



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“All-Door Boarding” Demonstration to Test BRT Features on Washington Street Silver Line Buses

Two-week long “Silver Line Better Bus Experience” to showcase possibilities for faster, more reliable commute for 14,000 riders

Boston, MA (May 22, 2017) -- BostonBRT, the MBTA, and the City of Boston announced today a partnership to demonstrate “all-door boarding,” a core feature of bus rapid transit (BRT), along the SL4 and SL5 Washington Street Silver Line between Dudley Square and downtown. During the [Silver Line Better Bus Experience](#), running from May 24-June 6, the public will be able to board and exit buses through all doors to test how this improvement creates a faster, more convenient, and reliable ride. The demonstration will include all Silver Line Washington Street buses (SL4 and SL5) in both directions, at every stop, from start of service on May 24 through the end of service on June 6.

“This project exhibits an essential level of partnership between a transit agency and municipality as well as a willingness to experiment with new ideas, both of which are crucial for transforming our bus system,” said Mary Skelton Roberts, senior program officer for climate at the Barr Foundation. “It’s one thing to do the analysis of all-door boarding. It’s another thing to put the idea to the test, and to give people an actual experience of how much better buses can be.”

The Silver Line Washington routes are one of the MBTA’s highest ridership bus routes, carrying 14,000 riders on an average weekday. Two-thirds of the delay on the SL4 and SL5 comes from the amount of time it takes for riders to get on and off the bus. Riders currently only board through the front door, in a single file line, paying as they get on the bus. The time it takes each person to pay (using Charlie Cards, Charlie Tickets, dollar bills, or coins) creates wait time at each stop that adds up over the course of a ride. The [Silver Line Better Bus Experience](#) will test all-door boarding as a proxy for the off-board fare collection process that makes BRT boarding and exiting work like a subway train.

BRT elements – which make transit more reliable – take effort from both the transit agency and municipality. The City of Boston already has two core BRT elements in place: dedicated lanes/bus-only lanes for most of the SL4 and SL5 corridors, and transit signal priority, which minimizes the time buses are stopped at red lights, which is currently at eight intersections along the routes. During the [demonstration](#), the City of Boston will ensure the buses can use the lanes unimpeded by vehicles.

“Improved bus service on the Silver Line from Dudley Square to Downtown is one of the priority projects identified in the Go Boston 2030 Mobility Plan,” said Chris Osgood, City of

Boston Chief of Streets. “We are very pleased to be participating in this pilot program to help us to improve the reliability and quality of service for bus riders on this corridor.”

“Improving bus service for our customers is a top priority for the MBTA. The T has begun a process that will examine each of its current routes and, once complete, we will implement improvements to better meet the needs of our customers,” said Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack. “This project provides the opportunity for both MBTA staff and our customers to better understand the time savings that can occur as a result of the incorporation of all-door boarding, a BRT element that is already part of the MBTA’s AFC 2.0 plan.”

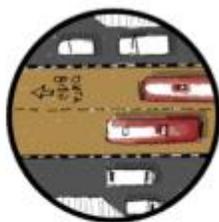
“It's exciting for us to continue to explore all-door boarding and this project is a great opportunity for data-gathering,” said MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board Member Monica Tibbits-Nutt. “The FMCB continues to be encouraged by partnerships like this one in coming up with innovative ideas to address the customer experience and to strengthen the relationship with the communities the MBTA serves.”

Volunteers from BostonBRT and community partner organizations will survey riders to better understand how getting on and off the bus using all doors affected their commuter experience and educate riders about the other bus improvements that are possible as part of a BRT system.

Funding for the demonstration is made possible through the support of the Barr Foundation, working in partnership with MassDOT, the MBTA, the City of Boston, and community organizations.



Dedicated Right-of-Way
Bus-only lanes fully segregated from mixed traffic



Busway Alignment
Bus-only lanes aligned to the middle, not the curb, of a road



Off-Board Fare Collection
Turnstile-controlled or proof-of-payment fare collection system



Intersection Treatments
Mixed-traffic is prohibited from making turns across the busway



Platform-Level Boarding
Station platforms level with bus floors when boarding and alighting

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About BostonBRT

BostonBRT is a research and community engagement initiative spearheaded by the Barr Foundation to explore the potential of Gold Standard BRT for Greater Boston’s mobility needs. Begun with a research phase, Boston BRT released a report in 2015 identifying five corridors where Gold Standard BRT is technically feasible and where there is already sufficient rider

demand. BostonBRT is now coordinating with municipalities, community groups, and neighborhood leaders to educate about the benefits and trade-offs of Gold Standard BRT, and the opportunities to incorporate Gold Standard BRT in their transportation planning efforts. BostonBRT can be found online at www.bostonBRT.org and @bosBRT on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).