



## Berkeley-El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan (BECCAP)

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## Berkeley-El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan

### 1. What is the Berkeley-El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan?

The [BECCAP](#) was a collaborative effort of BART and the cities of Berkeley and El Cerrito to identify station access strategies for communities served by the El Cerrito Plaza, North Berkeley, Downtown Berkeley, and Ashby BART stations before roughly 2,000 mixed-income apartments are built on the three parking lots. The development will change how BART customers in the surrounding communities get to and from the stations. The goal of the plan was to develop strategies that equitably distribute investments in walking, rolling, biking, riding transit, driving, and parking. The plan incorporated and balanced stakeholder input for these interrelated stations in a way that was consistent with Berkeley's and El Cerrito's adopted community plans as well as [BART's Transit-Oriented Development \(TOD\)](#) and [Station Access](#) policy goals and [performance metrics](#).

### 2. What was BECCAP's timeline for the plan's development?

Work on the BECCAP began in January of 2021 and major work concluded February 2023.

### 3. Why does BART want to develop its land for transit-oriented development (TOD)?

People who live close to transit use it for work, school, errand-running, and recreational trips more frequently than those who live further away. Building high-density housing on BART's land will not only increase transit ridership 7 days a week across all service hours but will also help address the housing and climate crises because residents will drive less, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. These TODs at BART stations are universally supported by El Cerrito's and Berkeley's adopted plans because they supply much-needed housing that reduce the need to drive and enhance community vibrancy.

### 4. Why is BART studying station access along the entire corridor rather than for each station?

BART does station access plans after the development teams are chosen. The BECCAP was done in advance of these station access plans to identify a toolkit of corridor-wide strategies that would be more feasible and effective when done as part of a coordinated effort. Some BECCAP strategies will be incorporated in each station access plan, which will also detail circulation and infrastructure needs in the station area and on public streets nearby and identify who will fund and build them.

### 5. How did the BECCAP relate to other projects at these three stations?

The BECCAP coordinated with overlapping studies in progress and incorporated planned changes to the pedestrian and bicycle access at or near these stations such as:

- North Berkeley Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements in and around the BART station area, anticipated to be completed in 2023, with funding from the state's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program.
- A bikeway through BART's western parking lot at Ashby station, connecting Prince and Woolsey Streets, anticipated to be completed in 2024 with funding from the state's AHSC program.

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- A study focused on implementing TOD at BART stations on the Richmond line, funded by the Federal Transit Administration TOD pilot. This study includes:
  - Supporting the City of Berkeley in evaluating the feasibility of [redesigning the roadway on Adeline Street adjacent to the Ashby station](#) by reducing vehicle lanes to potentially accommodate the Flea Market while implementing the [Adeline Corridor Specific Plan](#). The study will also evaluate temporary weekend vehicle-lane closures on Adeline Street.
  - Funding ongoing work needed to support eventual development of the El Cerrito Plaza, North Berkeley and Ashby BART parking lots, including analysis of affordable housing funding options, further community engagement, objective design standards for the TODs at Ashby and North Berkeley, and transportation demand management program set up in Richmond and El Cerrito.

### 6. Why is BART pursuing TOD and access studies during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that traditional commute patterns will continue to shift, and transit systems will need to get ahead of emerging work patterns and sustainable ridership trends. It is now more important than ever to locate housing – especially affordable housing – near transit to support essential workers who do not have remote work options. At the height of the pandemic in 2020, 53% of BART riders earned less than \$50,000 a year, and 51% did not own a car.

Developing homes on BART's parking lots will change how BART riders get to the stations, particularly those who parked at the station (before COVID-19, 17% at Ashby, 25% at North Berkeley and 34% at El Cerrito Plaza).

Berkeley and El Cerrito have adopted community plans that favor locating affordable and mixed-income housing on BART's land and our planning efforts must continue so we can develop options that will ensure a variety of riders, including those who before the pandemic drove and parked, continue to have access to stations along the Richmond line.

### 7. Why doesn't BART build or find a way to offer the same level of parking spaces when it builds homes on its parking lots?

It comes down to land space, costs, and funding sources. Here are some more details as to why BART can't replace all the parking removed:

- **Parking requires a lot of land:** Each parking space requires about 350 square feet to account for the stall, drive aisles, and equipment. Driving and parking at El Cerrito Plaza, North Berkeley, and Ashby stations take up 58% to 65% of the land area to serve 14% to 23% of BART riders who come from their homes.
- **It's expensive to build and maintain:** Based on recent projects, each parking space costs around \$80,000 to construct along with annual operation, security, and maintenance costs of roughly \$1,000 per space.
- **Funding for parking is limited:** Grant funds available to pay for BART customer parking are limited and competitive. Money for parking is most scarce since state and regional priorities have shifted over the last several years. There is only one definite grant source

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that will still fund parking, but it will only pay for up to \$50,000/space. Any public dollars used for parking are dollars that are likely being redirected from other access options such as new bike lanes, wider sidewalks, and better pedestrian lighting.

- **Dedicated BART parking has the least capacity for expansion:** Once parking is full for the day, the ability to access BART by driving and parking is limited. Walking, rolling, biking, and bus transit have the capacity to bring more riders to the stations and can be more readily expanded when there is greater demand.
- **Dedicated BART parking benefits higher income riders the most:** For these three stations, 27% of riders who have a household income of \$150,000 or more drive and park whereas 16% of riders who have a household income of less than \$75,000 drive and park.
- **More parking leads to more driving:** BART, Berkeley, and El Cerrito have adopted goals, strategies, and metrics to reduce driving. Providing a large amount of customer parking would be contrary to these community values.

We understand there are some riders who must drive and park and have no other option based on where they live and other circumstances. The BECCAP is including strategies for BART customers who need to park. They may include:

- Dedicated BART customer parking at the stations
- Dedicated or shared BART customer parking at municipal lots and garages
- Dedicated or shared BART customer parking at privately-owned spaces, lots or garages
- On-street, managed parking

BART's [Station Access](#) and [TOD](#) policy goals prioritize walking, biking and transit over driving and parking as well as making investments that result in greater equity and accessibility for our riders.

8. Why doesn't BART replace all BART rider spaces in an underground parking structure so that there isn't a trade off in the land available for development?

It is financially infeasible to spend \$125,000 to build each space in underground parking in addition to the annual cost of roughly \$1,000 per space needed to operate, maintain and enforce.

9. How does BART know that more riders will come from TOD than those who currently drive and park?

Building TOD on BART property brings new riders, but the ridership boost may be offset if the number of available parking spaces is reduced, and some people stop taking BART. Using data and research from a variety of sources, such as [Replacement Parking for Joint Development: An Access Policy Methodology](#) and [Travel of TOD Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area](#), BART staff can estimate the tipping point for ridership between the provision of parking spaces and housing units. As a rule of thumb, however, BART's [2017 Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines](#) states that a minimum of 75 homes per acre generates enough ridership to support BART operations, regardless of the number of parking

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spaces for BART customers. The TODs planned for El Cerrito Plaza, North Berkeley, and Ashby will meet or exceed this minimum number of homes per acre.

### 10. Won't commuters just drive directly to work and generate more emissions if they can't park at their preferred BART station?

We acknowledge that some current BART customers who park may decide not use BART if they can no longer park at the station. Most BART commuters use transit to access dense job centers because travel times for driving directly to work are unreliable and transit is more affordable than paying tolls and/or for parking in city centers. Therefore, many will find another option to getting to our stations that does not involve parking or they will drive to another station that has parking capacity or find another way to get to work that doesn't involve single occupancy driving that generates more emissions. A survey conducted in 2019 for the [El Cerrito Plaza BART Station Access Survey Results](#) found that less than 6% of respondents would choose to drive directly to their destination if there were no parking at the station. Some of these respondents may now have the option to work remotely at least part of the time.

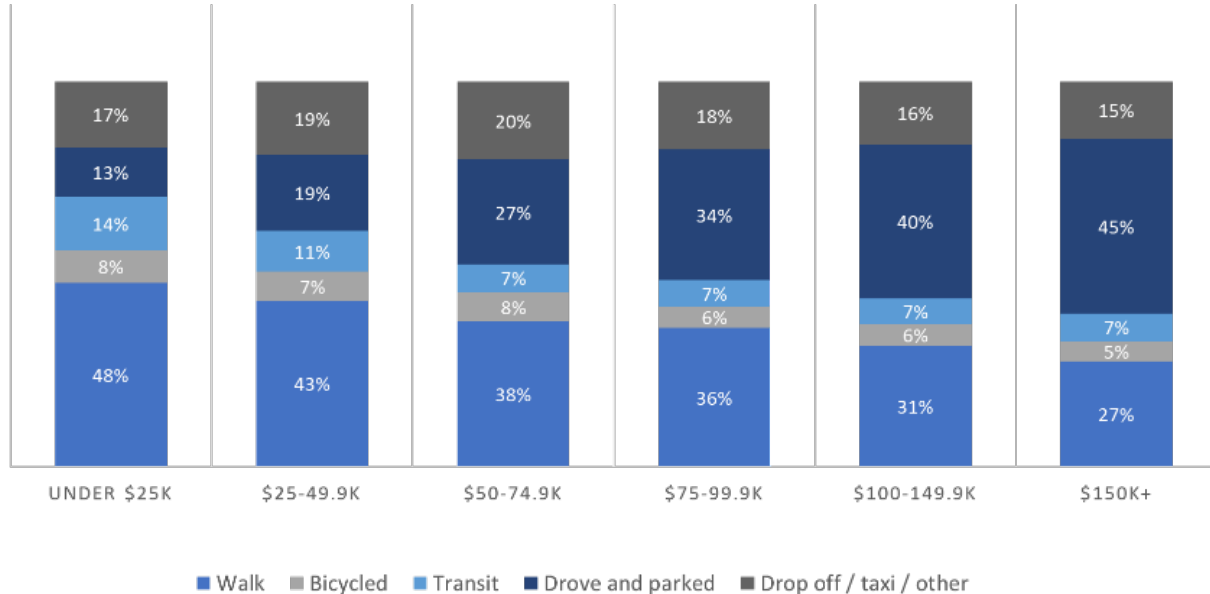
It is also important to note that [more emissions come out of the first 60 seconds of cold-starting](#) a car than they do for the next 200 miles that it's driven. Thus, motivating more BART riders to get to the stations in a more sustainable way would be better overall for the environment, even if some ultimately choose to start driving directly to work.

### 11. Won't low-income BART riders be most hurt by parking changes?

Low-income BART riders rely on getting to BART by walking, biking, and transit at a much greater rate than driving and parking. As shown in BART's [Station Profile Survey data](#), providing parking generally benefits wealthier BART riders. Lower-income BART riders are less likely to own cars and do not have the choice to live near BART because of housing costs. At the height of the COVID pandemic in 2020, per BART's [2020 customer satisfaction survey](#), 53% of BART riders earned less than \$50,000 a year, and 51% did not own a car. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of locating housing – especially affordable housing – near transit. Constructing high density housing at these BART stations will provide affordable housing near quality transit service while investments to improve walking, biking, and transit as ways to get to BART stations will help reduce overall transportation costs for more people.

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SYSTEMWIDE MODE OF ACCESS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (HOME-BASED TRIPS) - 2015



### 12. How will impacts to on-street parking be addressed?

BART and the cities of El Cerrito and Berkeley have been working to develop concepts to better manage parking around the stations to balance neighborhood street parking for residents with the station's parking demand. More detailed information is contained in appendices of the [Berkeley-El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan](#), as indicated below.

- Appendix F: El Cerrito Plaza station preliminary parking management concept
- Appendix G: North Berkeley and Ashby stations preliminary parking management concept
- Appendix H: City of Berkeley Council staff report regarding parking strategy for the two Berkeley stations

### 13. Will on-street parking management require a reservation for a specific space, to reduce cars driving around in the neighborhood in the search for parking?

The proposed parking management concept does not include reservations for on-street spaces. Reservations can work well in parking lots and garages but are not technically feasible for on-street parking.

When cities use price to manage demand for public parking, it ensures a minimum level of availability (or open parking spaces) so that drivers can quickly find parking spaces. Berkeley employs this type of [parking management practice](#) for its on-street parking in high-demand areas and its public lots and garages.

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14. What is the longest amount of time that people would be willing to walk from their parking space to get to a BART station?

The second BECCAP online open house had a survey open from April 20 through May 18, 2022. One of the questions asked was, “If you are a rider who drives to BART, which option do you prefer for on-street parking? Pay more to park closer to the station (about a 5-minute walk), pay less to park further from the station (about a 10-minute walk), or no preference?”. Responses can be found in the [Survey Summary](#), Exhibits 18 for the El Cerrito Plaza, North Berkeley, and Ashby station. As a data point, those who prefer paying less to park about a 10-minute walk from the station were 21% for El Cerrito Plaza, and 17% each for North Berkeley and Ashby.

15. What will happen to the Flea Market if a developer builds on the Ashby BART parking lots?

BART and the City are committed to ensuring the Ashby Flea Market remain and thrive within close proximity of the Ashby BART station. BART’s and the community’s top priority for the Ashby BART station development is to maximize the number of affordable, deed-restricted apartments as identified in the [Adeline Corridor Specific Plan](#) and the [Community Advisory Group process](#) for the development at the BART stations. At the same time, BART and the city recognize the role of the Flea Market as a key community asset. BART has allocated funding and resources for Berkeley’s project to [redesign Adeline Street at Ashby BART](#) (see Question 5 above) to identify its permanent location close to the Ashby station that will also enable BART’s developer to build as many affordable homes as possible.

Please see the [Ashby TOD project page](#) for more details.

16. How did BART account for people who have physical difficulty walking and biking to the station, such as some older adults or people with disabilities, in BECCAP?

BART engaged riders with mobility challenges throughout development of the BECCAP. Upcoming individual station access plans will identify the full range of access needs. BART has and will continue to seek input from BART’s Accessibility Task Force (BATF) as well as from community organizations and advocacy groups representing people with disabilities and neurodiversity.

[The Bay Area Transportation Systems for People with Disabilities](#) by the World Institute on Disability found that 44% of people under 65 with disabilities and 54% people 65 or older with disabilities do not drive. According to [Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan](#), about 41% of respondents said that they drove themselves to destinations. This indicates that most respondents can’t or don’t drive and they rely on transit, walking, or someone else driving them to get around. Improving station accessibility for all ages and abilities will result in better station area designs.

Those with mobility challenges who drive can use their disabled placard to park in ADA spaces that are provided at BART stations or on-street.

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17. Bus service to BART can sometimes be infrequent and unreliable. Were improvements to bus service be part of this process?

BART engaged AC Transit in the BECCAP process as part of its technical advisory committee to identify and evaluate bus service and reliability improvements. AC Transit began its [Realignment](#) study during the BECCAP process and the proposed service changes will be implemented in August 2024. In addition to the BECCAP work, BART has been working with other transit providers to better align service schedules to reduce transfer wait times and improve the experience of using two or more transit systems to complete a trip.

18. Taking the bus and also paying a BART fare is expensive. What can be done to make commuting more affordable?

BART is a key participant in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's regional efforts for transit fare reduction and integration. We offer discounted fares through [Clipper START](#), a pilot program for low-income adults. BART is also co-leading [MTC's Transit Fare Coordination and Integration Study](#) task force that is focused on identifying affordability solutions for transit transfers.

19. Who will pay for the station access changes recommended in the BECCAP?

The station access strategies will likely be funded by a mix of sources and programs including developer contributions, user fees, grant funds, BART contributions, and/or regional funding agency contributions. The BECCAP includes cost estimates for capital and annual operations for proposed station access strategies, identifies who would lead implementation, and provides potential funding sources and financing mechanisms.

20. Where can I find additional information and frequently asked questions for the specific development projects at each station?

- BART's [El Cerrito Plaza TOD website](#) and [frequently asked questions](#)
- The [El Cerrito Plaza Development Team's TOD website](#) and [frequently asked questions](#)
- The City of El Cerrito's [El Cerrito Plaza TOD website](#)
- The City of Berkeley's [website about the BART TOD planning process](#)
- BART's [Ashby TOD project website](#) and [frequently asked questions](#)
- BART's [North Berkeley TOD project website](#)