



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
February 14, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Liam Garland, Director, Public Works
Subject: Authorize a Funding Agreement with AC Transit to Supplement the Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane Project

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and enter into a funding agreement between the City of Berkeley and AC Transit providing \$648,000 in additional City funding to supplement the Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane Project.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The City will contribute a total of \$648,000 in supplemental funding to support the project's construction and delivery. Funding in the amount of \$336,000 is available in the FY 2023 budget in the General Fund (Fund 011). Funding in the amount of \$312,000 is subject to appropriation in the FY 2024 budget in the Measure BB Fund 134.

The funding will pay for new bus shelters at three new bus bulbs, angle parking on the north side of Durant Avenue for the whole project length, and an extension of the bus lane from Ellsworth Street to Fulton Street.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

AC Transit and the City are collaborating on the Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane project, which would introduce several transit operation improvements on Durant Avenue in the Southside neighborhood. Installing a transit-only lane and additional parking spaces can alleviate roadway conflicts and provide a clear path for transit.

AC Transit's original scope of work for the project included:

- A red transit-only lane between Ellsworth Street and College Avenue, creating a dedicated lane for buses in a highly congested corridor;
- New bus bulbs at the bus stops within this project area, which would speed up transit operations by no longer necessitating buses pulling out of and back into traffic;
- Traffic signal modification at the intersection of Durant and College Avenues, to allow buses priority for right turns; and

- Reconsidering curb management on the north side of Durant Avenue between Telegraph Avenue and Bowditch Street, which experiences heavy loading traffic.

Initial design work identified that the three bus bulbs would need powered bus shelters due to shade from existing tree canopies. In June 2022, Council included funding from the General Fund in the FY 2023 budget to fund this unexpected cost increase.

Additionally, in the past year, City staff proposed additional elements to expand the project's scope and effectiveness. These included:

- Extending the transit lane from Ellsworth Street west to Fulton Street;
- Implementing front-in angled parking on the north side of Durant Avenue for the full length of the transit lane project, increasing parking capacity in residential and commercial areas; and
- Installing concrete bus pads at the bus stops in the project corridor.

Staff committed to AC Transit that the City would identify local funding to deliver additional City-proposed scope elements. After a review of available funds, the City identified funding for the transit lane extension and angled parking on the north side of Durant Avenue. The funding agreement will formalize this pledge.

The Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane Project is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities.

BACKGROUND

AC Transit lines 6, 36, and 51B operate on stretches of Durant Avenue in the Southside neighborhood of Berkeley. Durant Avenue is frequently congested due to delivery drivers double-parking, particularly between Telegraph Avenue and Bowditch Street, which adversely impacts transit reliability. Durant Avenue is also a major vehicular access corridor connecting Downtown Berkeley with the Southside neighborhood, with three one-way through lanes and curbside parking and/or loading zones supporting local residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane Project is part of an AC Transit-wide effort to improve transit services to complement the numerous corridor improvement projects being undertaken as part of the AC Transit Major Corridors Study (2016) and the Quick-build Framework (2020).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The Project would result in more efficient transit operations, encouraging more people to use public transportation and engage in active modes of transportation instead of driving.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This project is a collaboration between the City and AC Transit to benefit transit operations and improve parking management in a highly congested area. The purpose of the Quick-Build project is to improve transit operations along Durant Avenue and to further implement improvements consistent with the City's transportation policies. AC Transit worked with the City of Berkeley in developing the project scope, including project elements, outreach/notification, and approval processes. The City will continue to work with AC Transit in finalizing the project design and implementation.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

City staff originally sought to fund new concrete bus pads at the bus stops in the project corridor, but insufficient funding was available to support their construction.

CONTACT PERSON

Farid Javandel, Deputy Director of Public Works, Transportation and Engineering (510) 981-7061
Gordon Hansen, Senior Planner, Public Works, (510) 981-7064

Attachment:
1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZE A FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH AC TRANSIT TO SUPPORT THE
QUICK-BUILD DURANT TRANSIT LANE PROJECT

WHEREAS, AC Transit operates local bus lines on Durant Avenue in the Southside neighborhood of Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, AC Transit has been awarded federal grant funding to implement the Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane project, which will benefit transit operations and improve parking management in a highly congested area; and

WHEREAS, City staff have collaborated with AC Transit on the project scope, adding supplemental project elements to increase the project's extent and effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified a total of \$648,000 in supplemental funding to support the expanded project scope, with \$336,000 available in the FY 2023 budget in the General Fund (Fund 011) and \$312,000 subject to appropriation in the FY 2024 budget in the Measure BB Fund 134; and

WHEREAS, the supplemental funding will pay for new bus shelters at three new bus bulbs, angle parking on the north side of Durant Avenue for the whole project length, and an extension of the bus lane from Ellsworth Street to Fulton Street.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to negotiate and sign a funding agreement with AC Transit to supplement the implementation of the Quick-Build Durant Transit Lane project.