John Bowman Bio

John Bowman has lived on Beals Street since 1992. He has a PhD in Transportation Systems from MIT and has worked as a consultant in the field since 1998. He served on the Brookline committee that drafted Brookline’s Complete Streets Policy and currently chairs the Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Name for credits: John L. Bowman

Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee website: <http://brooklinebikes.org/>

BAC Committee membership:

* John Bowman, chairman
* Bryan Decker
* Mark Lowenstein
* Jacob Meunier
* Kristin Schreiber
* Cynthia Snow
* Tommy Vitolo

Ex officio:

* Jonathan Kapust (Transportation Board liaison)
* Sgt Brian Sutherland (police liaison)

Key points about Bicycle Advisory Committee

1. Place BAC in context of Transportation Board: The T Board consists of six members, appointed by the Select Board, who are responsible for the rules and regulations governing the town’s streets. The Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC), Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) and Pubic Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC) are all appointed by the Transportation Board and their purpose is to advise the Transportation Board on matters that affect their respective areas of interest. The BAC’s official mission is to encourage, plan for, advocate for, and advise the Transportation Board about bicycling in the Town of Brookline.
2. One of the main things we do each year is update a document called the Green Routes Bicycle Network Plan. [Display the Green Routes Map]. It lays out a vision for a connected network of bicycle friendly streets and pathways throughout town, makes very specific street-by-street suggestions for achieving that vision, and monitors progress. The Transportation Administrator uses the Green Routes Plan as a guide for including bike accommodations when the DPW is going to repave or renovate streets. The BAC then reviews and provides its opinions about the design options laid out by the Transportation Administrator.
3. A recent important example of a project the BAC was involved with is the buffered bike lane on Beacon Street outbound between Coolidge Corner and Washington Square. The lane goes between the parking lane and the motor vehicle travel lane. It is separated from both by buffer zones that help protect bikes from opening car doors and moving motor vehicles. This has proven to be popular with cyclists, who perceive it as a great improvement in safety and comfort. It has also been used by people with mobility disabilities [Display the Beacon Buffered bike lane photo]. Another example is Centre Street behind the Arcade and Coolidge Theatre, where a buffered bike lane will be installed this year in the southbound direction.
4. In 2017 the BAC conducted a study of the frequency of bike lane violations in town, made possible by the efforts of 16 volunteers. A bike lane violation occurs when a motor vehicle stops on the side of the road obstructing the lane, forcing bicyclists to merge into the flow of motor traffic. [Display Violation photos 1 and 2]. The key finding was that on Beacon and Harvard Streets, two main thoroughfares for bicycles, bike lanes were obstructed 27% of the time. The conclusion is that unprotected bike lanes are inadequate for these busy streets. One follow-up action that the Transportation Board has approved is a demonstration of a protected bike lane on a short stretch of Beacon Street in Washington Square. Among other actions being considered is the addition of more loading zones so that trucks have more places to stop other than in bike lanes.

Key points about the Complete Streets Policy

1. Background: Brookline’s Complete Streets Policy was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Select Board in 2016. Brookline is one of hundreds of cities and towns throughout the United States to adopt a Complete Streets Policy.
2. The Complete Streets movement, and Brookline’s policy, lays out a new vision for our streets. It represents a shift from designing streets for cars to designing them for people, including people of all ages and abilities and including the town’s most vulnerable users, as noted in Brookline’s policy. [Consider displaying the following excerpts from the Brookline Complete Streets Policy:

The Town will create a comprehensive transportation network that sufficiently accommodates **people of all ages and abilities**, whether traveling by foot, bicycle, wheelchair, mass transit, or motor vehicle.

The needs and safety of **the town’s most vulnerable users shall be given special consideration** during project planning. Users may be considered vulnerable by virtue of their mode of transportation, such as bicycling or walking, or because of their age or ability, such as small children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities.]

1. Brookline’s policy also focuses attention on the importance of the town’s core strengths and values. [Consider displaying the following excerpts from the Brookline Complete Streets Policy:

Brookline’s transportation network will maintain or enhance **the town’s core strengths and values**:

* Convenient, inclusive and safe access by people of all ages and abilities, to all community destinations and activities, via all forms of transportation;
* Walkable neighborhoods, commercial districts, and neighborhood school districts;
* A network of open spaces, beautiful public spaces, and streets that incorporate trees, vegetation, and art, encourage social engagement, are pleasant to move about and be in, and contribute to a healthy environment;
* Economic vitality of local businesses;
* Environmental sustainability and transportation choices that reduce carbon emissions and other adverse environmental and public health impacts;
* Active, healthy lifestyles; and
* Social equity

1. Under the Complete Streets Policy, when the Town undertakes street projects, it seeks to implement them in ways that satisfy the objectives of the policy. This is a challenging task for two important reasons:
   1. Brookline’s streets are narrow. It is impossible to improve conditions for modes that have been previously underserved, especially bicycles, without compromising conditions for motor vehicles, especially on-street parking.
   2. Brookline’s Transportation budget is constrained, and it costs more money to provide better accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians while maintaining good accommodations for motor vehicles.