

Five Recommendations to Make Our Move on Transportation



Developed by The Transportation Table (T3)



Who We Are

We are a group of leaders across major sectors of the Commonwealth – business, industry, municipalities, and nonprofits – who, spurred by the request for ideas from the Speaker and Senate President, have been working together to identify the major chokepoints in transportation and develop a set of recommendations to address them. We agree that a set of inter-related changes are needed that embrace the depth of the problem facing our transportation system throughout Massachusetts, and hope that our recommendations inform better decision making. Together, we call on us all – elected officials, leaders across sectors, citizens – to act now to transform our transportation system so that it works for more residents throughout the Commonwealth.

The Crisis We Can No Longer Ignore

The Commonwealth's transportation system is in crisis. After decades of disinvestment, we face the worst congestion in the country. Our public transportation system is plagued by delays, derailments, and periods where it just doesn't work. Residents in rural areas travel on crumbling roads and bridges, but don't have other ways to get where they need to go. All of this steals time from people every day and threatens the region's economic future. Our transportation system is also the largest contributor to climate change and is woefully unprepared for the extreme weather impacts it will bring. There is no question we are in crisis, but in times of crisis comes opportunity, and we need to make our move now.



Our Vision

The Transportation Table (T3) envisions a 21st century transportation system that no matter where one lives, they can get where they need to go. We deserve a transportation system that is accessible, reliable, affordable, resilient to climate change, and fueled by clean energy. Ultimately, we want people to choose to drive less because their public transit options are so good.

To achieve our vision, we must fully modernize our rail system and dramatically improve bus service. Good roads, bridges, bikepaths, and more sidewalks are a large part of the solution. And, we should also work together on bold new ideas, taking inspiration from the best and most innovative mobility systems in the world. If we do these things, we will have a transportation system that Massachusetts residents can be proud of, and is a delight to use.

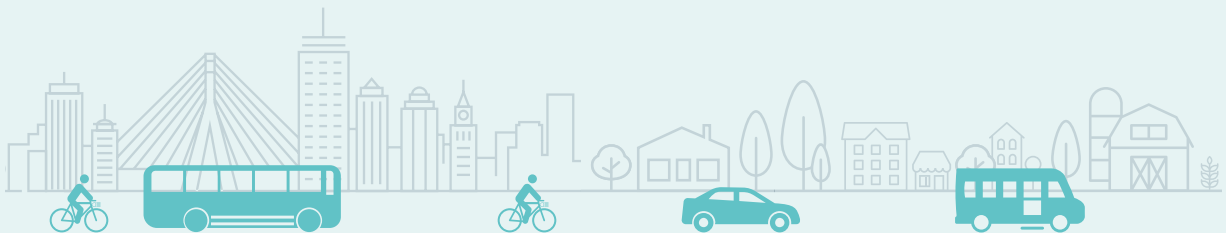
Our Recommended Approach

As referenced in the Future of Transportation Commission's report, innovation, climate change, and demographic shifts will significantly shape our transportation needs. We need a comprehensive approach that addresses five key chokepoints: governance, congestion, capacity, climate, and investment.

We identified and synthesized these chokepoints through a months-long research process, drawing on the collective knowledge of all the key leaders involved.

To drive toward our vision, we call on the Legislature, the Administration, and the Commonwealth's employers to address:

- 1 Governance:** Establish a robust governance structure that ensures accountability and transparency;
- 2 Congestion:** Employ pricing policies to reduce congestion and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and invest these funds in more frequent and reliable bus and rail services, Bus Rapid Transit, and greater transit connectivity, especially for underserved populations;
- 3 Capacity:** Grow the capacity of public entities to become more responsive, flexible, and effective and to deliver capital projects more quickly and efficiently;
- 4 Climate Change:**
 - a) Mitigation:** Accelerate GHG emission reductions through more multi-modal transportation options and the electrification of buses, trains, cars, and trucks;
 - b) Resilience:** Invest in climate resilient infrastructure and projects to protect against the ravages of extreme heat, storms, and floods; and
- 5 Investment:** Accelerate investment in the Commonwealth's transportation services and infrastructure by dedicating more revenue now – and in the future.



Many of these issues intersect and should be addressed concurrently in order to move us toward our transportation future. For example, successful reduction of congestion requires not just a pricing mechanism but also much improved public transit options. And, without the right governance and accountability structures in place, we run the risk of poor implementation and increased public skepticism.

The opportunities T3 proposes overlap as well. New programs to reduce congestion can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Similarly, more reliable and frequent bus service, especially in electric vehicles, benefits congestion, climate, and economic and social equity.

We also agree on the cross-cutting aim that the Legislature, the Administration, and other decisionmakers prioritize actions that get more people out of their cars, such as roadway pricing, tolling, and reduced parking options in core job centers.

These five recommendations position the Commonwealth to deliver short-term improvements to transportation services that customers will experience, while planning the future transportation system that Massachusetts residents deserve and that keeps our economy strong.

We look forward to continuing the conversation.