

# Columbus Ave Summary of Survey Results

---

Compiled by LivableStreets Alliance

Surveys Conducted December 1- 11, 2021

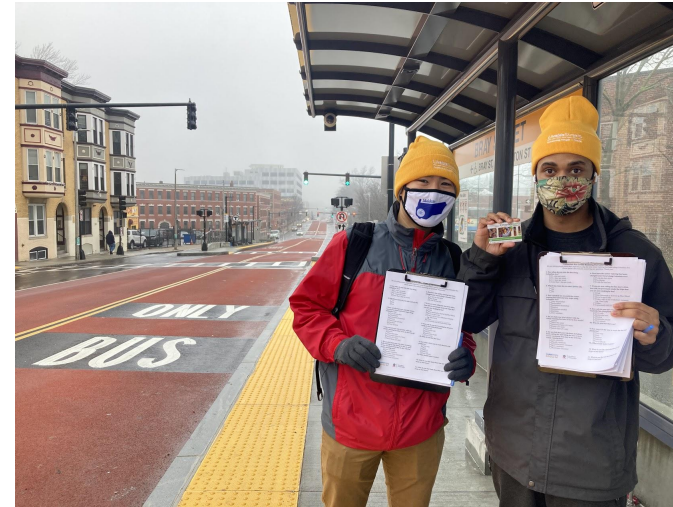


# Background

Between December 1-11, 2021, LivableStreets Alliance led a team of Street Ambassadors to speak with bus riders to support the evaluation of the new center - running bus lanes on Columbus Ave in Boston. Street Ambassadors spoke with and collected surveys from 183 people riding the 22, 29, and 44 buses.

Street Ambassadors also gave out \$5 preloaded CharlieCards and coffee to thank people for sharing their experience.

LivableStreets Alliance then analyzed the data and compiled this report.



# Overview of slides

- Survey Distribution
- Survey Responses
- Observations + Notes
- Conclusion



# Survey Distribution

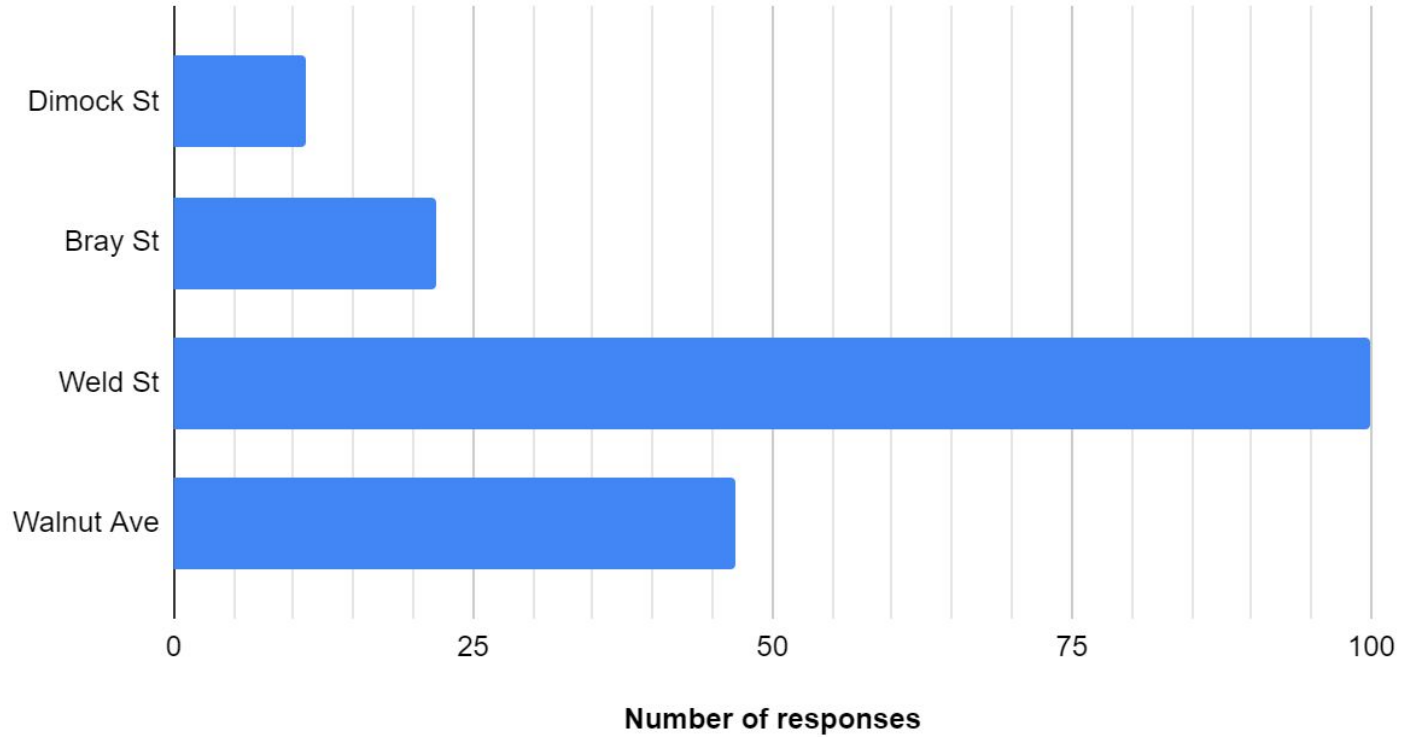


# Locations of Surveys Conducted

Street Ambassadors conducted surveys at each of the four new center-running bus stops on Columbus Ave, from Dimock Street to Walnut Avenue. As Weld St has the most riders getting on or off, a majority of the surveys were completed at this location. Three additional people completed surveys at the Churros & Chocolate; Mayor's Tree Lighting event in Egleston Square on December 18th, 2021.



## Locations of Surveys Completed

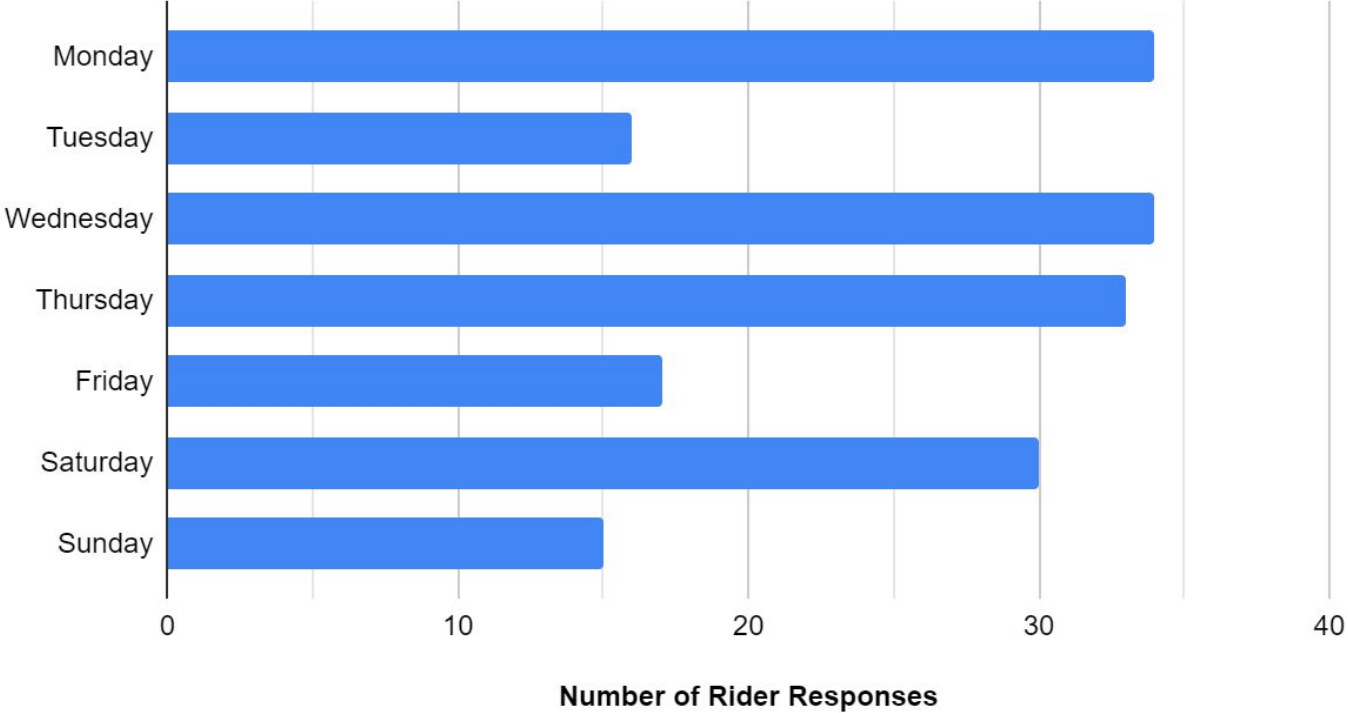


# Timeframe of Surveys Conducted

To understand variations in rider experience, Street Ambassadors spoke with people on all days of the week and weekend and at various times throughout the day. Due to rider volumes, there are variations in number of responses across days of the week and time of day.

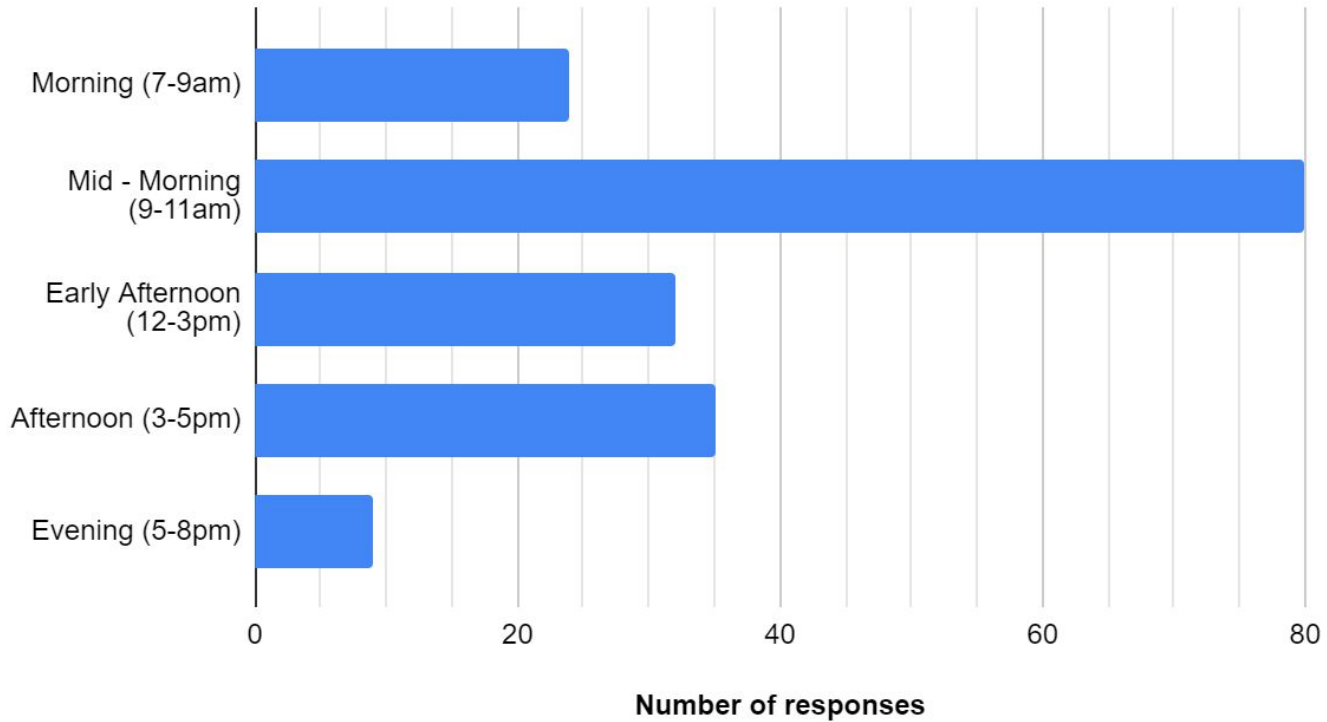


# Day of Week Survey Completed





## Timeframe of Surveys Conducted



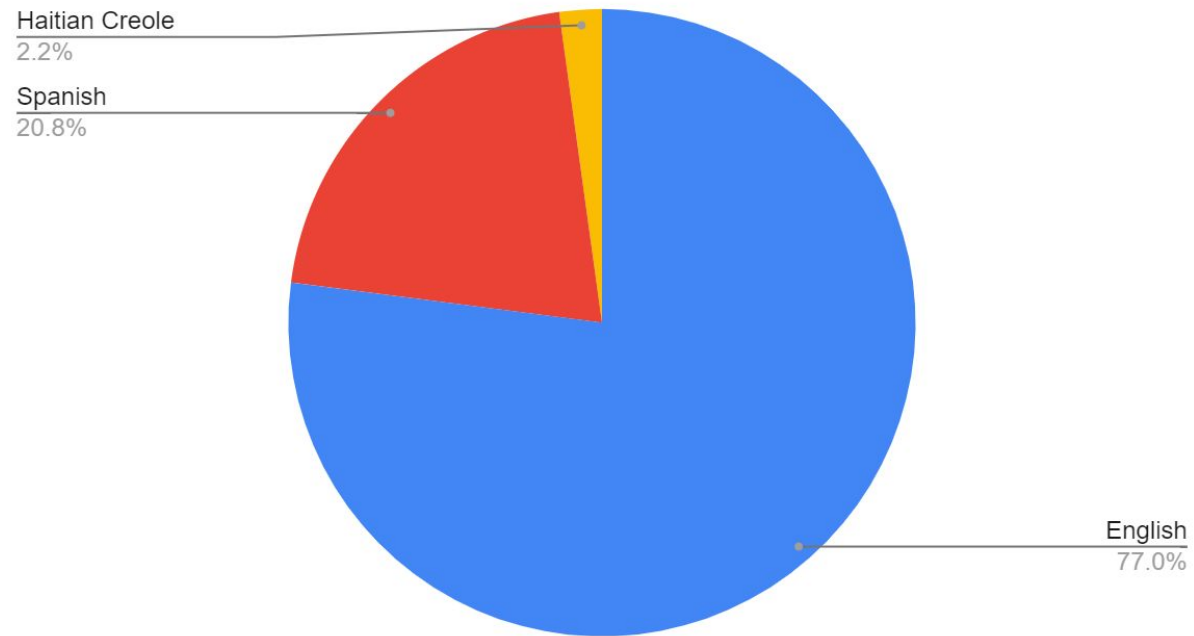
# Languages of Surveys Conducted

As Roxbury hosts speakers of many languages, Street Ambassadors were prepared to speak with with people in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Chinese.

Of the 183 surveys collected 141 were conducted in English, 38 in Spanish, and 4 in Hattian Creole.



## Languages Surveys Were Conducted In



# Survey Responses



# Survey Questions

1. How often do you ride the bus along Columbus Ave?
2. Which bus route(s) do you take?
3. How satisfied are you with the center-running bus lanes and new stops along Columbus Ave?
4. Do you feel your trip is faster with the center-running bus lane? If so, by how much?
5. Do you feel that your trip time, including both waiting for and riding the bus, is more or less consistent from day to day with the center-running lane?
6. How have the center-running bus lanes changed your travel along Columbus Ave?
7. If you are now riding the bus more often, how did you previously make the trips that you are now making by bus?
8. How safe do you feel crossing the street to reach the bus stop platforms?
- 8b. Why do you feel that way?
  9. How easy is it for you to reach the bus stop platforms?
- 9b. What would make it easier?
  10. What do you like most about the new bus stops or bus lanes?
  11. What do you like least about the new bus stops or bus lanes?



# Caveats

Although the Street Ambassador team collected 183 surveys, not all surveys are fully complete due to a variety of factors, this includes the surveying cut short due to riders boarding their bus, leaving for their destination, or declining to answer certain questions.

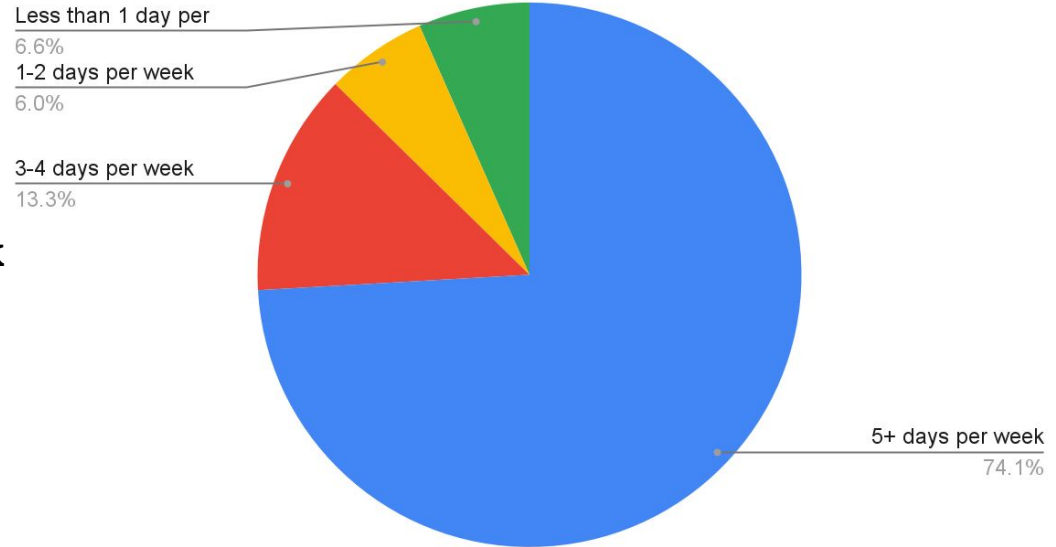


# Question 1: Frequency of Bus Usage

(166 responses)

- 74% rode **5+ days per week**
- 13% rode **3-4 days per week**
- 6% rode **1-2 days per week**
- 6% rode **less than 1 day per week**

Count of 1. How often do you ride the bus along Columbus Ave?

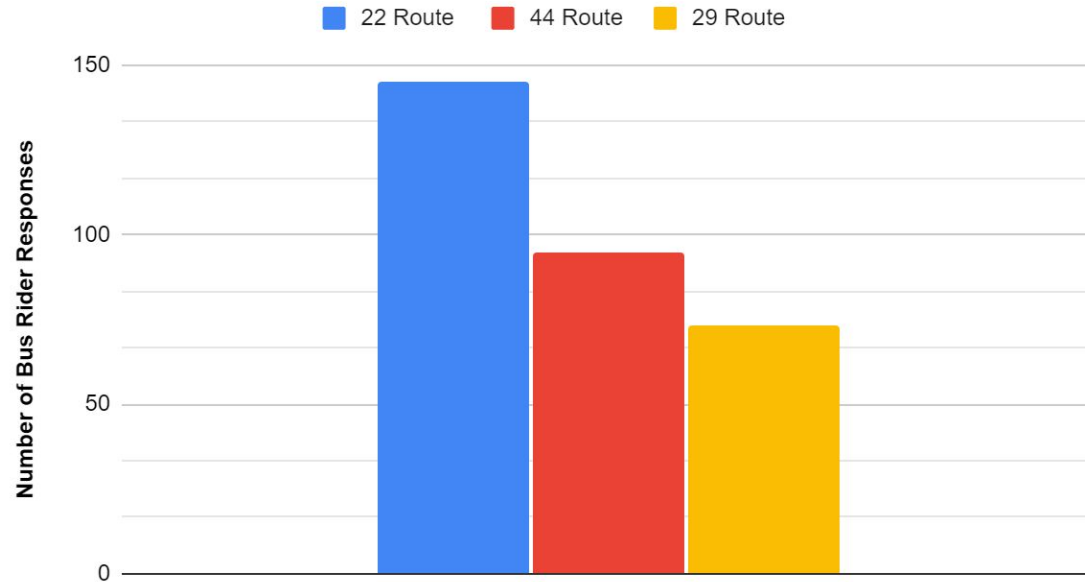


# Question 2: Bus Routes Used By Respondents (171 responses)

- 85% use the **22 bus**
- 55% use the **44 bus**
- 43% use the **29 bus**

\*note 55% of people selected multiple bus routes

Bus Routes Used by Participants

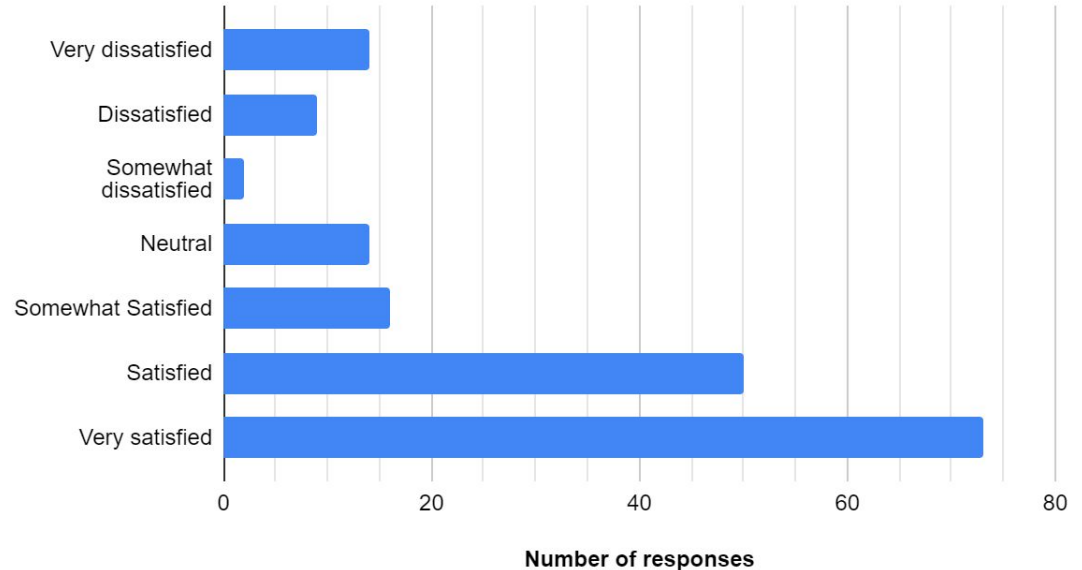




# Question 3: Satisfaction with Center - Running Bus Lane (178 responses)

- **Over 78% of riders were satisfied**
- **The remaining 22% were neutral or felt the bus lanes were dissatisfactory**

Satisfaction With Center - Running Bus Lane



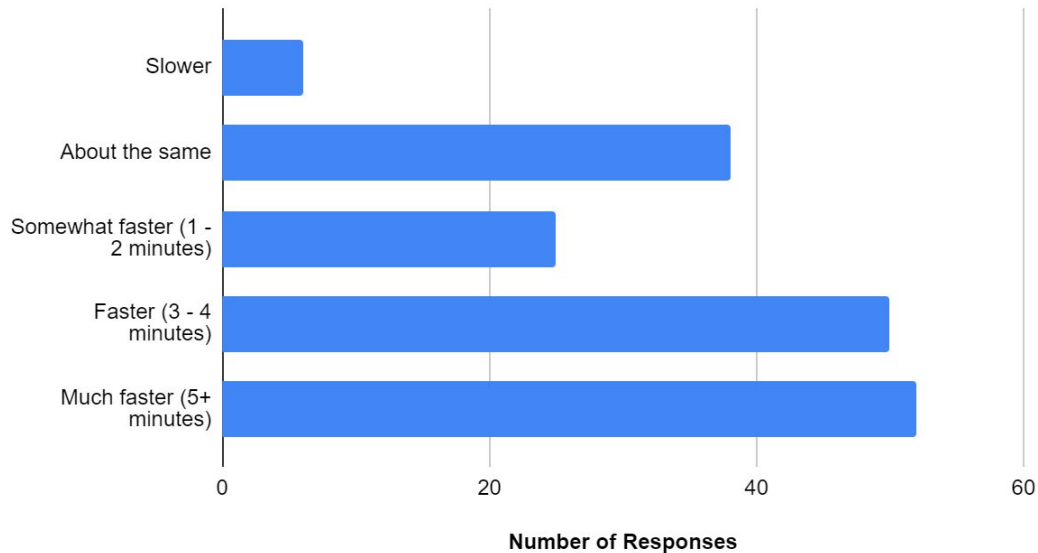
# Question 4: Center - Running Bus Lane Affect on Perceived Trip Length

(171 responses)

- **74% of riders** reported that they experienced faster trips

*"I feel like I'm the mayor getting an escort"*

Center - Running Bus Lane Affect on Perceived Trip Length

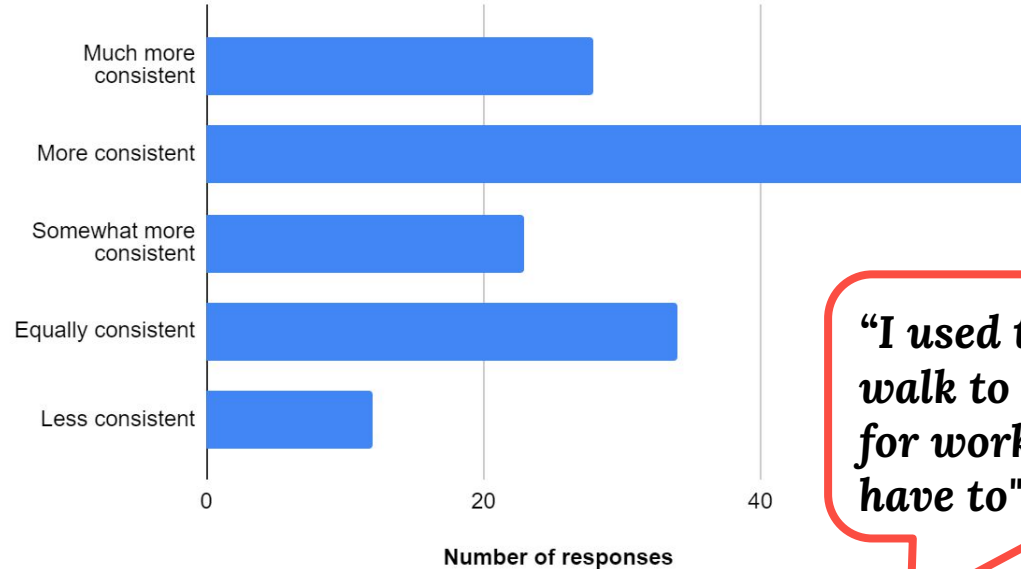


# Question 5: Center - Running Bus Lane Affect on Perceived Consistency

(157 responses)

- 74% of respondents experienced more consistent service

Center - Running Bus Lane on Perceived Consistency



*"I used to sometimes walk to be on time for work, now I don't have to"*

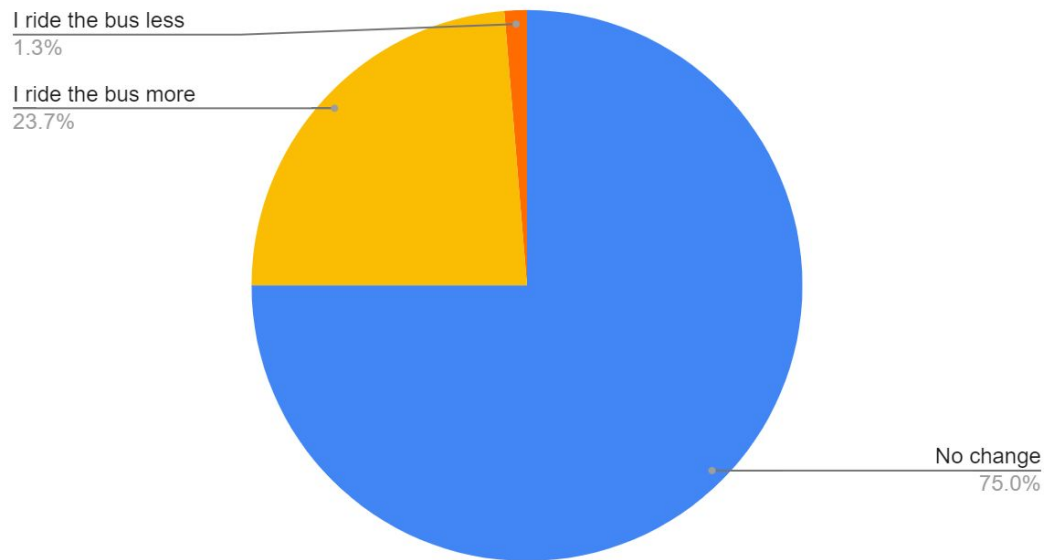


# Question 6: Center - Running Bus Lane Affect on Bus Usage (152 responses)

Of the riders who didn't change their bus usage:

- 77% of riders took the bus 5+ days a week (90% 3-5 days a week)
- 74% saw faster trip lengths
- 71% believed their buses were more consistent
- 82% felt safe reaching the bus platform

Center - Running Bus Lane Affect of Bus Usage



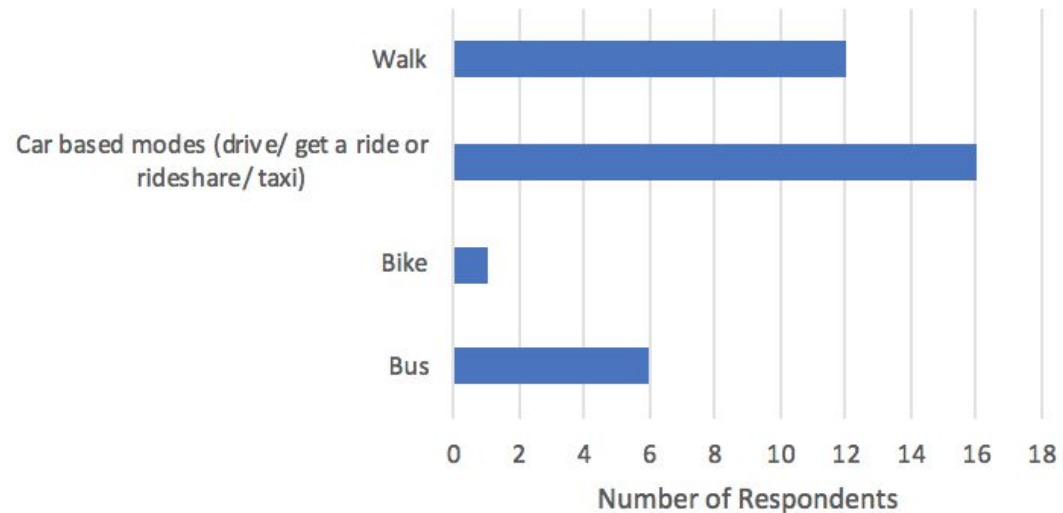
# Question 7: Mode Change

(35 responses)

Of the 24% of riders who said they use the bus more because of the center-running bus lanes:

- 57% previously used a car based mode
- 43% of people previously walked

Mode Used Before Center-Running Bus Lanes

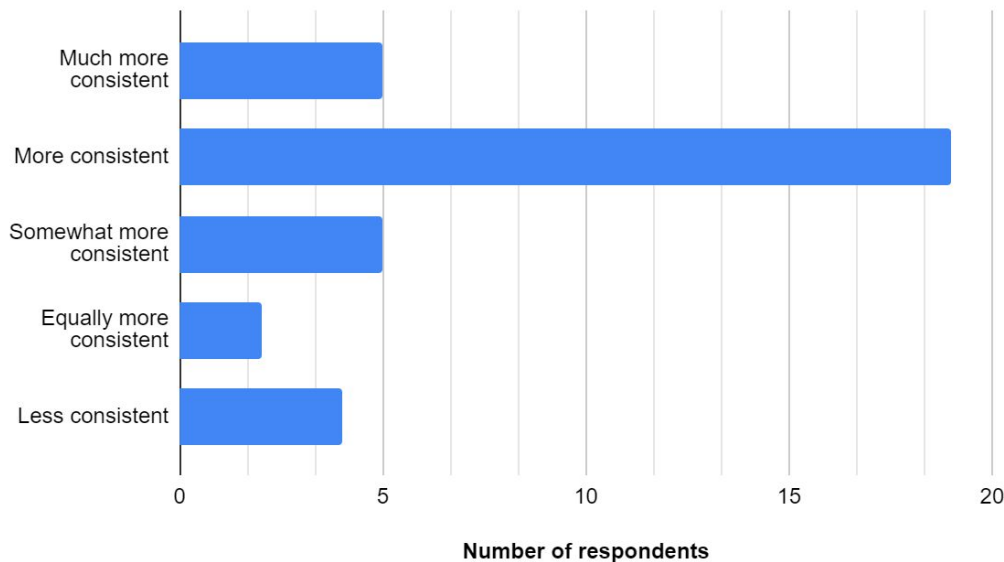


# Mode Shift + Perceived Consistency

(35 responses)

64% of riders who took the bus more felt that their bus trips are **more consistent**.

Mode Shift and Perceived Consistency

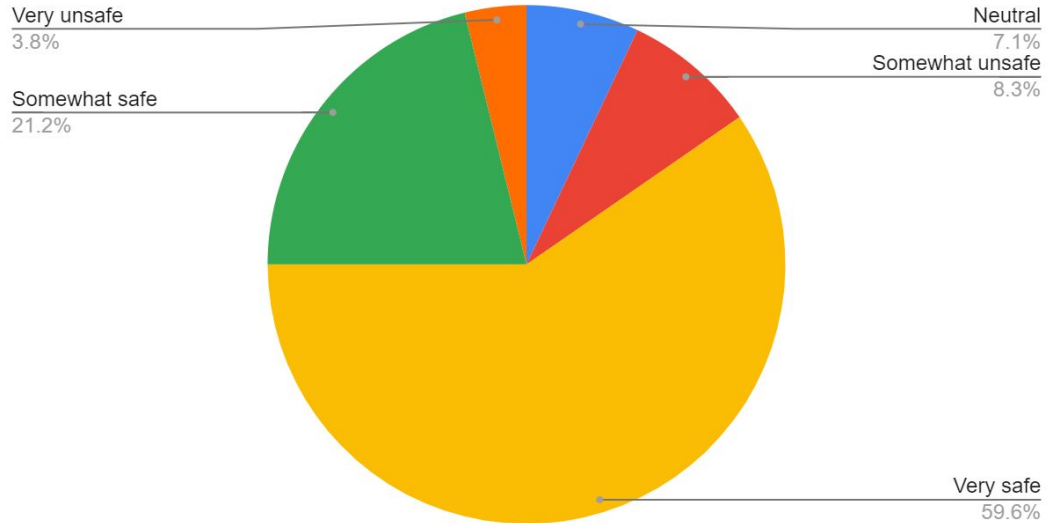


# Question 8: Perceived Safety of Crossing the Street (156 responses)

**81% of riders felt some level of safety crossing the street.** Some reasons for the increase in perceived safety:

- Protection from cars
- The decrease in crossing distance
- Cameras

Perceived Safety of Crossing the Street to Reach the Bus Stop Platforms



# Question 8b: Perceived Safety of Crossing the Street

- **Dimock St**
  - All respondents, but one rider reported feeling very safe crossing the street. Riders attributed this to the safety provided by the **crosswalk**.
- **Bray St**
  - All riders reported feeling some level of safety. The majority of respondents attributed this to the **new design of the crosswalk and being separated from cars**.
- **Weld St**
  - When compared to the other stops more riders at Weld St (12 total) responded feeling a lack of safety. Some key responses mentioned **blocked sightlines reducing car visibility and safety concerns due to cars speeding and not yielding**.
    - Note: in the immediate days before the surveying began, an individual was hit by a car driving in the bus lane. It was not specified whether the person walking was in or near the cross stop.
- **Walnut Ave**
  - 5 riders responded that they felt a lack of safety at the Walnut Ave stop due to **cars moving too fast at the intersection and not yielding to pedestrians**.





# Question 9: Perceived Ease of Reaching the Bus Stop Platform

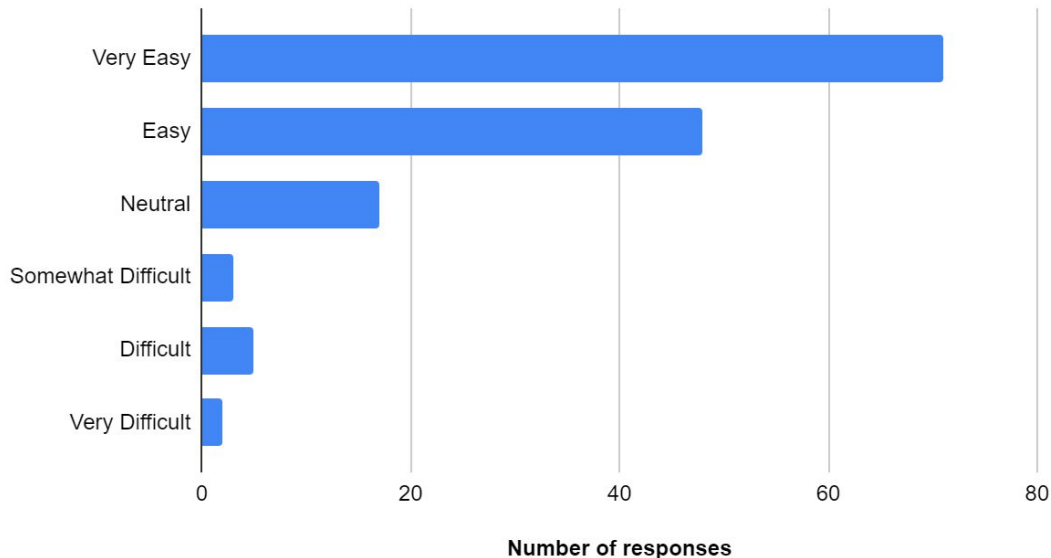
(146 responses)

**82%** of riders found it **easy to reach the bus stop platforms.**

Reasons for perceived ease include:

- Separation of cars and pedestrians
- The addition of crosswalks
- Street lights

Perceived Ease of Reaching the Bus Stop Platforms



# Question 10: Most Liked Aspects

(127 responses)

48 mentions of **real-time arrival screens**

13 mentions of **faster trips**

11 mentions of **bus shelters**

9 mentions of **increased safety**

7 mentions of **consistent service**



# Question 11: Most Disliked Aspects

(89 responses)

23 positive acknowledgements that design works as is

9 mentions of **needing heat in shelters**

6 mentions of **needing more buses**

7 mentions of **cars going too fast**

7 mentions of **traffic**



# Observations and Notes



# Quotes From Riders

*"VIP express to the train station. I love it!"*

*"I don't have to be guessing when the bus is coming."*

*"More of it! Bus lanes should go all the way to Mattapan Sq."*

*"I heard the new bus lanes were coming, so I tried it out and it's much faster. I like it because it's much more economical. I'm headed to the doctor and if I took an Uber it would cost \$20."*

*Bus Driver of 22 bus:  
"I love it! Love that I'm not stuck in that [pointing at traffic]. My only concern is about people crossing in the middle of the bus lane."*

*"I'm excited about free fares! Save some coin in the pocket."*



# Cars in the Bus Lane

Street Ambassadors noticed drivers using the bus lane on multiple occasions to get around traffic or make U turns. Street Ambassadors observed this most often at the intersection at Dixwell St, especially during school pick up/ drop off times.

Observed double parking incidents that blocked the bus lane occurred at the intersection of Columbus @ Washington St and Columbus @ W Walnut Park.



Columbus Ave @ Dixwell St



# Cars in the Bus Lane



Columbus Ave @  
Washington St



Columbus Ave @  
Walnut Park

# Bikes and the Bus Lane



During most shifts, Street Ambassadors observed people riding bikes along Columbus Ave. Cyclists used both the bus and general purpose lanes interchangeably.





# Additional Observations/ Comments

- The real-time arrival signs are by far the favorite new feature of the changed infrastructure, a good reminder that it's critical to provide changes that are both tangible and make the system more accessible and easier to use.
- The new platforms made people feel safer riding the bus. Many people, and most of them women, talked about how the lights, security cameras, and the fact that the platforms are separate from the sidewalk allows them to feel much safer while waiting for the bus.
- Where left turns were possible before, cars dip into the bus lane to continue making those lefts. For example cars turn into the Mobile station on Columbus Ave, Cleaves St, and coming out of Dixwell St.
- Street Ambassadors noticed people using the benches at the retired bus stops to rest while walking.
- People really appreciated receiving CharlieCards after speaking with a Street Ambassador. Many people mentioned the financial burden of paying bus fares.

