

# EVERETT

## Transforming a Parking Lane into a Shared Bus/Bike Lane for the Morning commute

Morning Peak Time Dedicated Bus Lane

Pilot: December 2016 to September 2017

Permanent: September 2017



Everett Bus Stop // Ad Hoc Industries

Fast, reliable, and accessible transportation was lacking in Everett, and city officials knew something had to change. A city just north of Boston, Everett saw that its lack of quality transportation options for residents and those passing through were insufficient. Originally the Mayor wanted to explore extending the Orange Line or the commuter rail, both of which would be costly and lengthy projects. However, after MassDOT completed the Everett Transit Action Plan in November 2016, it was clear that bus improvements would be a faster, and cheaper, way to prioritize transit in the City.

Everett's Mayor was a strong believer in the Transit Action Plan and provided the political will for changes to be made. Mode share data showing that 50% of people on the corridor were on the bus was the single biggest thing that convinced the Mayor and his administration that bus riders were not a minority and should be prioritized for street space.

The Everett Transit Action Plan, which included extensive public process, helped set the stage for the City to begin a pilot for bus improvements shortly after the conclusion of the study. Most new planning projects go through a lengthy and typical process of holding nighttime meetings with residents, gathering feedback, and then spending months working with consultants to reach a final design, but this project was different. With the foundation of the Transit Action Plan, the City of Everett made a decision to try a new project implementation process.



## CASE STUDY / EVERETT

In December 2016, immediately after the completion of the Everett Transit Action Plan, the City of Everett piloted the first shared bus/bike lane in the greater Boston region since the Silver Line in Boston. The pilot took place on Broadway, the main thoroughfare through the city which has approximately seventeen bus trips traveling along it during the morning peak period. With the mantra “the pilot is the process,” Everett gave one week’s notice to residents before restricting parking on one side of the street and putting down cones to designate the space for buses and bikes. A previous MAPC parking study along Broadway gave the City crucial data showing that parking spaces were lightly utilized prior to 9:00am, which gave City officials the knowledge that parking displacement would not be significant during the pilot.

Using cones was intended to mimic a construction zone, something that drivers would be familiar with and know not to park or drive in. The City used this practice to pilot their bus lane on Broadway’s inbound parking lane during the morning peak commute time. Every morning during the pilot the City’s public works department would repurpose 200 parking spaces into a shared bus/bike lane with the help of 300 orange cones. By using temporary materials that could easily be moved, removed, or changed, the city had time to understand how the pilot was working and hear about people’s experiences before investing a large amount of money into permanently changing the street.

Coordination with external agencies was key. The MBTA ensured that bus drivers for the routes in Everett were informed and trained about the adjustments they would need to make for the pilot. Simultaneously while planning the physical changes, Everett also coordinated with multiple local media outlets to ensure that residents and commuters were aware of the pilot and to tell the story of how a simple re-allocation of street space could have incredible benefits to users.

Results from the pilot showed that the one-mile bus lane cut trip times by 20-30%, which prompted the city to start working on the next steps of bus stop consolidation, transit signal priority, and planning for more bus/bike lanes.

In addition to bus lanes, Everett provided shared, dedicated space for both buses and bikes, where this street previously had no bike infrastructure. The bike community, almost overnight, started to utilize the shared bus and bike lane. The city continued to encourage use by installing Bluebikes bikeshare stations at some bus stops and studying the running speeds of both kinds of vehicles to ensure it would be safe for people riding bikes.

Everett’s strategy for implementation gained wide-spread recognition. It was so successful in the eyes of the public and in improving commute times that on day three of the pilot, Everett’s Mayor decided to continue the bus/bike lane indefinitely.



*Everett Bus Lane on Broadway // City of Everett*



*Everett Bus Lane in Sweetser Circle // City of Everett*



Everett Public Art // BRTBoston

According to Julia Wallerce, Boston Program Manager for the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, “Not only did the bus lane shave time from people’s commutes and improve reliability of the bus, it gave people an overall better bus experience, which contributed to a perception of time savings that was often significantly higher than was actually saved.”

## What happened next?

Everett’s transformative bus lane led to a domino effect in Greater Boston, with numerous other municipalities piloting and laying down permanent fixtures for bus lanes throughout the region. Everett continued their work to prioritize bus service within the city as well. In 2020, a new outbound bus lane was installed on Broadway during the evening peak hours, and new 24-hour bus lanes were painted along the outer edge of Sweetser Circle. To complement the bus improvements, the city also installed level-boarding platforms, partnered with a local artist to transform a bus stop into a “flower bomb,” and added Bluebikes bikeshare stations near bus stops. All of these improvements worked together to enhance the experience of waiting for and riding the bus, as well as connecting to and from the Broadway corridor.

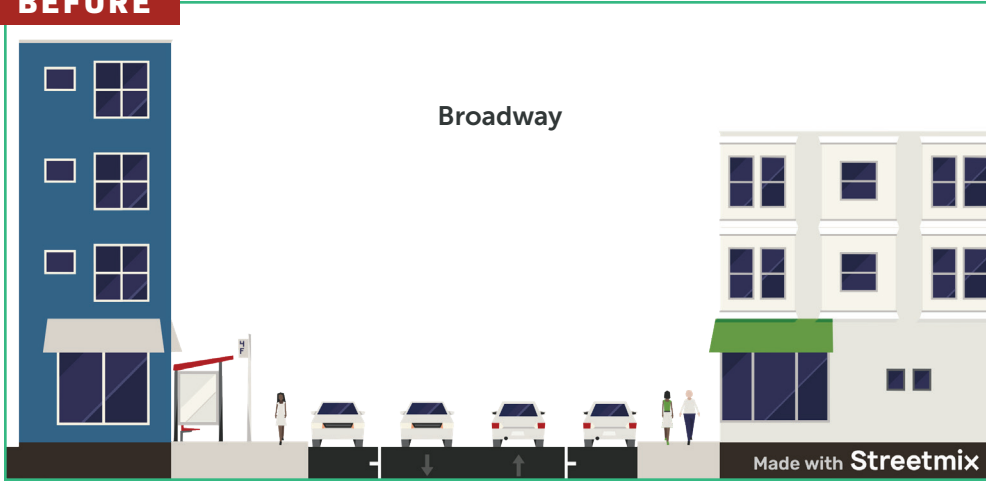
See **Everett’s Transit Action Plan** for additional information: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/07/02/EverettTransitPlan-FinalReport.pdf>



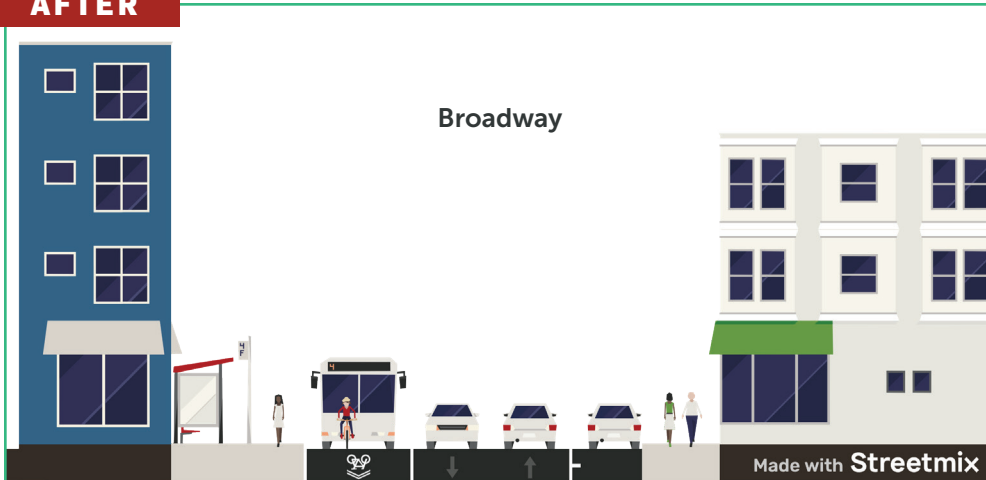
Everett Postcards // Ad Hoc Industries



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**DATA**

**Type of Improvement:**

AM Peak bus lane (4am-9am)

**Length of Improvement:**

1.1 miles

**Bus Routes Along Corridor:**

97, 104, 109, 110, 112

**Exact Location:**

Broadway between Ferry St and Route 16

**Starting Intersection/Point:**

Broadway at Ferry Street

**Ending Intersection/Point:**

Broadway at Sweetser Circle (Route 16)

**Weekday Ridership:** 7,500 people

**Vehicles Allowed to Use Bus Lane:** MBTA buses, emergency vehicles, school buses, bikes

**Multimodal Improvements:**

Only bus infrastructure, but bikes allowed to use lane

**Land Uses Along Corridor:** Commercial

**Pilot or Direct to Permanent:**

Pilot first, then permanent

**Dates of Pilot:** December 2016 – September 2017

**Dates of Implementation:** September 2017

**Parking Study:** Yes (by MAPC)

**Planning Study:**

Everett Transit Action Plan (2016)

**Average bus rider time saved:** Up to 8 minutes

**Post-implementation Survey Satisfaction:**

74% of survey respondents listed "satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied"

