 5 a.m. mostly noted arrival or departure times between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m.

## Demand across overnight period from intercept survey (N=2,300)





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# Opportunities for Service Pilot

# Growth in Overnight Employment: Occupations

## Occupations of existing late night commuters in Suffolk County:

- transportation
- food preparation and serving
- office and administrative support
- construction and extraction
- management
- health care practitioners and technicians
- building and grounds clearing
- sales and related
- protective services
- production

## Opportunity to meet future growth:

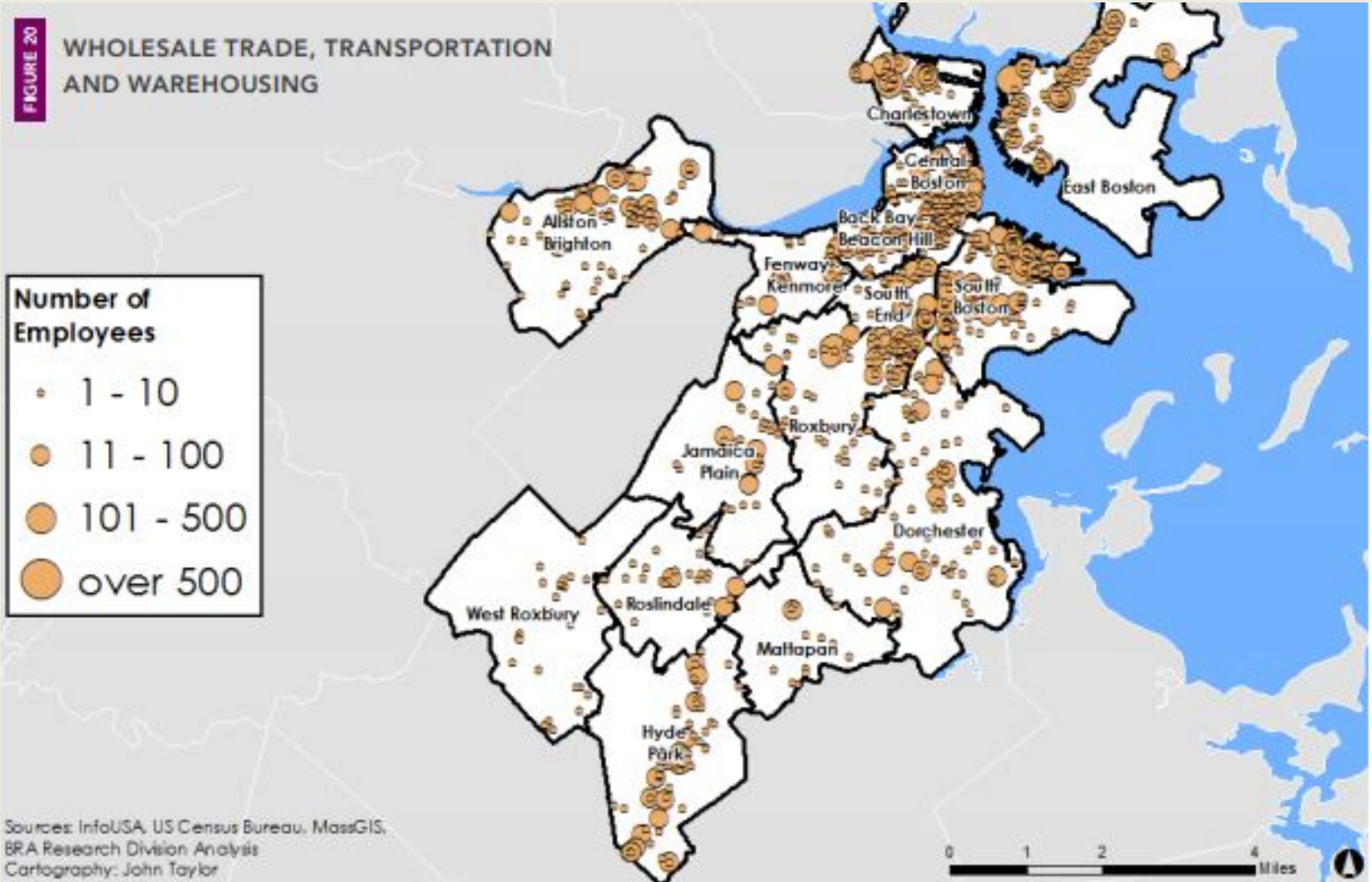
Bureau of Labor Statistics projections suggest administrative support and food preparation and serving positions will have the most annual openings through 2022, **forecasting significant growth in this low wage segment of the regional workforce.**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 5-year American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS); BPDA Research Division Analysis

# Economic Development Opportunities and Existing Clusters

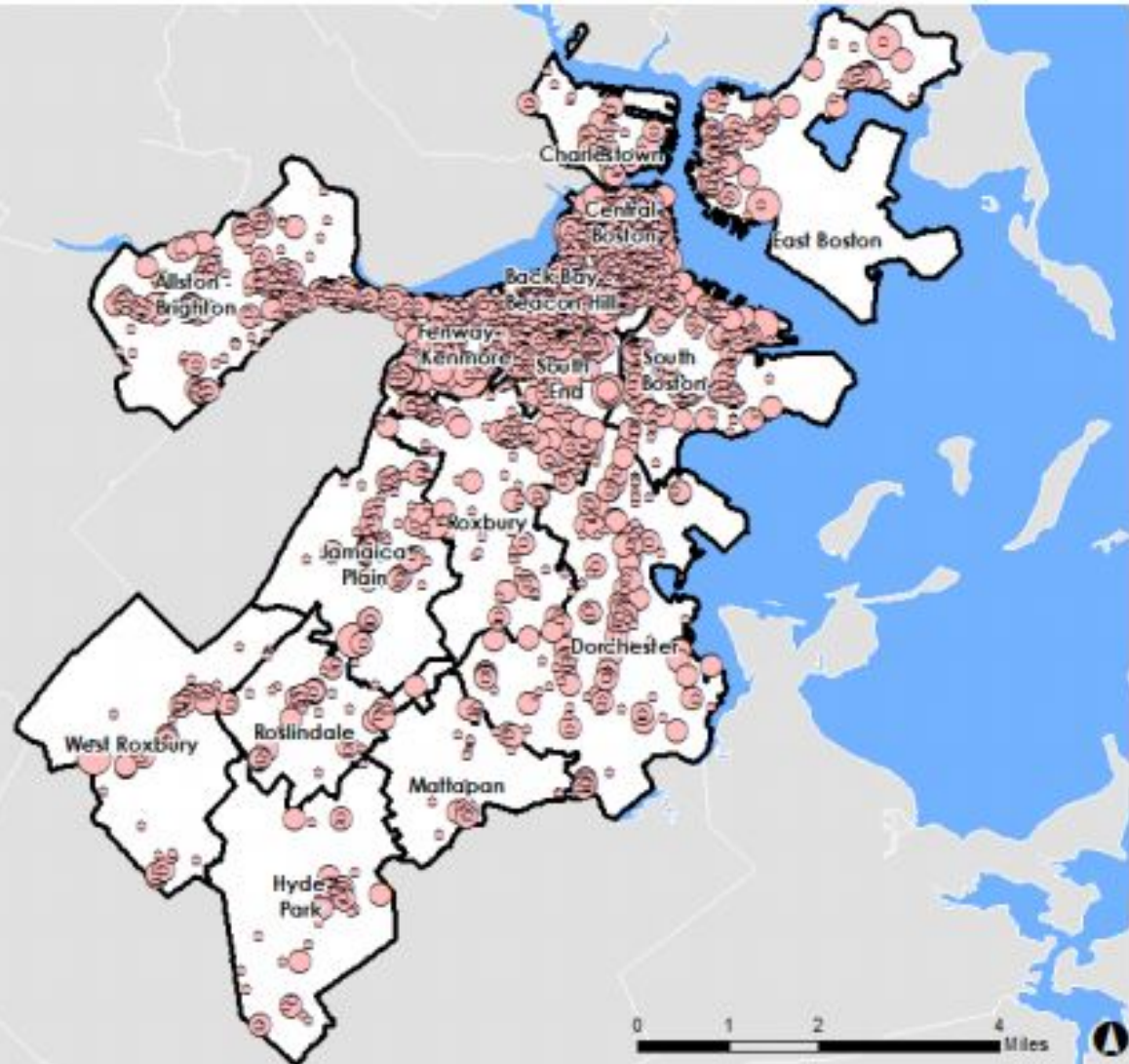
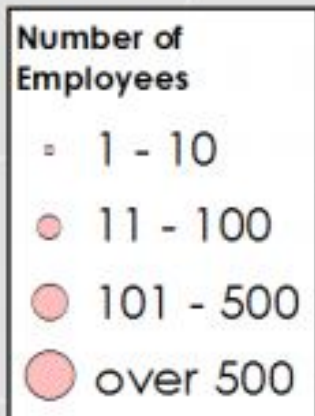
- Geographic clusters of overnight job activity are concentrated in and around key neighborhoods including East Boston, Longwood, and Downtown.
- Health care establishments are located all over Boston, but the largest employers are in Longwood and Downtown Boston.
- Transportation and warehousing firms are mostly clustered around the neighborhoods of Allston, Brighton, South Boston, South End, Charlestown, and East Boston.
- Transportation warehousing firms are located predominantly in areas with limited transit options even during peak commuting hours.
- In the region, Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville have the most alcohol-licensed establishments. Just *six neighborhoods in Boston* (Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Downtown, Fenway, South Boston, and East Boston) *have 322 establishments that have workers unable to take public transit when they leave work.*
- The highest concentrations of hotel establishments and rooms are in the same neighborhoods as restaurants operating later than midnight. This sector continues to grow with another 866 rooms approved in 2016 for Boston alone.

# Wholesale trade, Transportation and Warehousing



**FIGURE 14**

## LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY



Sources: InfoUSA, US Census Bureau, MassGIS,  
BRA Research Division Analysis  
Cartography: John Taylor

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# Public Support

# Overnight Pilot Proposal Sponsors and Supporters

- Sponsors

- Boston
- Cambridge
- Somerville
- Transit Matters

- Supporters

- Representative Madaro
- Representative Carvalho
- Senator Dorcena Forry
- Representative Holmes
- T4Mass
- Alliance for Business Leadership
- ACE / Transit Riders Union
- Conservation Law Foundation
- Massachusetts Restaurant Association
- District 2 City Council Candidate Corey Dinopolous