

STREETSBLOG

Streets Need to Be Safe for Black Lives, Too

By StreetsblogMASS | Jun 1, 2020 | 0 COMMENTS



St. Louis County police in riot gear confront protesters in Ferguson in August 2014. Photo by Jamelle Bouie, licensed under Creative Commons.

It's been one week since Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, choked George Floyd to death in a Minneapolis street, and three months since a retired Georgia cop and his son gunned down Ahmaud Arbery on a quiet street in Georgia.

Both killings were caught on videos that contain damning indictments not only of the uniformed killers themselves, but also of a cronyist criminal justice system that condones and defends police violence: in Minneapolis, [three other police officers stood by and did not intervene while George Floyd begged for his life](#); in Georgia, county prosecutors with



personal ties to Arbery's killers attempted to defend the perpetrators' actions and declined to file any charges (after widespread public outrage, state investigators who later took over the case finally arrested the suspects earlier this month, [73 days after Arbery's death](#)).



Now, America's tolerance for violent police brutality may be near its breaking point, as protests across the nation take over streets and major highways to demand justice.

For advocates of safer streets and sustainable transportation, these high-profile police killings should serve as a visceral reminder that infrastructure alone can't allay the threats and anxieties of being in public spaces with brown skin.

Late last week, Tamika Butler, Director of Equity and Inclusion and Director of Planning for California at Toole Design Group, [wrote of those anxieties in an essay titled "Stop Killing Us: A Real Life Nightmare."](#) Butler asks white people to ask themselves five questions on a daily basis:

I really need white people to do more than just say they're fighting for justice... I want them not just to lean in, but to live in, to an urgency to do more. I want them to sit with these things and not turn away when they hear themselves say the answers:

1. Do *I* understand that **'not being racist' isn't the same as being anti-racist**?
2. Why am *I* so afraid to be **brave** enough to [confront my power and privilege](#)?
3. What am *I* waiting for to decenter whiteness and realize **just because I have never experienced it (or seen the research to prove it) doesn't mean it isn't real**?
4. What am *I* doing every single day to force myself to **think about racism and white supremacy**?
5. What am *I* doing every single day to **stop the killing of Black people**?

Butler's five questions are also worth asking in terms of how we advocate for safer streets, and whether we're dedicating as much attention to the hazards of hate-motivated harassment and assault against our vulnerable neighbors as we are to the safety hazards that affect us directly.

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Rep. Pressley, Sen. Markey Introduce Legislation to Fund Fare-Free Transit

By Christian MilNeil | Jun 26, 2020

Massachusetts Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and Senator Ed Markey today announced a new bill – the “Freedom to Move Act” – that would provide grant funding to help states and local transit agencies eliminate fares. The proposed legislation would authorize \$5 billion a year to fund “Freedom to Move Grants” – a new competitive grant program [...]



Saturday: Dedham to Hold Delayed Vote on Trail Referendum

By Christian MilNeil | Jun 25, 2020

Voters in Dedham will head to the polls on Saturday to decide whether to support the Dedham Heritage Rail Trail, a 2-mile connection between downtown Dedham, the town's schools and the Readville commuter rail station. The advisory referendum asks voters whether they "favor, if there is no cost to Dedham taxpayers for design and construction, [...]"



DCR Hosts Virtual Meeting to Discuss Arborway Safety Improvements

By Christian MilNeil | Jun 24, 2020

The state Department of Conservation (DCR) hosted a second public meeting Wednesday night for a project that's expected to create new, protected bike and pedestrian routes along the Arborway in Jamaica Plain. The DCR's "Arborway Parkways Improvement Project" kicked off last winter, and is aiming to produce detailed designs for a construction project that would [...]





The New Allston Turnpike Plan Looks A Lot Like the 1965 Allston Turnpike Plan

By Christian MilNeil | Jun 23, 2020

The latest proposal would rebuild much of the massive, eight-lane-wide viaduct that has loomed over putative parkland on Allston's riverfront since the mid-1960s.

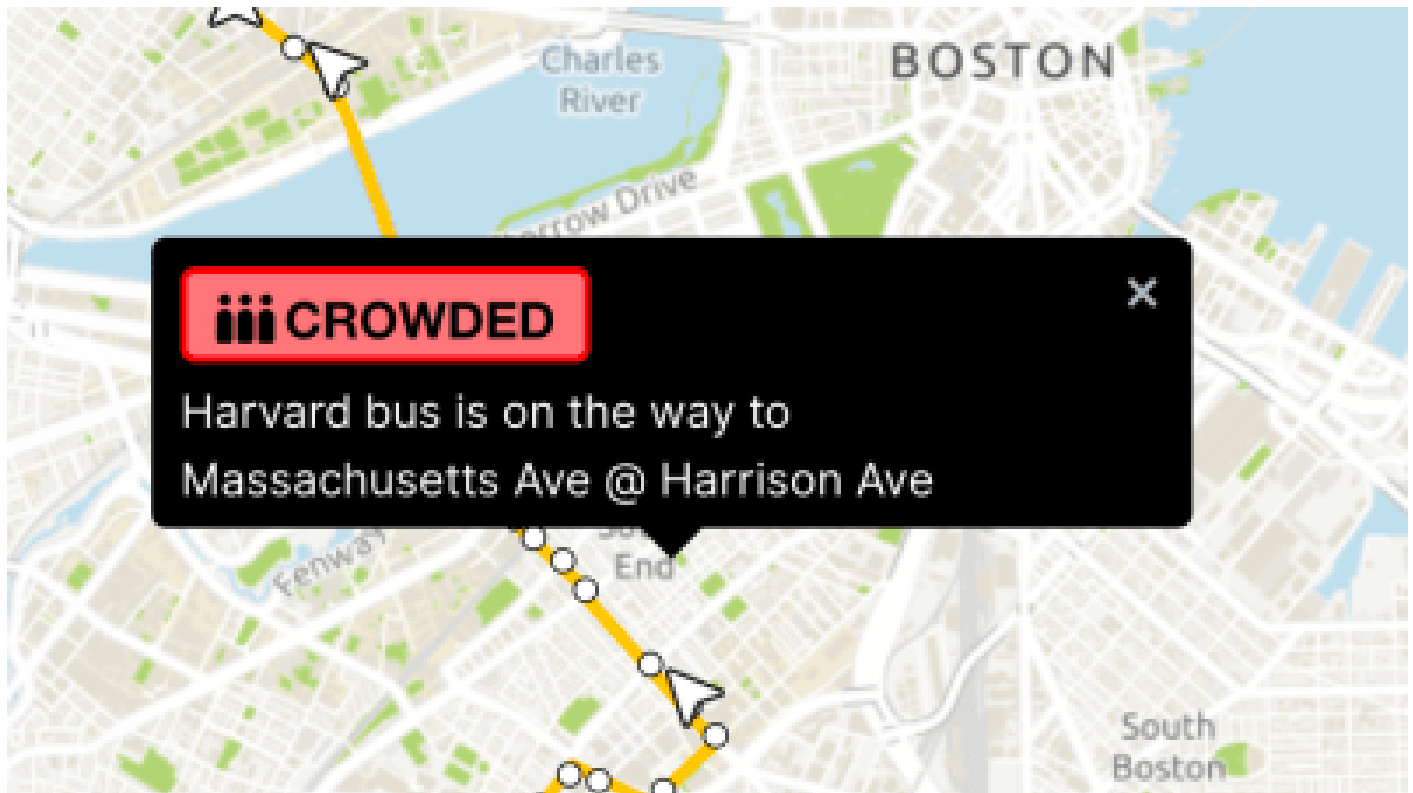


TransitMatters Issues Detailed Game Plan for Regional Rail Upgrades



By Christian MilNeil | Jun 22, 2020

Advocates from TransitMatters have released a detailed, \$2.6 billion strategy for upgrading key commuter rail lines to attain 15-minute, all-day service to Beverly, Providence, and along Boston's Fairmount Line. Last November, the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) endorsed an aspirational vision to electrify the MBTA commuter rail network to provide all-day, rapid-transit-style service [...]



MBTA Rolls Out Real-Time Crowding Data for Nine Bus Routes

By Christian MilNeil | Jun 19, 2020

Initially, the new data will be available on nine routes: the 1, 15, 16, 22, 23, 31, 32, 109, and 110.

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