

Reclaiming the Street: The Impact of Better Bike & Bus Infrastructure

Monday, October 25th, 2021

Marah Holland, Transportation Planner II Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

Where were we prepandemic?

December 2016

Everett pilots the first dedicated bus lane in the Boston region in over a decade. After three days of success, Everett decides to continue their pilot indefinitely.

September 2017

Everett launches a permanent bus lane with paint and pavement markings.

December 2017

Boston briefly pilots a bus lane in Roslindale on Washington Street from Roslindale Square to Forest Hills.

May 2018

Boston conducts a longer bus lane pilot in Roslindale, and soon after decides to make the peak-only shared bus/bike lane permanent.

Bus priority projects continued to be implemented in Greater Boston throughout 2020 and 2021. Various funding sources, including the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program accelerated many projects in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

October 2018

Arlington starts a month-long pilot for a bus priority lane, queue jumps, and signal changes on Massachusetts Avenue.

Cambridge and Watertown pilot their bus improvements including a bus lane, and signal retiming along Mount Auburn Street and Belmont Street.

June 2019

Boston launches a permanent shared bus/bike lane on Brighton Avenue inbound.

August 2019

Somerville launches a permanent bus lane on Broadway.

Cambridge and Watertown

July 2018

Everett installs level boarding

platforms at two major bus

stops on Broadway.

make their bus improvements permanent.

October 2019

Arlington makes their peakonly bus lane permanent.

Boston launches a permanent shared bus/bike lane on Brighton Avenue outbound.

Where were we pre-pandemic?

September 2019 – Livable Streets released 64 Hours: Closing the Bus Equity Gap

Source: <u>Livable Streets Alliance</u>

March 2020 – Boston ranked as America's most congested city – again

Source: INRIX

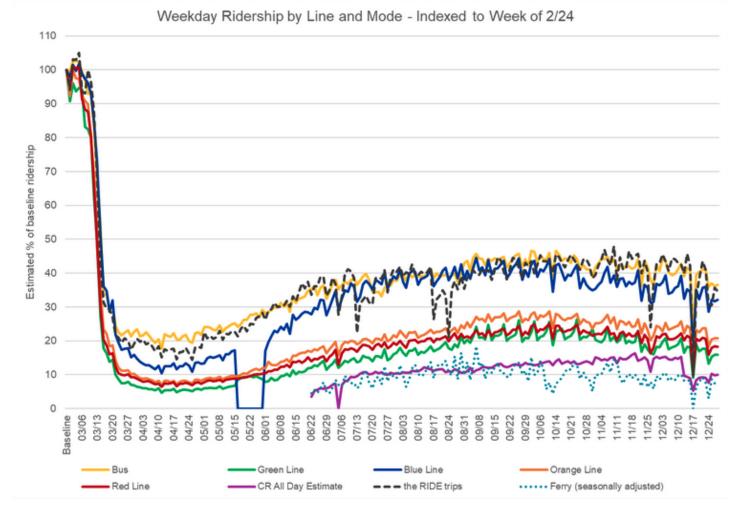
Annual Travel Time Disparity Compared to White Riders Black Riders +64 hours Latinx Riders +10 hours

Source: MAPC Regional Indicators, 2014

Pandemic MBTA Ridership

Throughout the pandemic, MBTA routes with higher proportions of people of color, low-income residents/riders, and people with limited vehicle access saw the least amount of change in ridership.

Source: MBTA Back on Track



Source: <u>MBTA Back on Track</u>

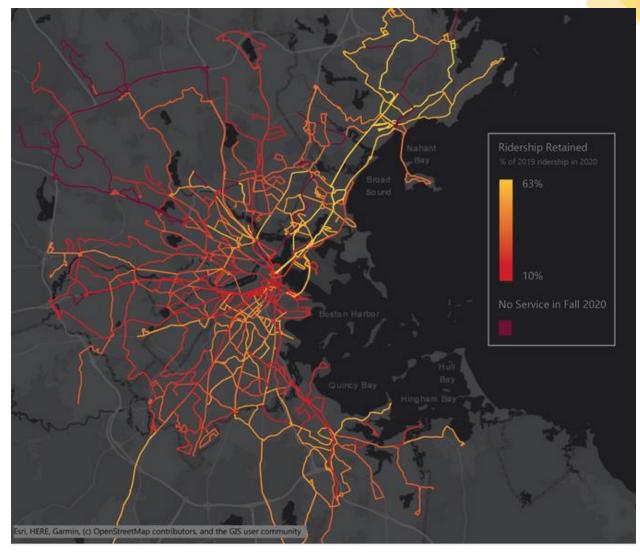
Pandemic MBTA Ridership

Ridership Retention: Fall 2019 vs. Fall 2020

- From this map, a few broad routes continued to see high ridership during the pandemic:
- Routes in Roxbury / Dorchester / Mattapan, Chelsea / East Boston, and Lynn / Salem
- Routes that travel a long distance, such as the 70
- Routes that provide the only service to a particular area, such as the 34E

Source: MBTA Back on Track

Explore more data on pandemic ridership here: <u>MassDOTMobility Dashboard</u>



Source: MBTA Back on Track

Pandemic response - Shared Streets

Summer 2020 – MassDOT announces the first round of Shared Streets and Spaces funding

Examples

- July 2020: **Somerville** To create a dedicated bus lane and protected bicycle lanes at a high-delay intersection on a top 20 MBTA bus route.
- October 2020: Lynn was awarded \$125,000 to fund the costs of street marking/painting – in standard safety red – for a new bus lane.
- March 2021: The MBTA, in partnership with Revere and Chelsea, received \$196,900.00 to install a peak-only shared bus/bike lane on the southbound side of Broadway, from Revere Street to the Revere/Chelsea line.
- July 2021: Malden, in partnership with the MBTA, received \$491,000.00 to construct dedicated bus and bike lanes on Centre Street between Main Street and the Malden Center Orange Line station.



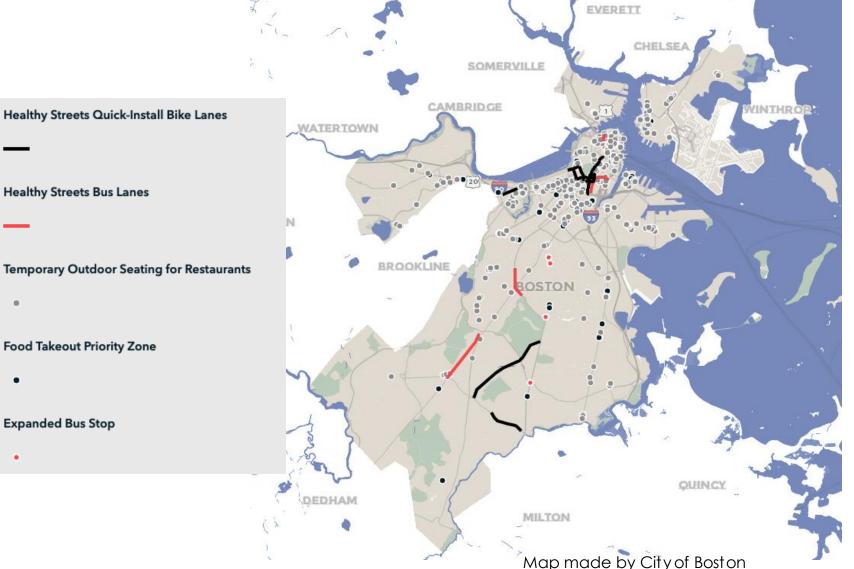
New shared bus-bike lane on North Common St in Lynn, Photo from the MBTA

Pandemic response – Boston Healthy Streets

Boston's COVID-19 response was driven by their Go Boston 2030 Goals:

- Equity
- Economic
 Opportunity
- Climate Responsiveness

More information: <u>www.boston.gov/healthy-streets</u>

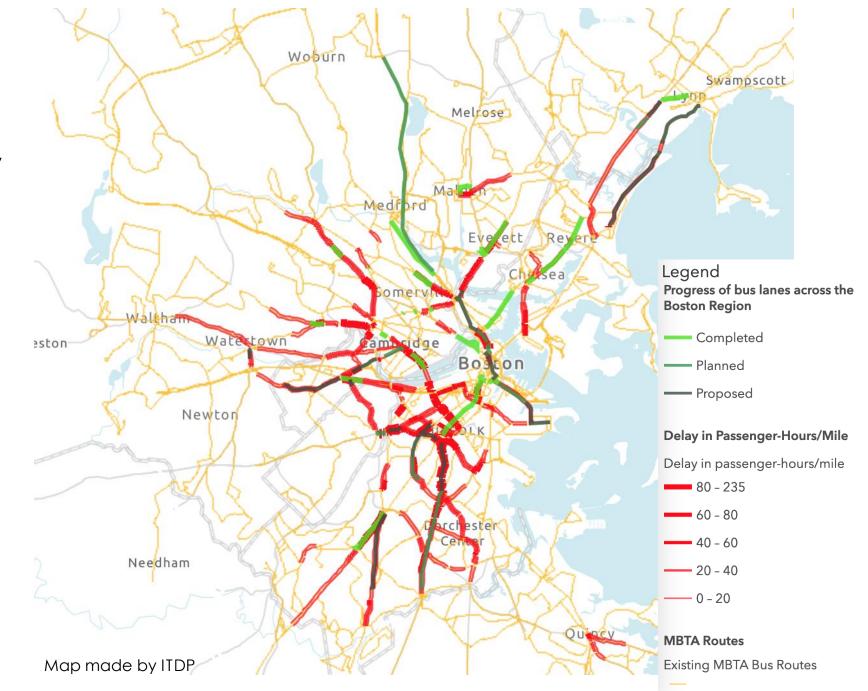


Current Bus Priority Lanes

The current network of bus priority lanes is focused on the highest delay corridors in the MBTA bus system

Link: <u>https://www.arcgis.com/home/web</u> map/viewer.html?webmap=21b6330c4ae 640d4ba0758bc5904f410&extent=-71.2197,42.232,-70.9838,42.3366

Map



Results

Cambridge & Watertown

- MBTA bus riders will save 36,000 hours of travel time on Mount Auburn Street in one year, with no measurable impacts on driving.
- 57% of roadway users are satisfied with the way Mount Auburn Street works now. (Compared to19% pre-project)
 Source: Boston BRT

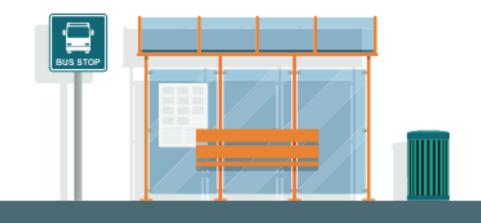
<u>Everett</u>

- 81% of bus riders supported for making the elevated platforms permanent.
- Riders reported reduced waiting times as well as improved boarding and exiting, particularly for people with mobility challenges and with young children in strollers.
 Source: Boston BRT

<u>Arlington</u>

- Bus riders in Arlington saved up to **10 minutes** on their commute.
- Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents reported satisfaction with the dedicated bus lane pilot.

Source: Boston BRT



MAPC's Latest Resource



View Report Here: MAPC Get It Rolling



Marah Holland, Transportation Planner II Mholland@mapc.org

