

BRT for Berkeley

Proposal for Discussion



This document describes elements of the City of Berkeley's staff proposal for a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) of the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit project. The proposal is *not final*. It is merely meant to provide a framework for community discussion.

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (EBBRT) project was designed by AC Transit to provide faster, more reliable, and more frequent transit service between downtown Berkeley and San Leandro, by way of the south side of UC Berkeley and downtown Oakland. A major improvement to transit service in this corridor would better serve major East Bay destinations and communities, benefit a large number of existing transit users, and attract new riders to transit.

BRT bus service would be 18% faster, more reliable, and more frequent than the 1R.

BRT would allow the bus to avoid worsening traffic congestion by using bus lanes separated from traffic. Eliminating the conflicts with traffic that cause most delays would both make buses faster and make bus arrival times much more predictable. Stops with raised platforms which allow faster level boarding, would further improve speed and reliability. Buses would also arrive more frequently: every five minutes during weekdays and every 10 minutes during weekday evenings.

There are a number of important conditions in the corridor that led to the development of the EBBRT proposal:

BRT would serve one of the most important corridors in the AC Transit network.

Routes 1 and 1R Rapid are already the second- and third-busiest in the AC Transit system and ridership is growing rapidly.ⁱ Combined weekday daily ridership was approximately 21,500 in 2007. In 2008 Route 1R Rapid ridership increased 11%. Ridership increased even more in Berkeley: rising 34% at Telegraph and Webster, and 38% at Telegraph and Dwight.ⁱⁱ

BRT would serve major East Bay destinations and communities.

- The proposed route is within one-half mile of nearly 260,000 residents, living neighborhoods of comparable density to San Francisco.ⁱⁱⁱ
- There are 71,000 jobs in downtown Oakland. There are another 29,000 in downtown Berkeley and on the UC campus, and there are close to 35,000 students on campus.^{iv}
- There are several major concentrations of hospitals and medical offices, eight colleges and universities, 10 high schools, and 10 middle schools along the route.

BRT would serve a growing population and proactively address traffic congestion.

- **Travel demand, population and employment in the corridor are all growing.** By 2025, the corridor's population is anticipated to grow by 16%, and the number of jobs is expected to grow by 23%.^v Another 5,700 jobs are anticipated within a half-mile of Berkeley BRT stops.^{vi}
- **Growing Traffic Congestion is already affecting transit speed and reliability.** Bus travel speeds are slowing down faster than AC Transit had anticipated; travel times have already reached their year 2025 projections. A recent study by AC Transit found that four of the ten

segments with the most severe bus delay were in Berkeley and that most of the delay to buses is caused by traffic congestion: 57% of delay was from congestion while the bus was in motion, and 24% was from loading, unloading, and waiting to merge back into traffic.^{vii}

- **Traffic in the corridor is projected to grow without BRT.** Today, there is one intersection along the corridor that is severely congested during afternoon rush hour according to AC Transit's environment review. By 2025, without BRT, there are projected to be five.^{viii}

BRT would attract new users to transit.

By 2015, BRT is expected to attract nearly 7,000 new riders to transit per day,^{ix} reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled in the area by 6.2 million per year.^x

ⁱ Alameda Contra Costa Transit District "GM Memo No. 09-001a," Feb. 25, 2009

ⁱⁱ Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, "International/Telegraph Corridor Rapid Bus Study: Phase IV," April 2009

ⁱⁱⁱ Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *AC Transit East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report*, May 2007

^{iv} Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *Fiscal Year 2010 Small Starts Submittal*, September 2008

^v Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *Fiscal Year 2010 Small Starts Submittal*, September 2008

^{vi} Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *Fiscal Year 2010 Small Starts Submittal*, September 2008

^{vii} Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, "2009 Line 1R Service and Reliability Study" (not yet released)

^{viii} Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *AC Transit East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report*, May 2007

^{ix} Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *Fiscal Year 2010 Small Starts Submittal*, September 2008

^x Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, *AC Transit East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report*, May 2007