

# allston-brighton

founded/ annexed	population	gross area	population density	housing units	median income	median age
1646/1807	69,648	4.36 sq.mi.	15,974 ppsm	30,988	\$38,941	27.8

Information from 2000 U.S. Census data

## history

Allston is the only locale in the United States named for an artist, appropriate for a bohemian neighborhood which is now home to so many artists and musicians. Allston-Brighton was originally part of Watertown and Cambridge, and was known as Little Cambridge from its founding in 1646 until 1807, when it was annexed to Boston under the new name of Brighton. The name Allston was added in 1867 when the postal service created a separate designation for the neighborhood and residents chose to honor painter and resident Washington Allston. Before the Revolutionary War, Little Cambridge was an affluent farming community of under 300 residents; the town became famous for its cattle market which supplied beef to George Washington's army headquartered in nearby Harvard Square.

## today

Like Manhattan's Meatpacking District, Allston-Brighton is no longer home to stockyards or slaughterhouses, but has morphed into a young, trendy and vibrant neighborhood. The alternative bars, cheap ethnic restaurants, and discount shops of **Harvard Avenue** have given rise to the area's nickname 'Allston Rock City,' and it has been home to musicians such as Aerosmith and Freezepop. The neighborhood was even the setting for Neal Stephenson's *Zodiac* and a Karl Stevens graphic novel. The area draws considerable numbers of college and graduate students as well as many medical professionals working at the nearby hospitals. **Boston College** and **Boston University** bookend Allston-Brighton to the north and south, North Allston houses the **Harvard Business School**, and Allston Landing North is the proposed site for the expanded **Harvard University** campus.

Unlike Allston today, Brighton is fairly quiet, especially at night. The neighborhood, is primarily populated by graduate students, young professionals and families. Independent shops mix with national chains along Brighton's main drag, **Washington Street**, which runs from trendy and lively **Cleveland Circle** to **Brighton Center** to

**Oak Square** (a largely residential neighborhood with some bars and restaurants). **Union Square** is another center of activity.

## location

Allston-Brighton is located on the western edge of Boston, bordering Brookline to the south, **Boston College** and Newton to the west, **Boston University** and Kenmore Square to the east, and Cambridge, Watertown, and the Charles River to the north. Though the boundaries between Allston and Brighton tend to be quite blurred, **Warren Street** effectively divides Allston-Brighton, with Brighton to the west and Allston to the east. After World War II, the construction of the Mass Pike separated North Allston from the rest of the community. Most of the neighborhood's open space stretches along the Charles River.

## housing stock

Characteristic housing stock includes distinctive brick and limestone prewar apartment buildings, single family Victorians and Colonials, as well as Boston's traditional triple-decker houses. Properties near Boston University have historically commanded approximately a market premium.

## historic districts

Aberdeen Historic District • Brighton Center

## famous residents

Aerosmith • Jason Alexander • Isaac Asimov • Joan Baez • Alexander Graham Bell • Saul Bellow • Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy • Geena Davis • Doug Flutie • Freezepop • Tipper Gore • Lady Bird Johnson • Jack Kerouac • Martin Luther King, Jr. • Robert Lowell • Leonard Nimoy • Chris O'Donnell • Rosie O'Donnell • Bill O'Reilly • Amy Poehler • Sylvia Plath • Paul Reubens • Babe Ruth • Anne Sexton • Howard Stern • Marisa Tomei • Steven Tyler • Elie Wiesel

# allston-brighton

## movies & books

Jack Ryan of Tom Clancy's spy novels is a fictional Boston College alum.

## transportation

Allston-Brighton is conveniently located for both residents and commuters, and is well-served by public transportation and proximity to major transportation routes:

**Car:** Exit 20 off the Mass Pike (I-90) will bring you to Allston-Brighton.

Driving through Boston, follow Commonwealth Ave north to the Harvard Street intersection.

**T:** The MBTA Green Line B trolley travels the length of Allston-Brighton along its southeastern edge and is free going outbound (west).

**Bus:** The 57 bus traverses Allston-Brighton through its center; board at any B-line stop from Kenmore Square to Packard's Corner. The 66 and 64 buses respectively connect Cambridge's Harvard and Central Squares to Allston-Brighton.

## parks & recreation

Charles River • Ringer Playground • Smith Playground • West End House

## local news sources

*Allston-Brighton Tab*

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