



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
MICHELLE WU

March 10, 2025

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councilors:

I hereby transmit for your approval an Order authorizing the City of Boston Transportation Department to enter into a contract for a period of up to ten years for the services of an operator for the City's public bike share program, Bluebikes. The contract term would begin in 2026. The City Council's permission to enter into a contract of this type for a period of more than three years is required by section twelve of chapter 30B of the General Laws.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council ("MAPC") intends to issue a request for proposals (RFP) on behalf of the municipalities of Boston, Arlington, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Newton, Revere, Salem, Somerville, and Watertown to select a new operator for the regional Bluebikes system. MAPC will select one operator to manage the entire system to ensure that it operates regionally. Each Bluebikes municipality will then have the opportunity to contract with the selected operator separately. The current operator's contract expires in April 2026. MAPC intends to release the bike share operations RFP in early 2025 to allow sufficient time for contract negotiations with the selected vendor. I am requesting that the attached Order be approved by March 15, 2025 so that vendors can submit their bids with confidence in the City's authority to enter into a long-term contract.

In July 2016, City Council authorized the Boston Transportation Department to enter into a bike share operations contract for a period of up to 10 years. The long-term contract has facilitated tremendous success in expanding the bike share system in metro Boston and ensuring its sustainability. With the assurance of a 10-year term, our operator was able to secure a \$18-million title sponsorship agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Massachusetts, which was renewed in 2023 for \$28 million. In addition, over the course of the contract, Bluebikes municipalities have expanded stations by 175%, including 153 stations in Boston. Annual Bluebikes trips have tripled in this same period, surpassing 4.7 million in 2024 alone. Close to 70% of these trips started or ended in Boston.

As the Bluebikes system moves toward its 14th year of operation, the City has identified three goals necessary to ensure the system's continued success: (1) improving user happiness through availability of docks and bikes; (2) growing the number of trips by increasing the number of casual users and members, particularly through the Boston Bikes Pass; and (3) increasing equity of access and use, by ensuring every household in Boston is within a 10-minute walk of Bike Share—our Go Boston 2030 goal for bike share.

To achieve these goals, Streets Cabinet staff and municipal partners have developed a revenue-sharing financial model for bike share that incentivizes the operator to provide a high level of service to users, and to foster strong sponsorship relationships with external funders. By requiring the operator to handle the cost of operations, fundraising, and marketing for the system, the model also allows the City to focus municipal resources on ensuring a strong state of good repair, and reducing financial barriers to bike share for our residents.

I respectfully request that the City once again enter into a longer-term contract to encourage the operator to achieve these outcomes, and to ensure ongoing high-value title sponsorship for the system.

I urge your Honorable Body to pass this Order expeditiously.

Sincerely,


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Wu'.

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL

AN ORDER AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BOSTON TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO TEN YEARS FOR THE SERVICES OF AN OPERATOR FOR THE CITY'S BIKE SHARE PROGRAM.

ORDERED: That the City of Boston Transportation Department be, and hereby is authorized, pursuant to section twelve of chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws, to enter into a contract for a period of up to ten years for the services of an operator for the City's bike share program.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY
THE FORGOING, IF PASSED IN
THE ABOVE FORM, WILL BE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH LAW.**
BY 
ADAM CEDERBAUM kmw
CORPORATION COUNSEL