

Research in Progress

Translating Data Generated by the Transit App into Insights on Transportation Use in Greater Boston

Research Need

The *Transit* app provides the MBTA with data generated by users, including user locations, trip searches, and “favorite” routes. This information goes beyond that which MBTA already has access to. A full understanding of customers' journeys can lead to improved bus networks, improved real-time response to disruptions and information provision, and a more holistic planning process.

Goals/Objectives

This project addresses three main objectives:

- 1) Constructing and documenting a process for making the content of *Transit* data available to the MBTA for both historical analysis and real-time tracking;
- 2) Matching the data with other data sources describing the places, events, and conditions of transit usage in greater Boston; and
- 3) Demonstrations of the substantive value of the *Transit* data through a series of initial studies that address questions of mobility, public transit experiences, and resiliency in the Boston area.

Project Information

This project is being conducted as part of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Research Program with funding from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) State Planning and Research (SPR) funds.

Principal Investigators:

[Dr. Daniel O'Brien](#), [Dr. Ryan Wang](#)
[Dr. Justin de Benedictis-Kessner](#)

Performing Organization:

Northeastern University

Project Champion:

Dave Barker, MBTA

Project Start Date:

November 2018

Expected Project Completion Date:

September 2020

Methodology

This study is built on data collected by the *Transit* app. The analyses will use this data by first creating data storage. From analyzing the data, the researchers will start to develop meaningful forms of analysis, and then use these analyses to help inform the planning process and also to further understand the customers themselves through the data that is analyzed.

Research and Technology Transfer Section
MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Planning.Research@dot.state.ma.us

