
51 Bus Rapid Transit



Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment, and Sustainability Policy Committee

March 2, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

- Refer to the City Manager the development of an implementation and community engagement plan to install Bus Rapid Transit, including dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, elevated platforms, and enhanced sections, on the AC Transit 51B route along University Avenue from Sixth Street to Shattuck Avenue and along Shattuck Avenue from University Avenue to Durant Avenue, with engagement centering pedestrian, cyclist, transit and mobility justice advocates, the disability rights community, local faith communities, merchants, neighboring residential communities inclusive of tenants, seniors, and students, and historically marginalized communities.

RECOMMENDATION

- Refer \$300,000 to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Process to conduct a Complete Street Corridor Study antecedent to the installation of a cycle track along University Avenue from 6th Street to Oxford Street, consistent with the City of Berkeley's 2017 Bicycle Plan and integrating pedestrian amenities consistent with the City of Berkeley's 2020 Pedestrian Plan. As per the Bicycle Plan, the study will be evaluated in the context of the modal priorities established by the City of Berkeley General Plan's 2001 Transportation Element and the Alameda County Transportation Commission's (ACTC) 2016 Countywide Multimodal Arterial Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- Refer \$300,000 to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Process to conduct a Complete Street Corridor Study antecedent to the installation of a cycle track along Oxford Street from Virginia Street to Durant Avenue consistent with the Bicycle Plan and integrating pedestrian amenities consistent with the Pedestrian Plan. As per the Bicycle Plan, the study will be evaluated in the context of the modal priorities established by the Transportation Element and ACTC's Countywide Multimodal Arterial Plan. It will be coordinated with proposed improvements to transit performance on this Primary Transit Route, such as bus boarding islands, transit-only lanes, transit signal priority/queue jump lanes, far-side bus stop relocations, and other improvements as described in AC Transit's 2016 Major Corridor Study.

RECOMMENDATION

- Refer \$X to the Fiscal Year XX-XX Budget Process to install quick-build bus station improvements along the AC Transit 51B route.
- Initiate consultation with AC Transit and UC Berkeley Bear Transit as soon as possible on the planning, scoping, and implementation of these items.

WHAT IS BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)?



- AC Transit describes BRT as “a high-quality, high-capacity bus transit system designed to emulate light rail operation”
- AC Transit’s 2016 Major Corridors Study
- AC Transit’s 2018 Multimodal Corridor Guidelines

PERCENT TRAVEL SPEED AND RIDERSHIP

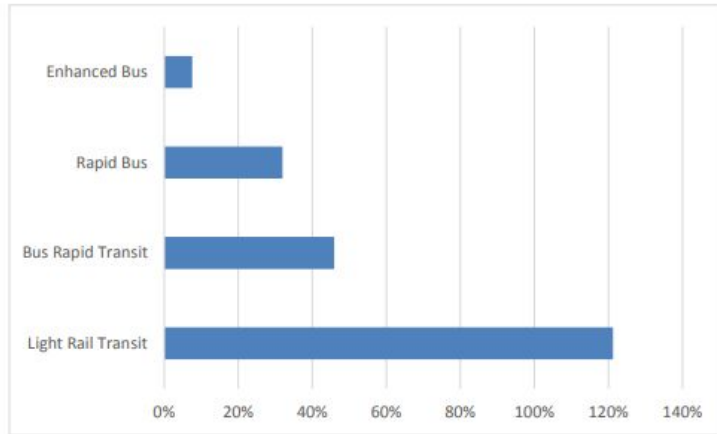


Figure A: Percent Travel Speed Increase by Mode (2040 with Project vs. 2040 Baseline)

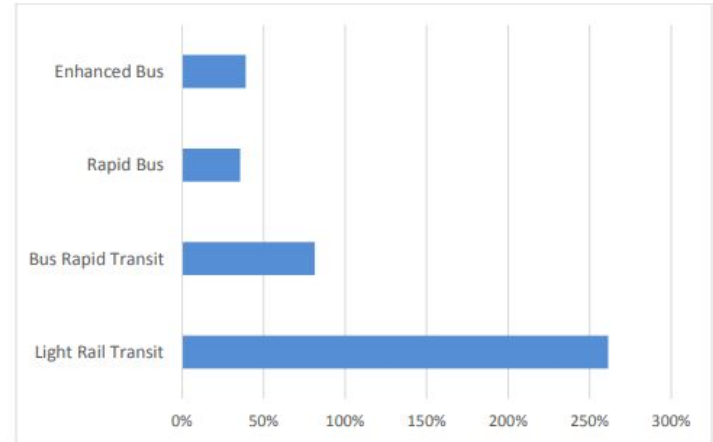


Figure B: Ridership Increase by Mode (2040 with Project vs. 2040 Baseline)

COST PER PASSENGER TRIP AND OPERATING COSTS

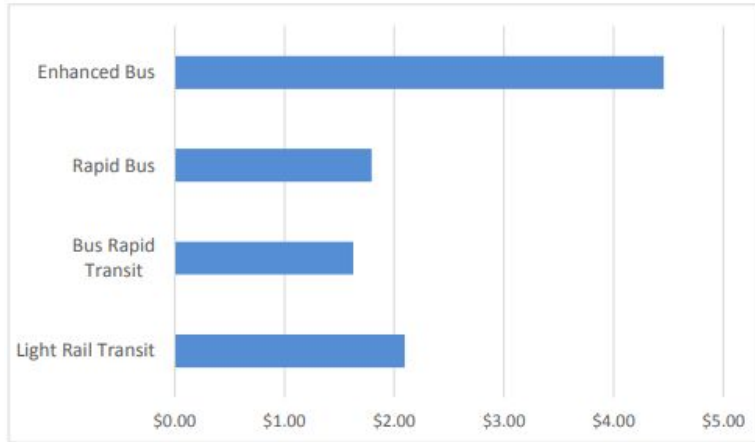


Figure D: Cost per Unlinked Passenger Trip by Mode

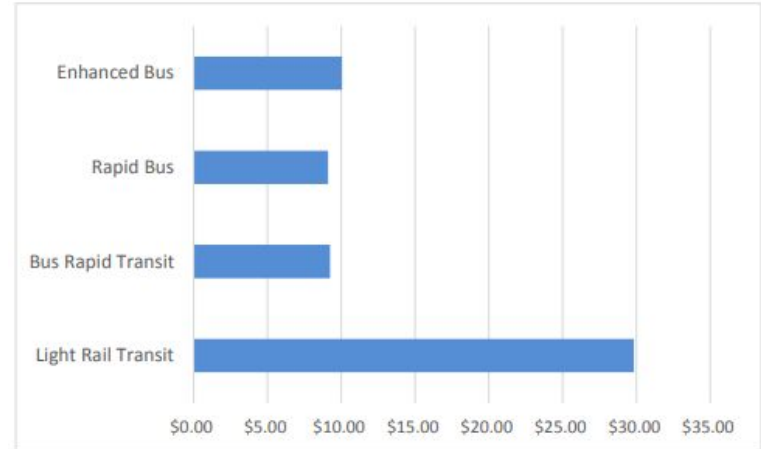


Figure E: Operating Cost per Mile by Mode

HIGH-AMENITY STATIONS AND OFF-BOARD FARES

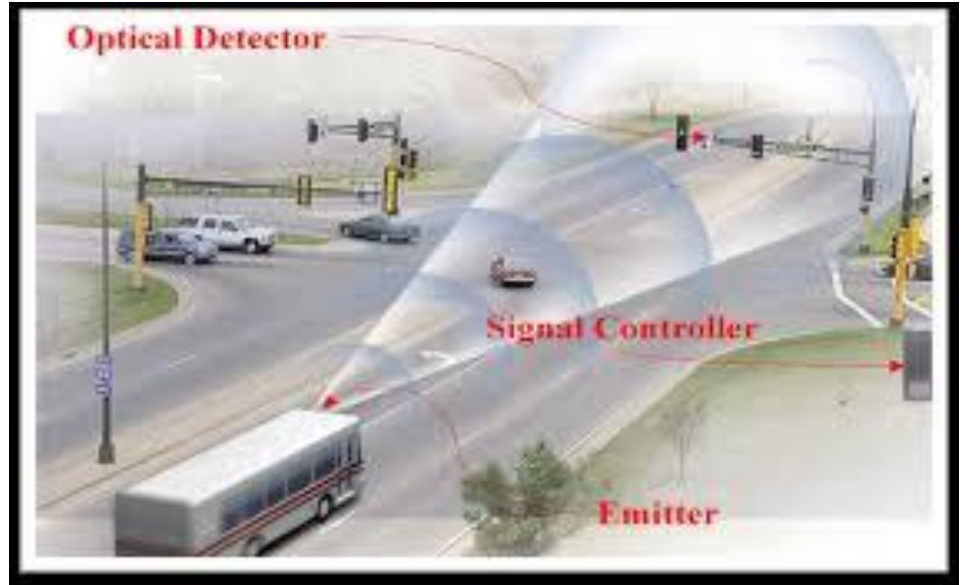


Oakland



Oakland

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSIT SIGNALS



BUS-ONLY LANES



San Francisco



San Leandro

WHY BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)?

- City of Berkeley's Climate Action Plan
- City of Berkeley's Strategic Transportation Plan
- City of Berkeley's Strategic Plan
- City of Berkeley's Vision Zero Action Plan
- Population Trends
- AC Transit Ridership
- Pedestrian Collisions
- ADA Compliance
- Local Business and Economy

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (2009)

- Transportation Emissions Are Largest Source of Greenhouse Gases
- Envisions Public Transit, Walking, Cycling, and Other Sustainable Mobility Modes as Primary Means of Transportation
- Goal: Increase Safety, Reliability, and Frequency of Public Transit
- Goal: Manage Parking Effectively to Minimize Driving Demand
- Goal: Encourage and Support Alternatives to Driving
- In 2018, City Declared Climate Emergency

STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2016)

- Envisions Streets, Sidewalks, and Pathways as Multimodal
- Goal: Encouraging People to Walk, Bicycle, and Ride Transit
- Goal: Improve Transit Efficiency
- Goal: Design Street Networks That Ensure Comfortable, Safe Environments for Users of All Abilities
- Prioritizing Transit Services Along Transit Routes

STRATEGIC PLAN (2018)

- Goal: Provide State-of-the-Art, Well-Maintained Infrastructure, Amenities, and Facilities
- Goal: Create a Resilient, Safe, Connected, and Prepared City
- Goal: Foster a Dynamic, Sustainable, and Locally-Based Economy

VISION ZERO ACTION PLAN (2019)

- Strategy to Eliminate All Traffic Fatalities and Severe Injuries While Increasing Safe, Healthy, and Equitable Mobility for All
- Goal: Create Safer Transportation Options for People Who Walk, Bike, and Take Transit
 - Makes These Modes More Attractive
 - Reduces Number of Car Trips
 - Resulting in Fewer Severe and Fatal Collisions

POPULATION TRENDS

- City of Berkeley's 2023 Housing Element Update
- Since 2000, Population Has Increased 9% Each Decade
- 2020 Department of Finance Estimate: 122,580
- 2030 Association of Bay Area Government Estimate: 136,000
- 2040 Association of Bay Area Government Estimate: 141,000

AC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

- 2019 Annual Report: Ridership Over 53 Million, 2.5% Increase from 2018
 - Key Factors: Proactive Efforts, Service Frequency, Robust Local Economy
 - Nationwide Major Transit Providers Reported 2.8% Decline
- 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic
 - Fewer People Commuting, Running Errands, or Doing Activities
 - Schools and Colleges Closed, Employees Working from Home
- Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Ridership Almost 29 Million, 36% Increase
 - Service at 85% of Pre-Pandemic Levels

PEDESTRIAN COLLISIONS

- City of Berkeley's 2020 Pedestrian Plan
 - Shattuck and University Avenues Rank 1st and 5th (2008 - 2017)
 - 1st and 3rd (Tied) for Fatal or Severe

ADA COMPLIANCE

- BRT Improvements Advance City's Goals
 - Increasing Mobility Access for Transit Riders and Cyclists with Disabilities
 - ADA Accessibility Standards Issued by US Department of Transportation
 - Guidance for Bus Boarding and Alighting Areas, Shelters, Signs, and More

LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ECONOMY

- National Institute for Transportation and Communities
 - 2015 National Study of BRT Development Outcomes
 - Areas Within a ½ Mile of BRT Corridors Increased Share of Office Space By ⅓
 - New Multifamily Apartment Construction Doubled Since 2008
- PolicyLink “Business Impact Mitigations for Transit Projects” (2013)
 - Best Practices: Financial and Technical Assistance, Proactive Outreach

INITIAL CITY AND COMMUNITY INPUT

- City of Berkeley's Office of Economic Development
- District 2 Transportation and Infrastructure Commissioner
- AC Transit
- Bike East Bay
- Telegraph for People
- Walk Bike Berkeley

BUILDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
- Center for Independent Living
- Downtown Arts District
- Downtown Berkeley Association
- Netivot Shalom
- Poet's Corner Merchants
- Telegraph for People
- University Avenue Association
- Walk Bike Berkeley
- Way Christian Center
- ...And More!

ONGOING CITY/AGENCY DISCUSSIONS

- AC Transit
- Alameda County Transportation Commission
- Berkeley Unified School District
- Fire Department
- Office of Economic Development
- Public Works Department
- Transportation Division
- Transportation and Infrastructure Commission
- UC Berkeley Bear Transit

QUESTIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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