

Allston Gets a New Bike/Bus Lane

Red paint is expected to go down in the next few days – here's what bus riders and cyclists can expect.

By [Christian MilNeil](#) | [Jun 12, 2019](#)



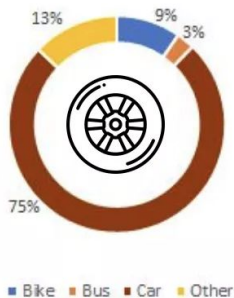
A Route 57 bus in Packard's Corner in April 2016. Wikimedia Commons photo by Pi.1415926535.

It's been a rough week for the MBTA and its riders, with [a Saturday derailment on the Green Line](#) that injured 10, and an extremely disruptive [Red Line derailment](#) during this morning's rush hour, but some good news is here for riders on two of the agency's busiest bus routes.

Over the course of the next few days, Boston's public works crews will lay down a carpet of red paint on Brighton Avenue in Allston to install the city's newest bus lane on Brighton Avenue, which has been a significant bottleneck for the MBTA's 66 and 57 bus lines and their 14,000 daily riders.

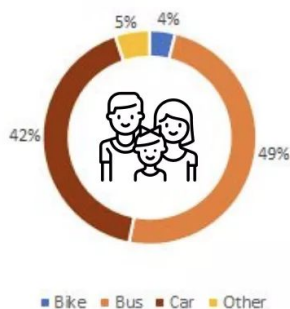
The new bus lane will extend eastward (in one direction only) from Union Square to Packard's Corner, and unlike the rush-hour lane installed in Roslindale last year, the Brighton Avenue lane will be exclusively for bikes and buses around the clock.

AM Peak Vehicles



The City of Boston's roadway utilization analysis shows that buses carry more people than private cars on Brighton Avenue during the morning peak hours. Courtesy of the City of Boston Transportation Department.

AM Peak Passengers



City data show that, during the morning rush hour, buses carry more people on this section of Brighton Avenue than private vehicles (see chart at left), and that each rush-hour bus is delayed by 2 to 2.5 minutes on this half-mile segment. With dozens of full buses plying this route every

hour, that wasted time adds up: without a bus lane, bus passengers collectively lost over 20 hours to traffic each day on Brighton Avenue.

Kristiana Lachiusa, a Community Engagement Coordinator for [LivableStreets](#), has been collaborating with Brighton Avenue's small businesses and community organizations like [Allston Village Main Streets](#) and the [Allston Brighton Health Collaborative](#) since 2017 to advocate for the new lane.

"Allston is seeing lots of new development. There are thousands of new housing units being proposed, and without better transit service, that's potentially thousands of new car trips in the neighborhood," says Lachiusa. "A number of community members wanted something to be done to make it easier to bike or take the bus, so thinking about how to make the buses move more quickly was a big focus."

[In a statement issued early Tuesday morning](#) (before it was overshadowed by the Red Line wreck), Mayor Walsh said he was "proud" to support a project "that will improve commute times, reduce congestion and reduce emissions from motor vehicles in the neighborhood."

Like the Roslindale lane, the new Brighton Avenue bus lane will also be open to bikes, and will connect to the [new protected bike lanes currently being installed on Commonwealth Avenue](#) east of Packard's Corner.

In May, [LivableStreets hosted a "bus-bike workshop"](#) to give neighborhood cyclists a chance to learn how the new lane will function, and talk with bus drivers to learn what to expect.

"We wanted to create an opportunity to open lines of communication between bus drivers and cyclists," says Lachiusa. "For instance, bus drivers, when they're going to pass a bike rider, will beep their horn. A lot of riders have never heard that before – the bus drivers aren't honking to tell you to get out of the way, it's just a heads-up. Another thing was learning where the blind spots are on a bus... on the right side, there are significant blind spots, and it's where passengers are boarding, so it's important for cyclists to move to the left in order to pass a stopped bus."

Brighton Avenue's eastbound lanes have been freshly paved and are currently being prepared for new roadway markings. The city announced in a press release that the installation of the lane will begin on Wednesday.