



Boston Police need public's help tracking down hit-and-run driver who maimed cyclist Sunday

The victim is in critical condition.

By Erin Tiernan | Published : May 01, 2017 | Updated : May 01, 2017



Boston Police are asking for the public's help in tracking down a car involved in a hit and run early Sunday morning that left a 30-year-old Boston man fighting for his life.

The silver sedan hit the cyclist around 3:19 a.m. Sunday as he was traveling on Commonwealth Avenue near Clarendon Street in the Back Bay neighborhood, police said.

Police said the cyclist, who was traveling with another biker who was not hit, was transported to Massachusetts General Hospital with life-threatening injuries.

In an interview with WCVB, Police Commissioner Bill Evans said the cyclist was hit, dragged for about 10 feet and slammed into another car before the driver of the car sped off, turning the wrong way down Berkley Street to make its escape.

“Right now he’s in tough shape,” Evans said. The victim is listed in critical condition at MGH.

The sedan would have suffered damage to its roof near the windshield on the driver’s side, Evans said.

“Obviously this four-door silver vehicle is going to have some grill damage in the front from the impact,” he added. “If anyone is out there and knows, please contact us.”

Safe streets advocate Andrew McFarland said the severity of the Sunday crash illustrates the city’s need for better protections for cyclists and pedestrians.

“Something we’ve been advocating for and the Vision Zero Coalition has been advocating for is stepping up response from the city,” said McFarland, of LivableStreets Alliance, a nonprofit that advocates for safety, access and enjoyable streets for all road users.

“It’s really, really unfortunate that this crash happened and we need to be prepared to respond to it in a way that really affirms we care about traffic violence,” he said.

The city has committed to take steps to cut traffic fatalities down to zero by 2030. Last year 23 people died on Boston streets, though there were no cyclist fatalities within the city limits. Boston has started the work, but McFarland said Boston officials need to work faster to protect pedestrians and cyclists with things like protected bike lanes, flex posts and better signs.

“This stuff is pretty easy to do in the grand scheme of things and doesn’t really require large capital costs,” he said. “It’s mostly repainting lines, flex codes — this isn’t like the Big Dig.”

Boston saw a slight decline in fatalities from 2015 and 2016, with 23 and 21 respectively, but it saw a 6 percent rise in injuries on city streets. Despite the rising risk of injuries, Boston has decided to level fund its Vision Zero initiative.

"There's only \$3.1 million allocated for Vision Zero funding, which is very, very low — even for a city of Boston's size," McFarland said.

To put it in perspective, that's about \$5 per Boston resident per year. By contrast, New York City spends \$13 per resident on similar programs and San Francisco tips the scales at about \$75 per resident.

Anyone with information on the crash can contact Boston Police at 617-343-4470. For anonymous tips, call 1-800-494-TIPS or text the word “TIP” to 27463.