



## BERKELEY-EL CERRITO CORRIDOR ACCESS PLAN



Funded by the California Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration

# OUTREACH MILESTONE REPORT #1

*April through August 2021*

The Berkeley – El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan (The Corridor Access Plan) is focused on existing riders whose access to BART may be affected by the roughly 2,500 mixed-income homes planned on station parking lots at Ashby, North Berkeley, and El Cerrito Plaza. Using input from the public, elected officials, boards and commissions, local agencies, and service providers, the Corridor Access Plan will provide a set of area-wide options for station access and parking management to be implemented in alignment with each station's development.

This milestone report summarizes the first of three public outreach phases for the Corridor Access Plan.

### Online Open House



3,552 Unique Users

### Other Outreach



14 Virtual Public Meetings  
(Community, Council, Board)



1,968 Completed Surveys



170+ Interactions at  
Four In-Person Events and  
12 Virtual Office Hours



1,398 Comments and Upvotes  
from Interactive Map



1,067 Email Recipients



17 Social Media Posts  
232 Likes/Tweets



122 Website Comments Received

*Survey and key materials translated into Spanish and Chinese.*



## WHAT WE HEARD: KEY THEMES CORRIDOR-WIDE

During this period of outreach, riders shared many suggestions for and concerns about changes to the way they get to and from BART. Residents near BART stations provided their opinions about how reducing the number of BART rider parking spaces will affect their neighborhoods. In general, many support transit-oriented development (TOD)<sup>1</sup> to help the Bay Area's housing crisis in an environmentally sustainable way, but some expressed concern that building on BART's parking lots will lead to more commuters driving directly to their destinations.

**Walking, Rolling, and Biking:** Nearly all who provided input on these modes indicated the importance of creating low-stress access to and from BART by people of all ages and abilities.

- Implement bikeway and walkway improvements on select streets that lead to BART.
- Redesign key intersections to prioritize safety and ease of access for those who walk, roll, or bike to and from BART.
- Separate cyclist and pedestrian traffic where possible.
- Install secure bike parking in the station areas that can accommodate a variety of types, such as trikes, electric, cargo, tandem, recumbent, and adaptive bikes.
- Provide cycling amenities, such as bike repair kiosks and charging stations for individual and shared mobility, like electric bikes, wheelchairs, and scooters.
- Institute a bike lending library that enables BART riders to test out a variety of types, such as trikes, electric, cargo, tandem, recumbent, and adaptive bikes.

**Car Parking:** Suggestions for accommodating those who drive and park to access BART included:

- Provide parking to riders who have the fewest choices, such as seniors, people with disabilities, and those who have multiple stops, such as dropping off children at school.
- Manage parking at BART to ensure availability even if it means charging a higher rate.
- Minimize on-street parking by BART riders and new TOD residents to protect parking for current neighborhood residents and businesses.

## OUTREACH SUMMARY

### Online Open House

The online open house communicated details about the Corridor Access Plan and could be translated into multiple languages. The survey (available in English, Spanish, and Chinese) and interactive map solicited feedback from the public from **July 2 through August 20, 2021**. There were four virtual office hours for each of the three stations where development is planned.

### Project Website

Free-form comments were submitted through the Corridor Access Plan website at [www.bart.gov/beccap](http://www.bart.gov/beccap).

### In-Person Events

BART staff tabled at three Farmers Markets and one Flea Market during the online open house.

### Virtual Meetings

14 meetings were held with elected officials, boards, commissions, and community groups.

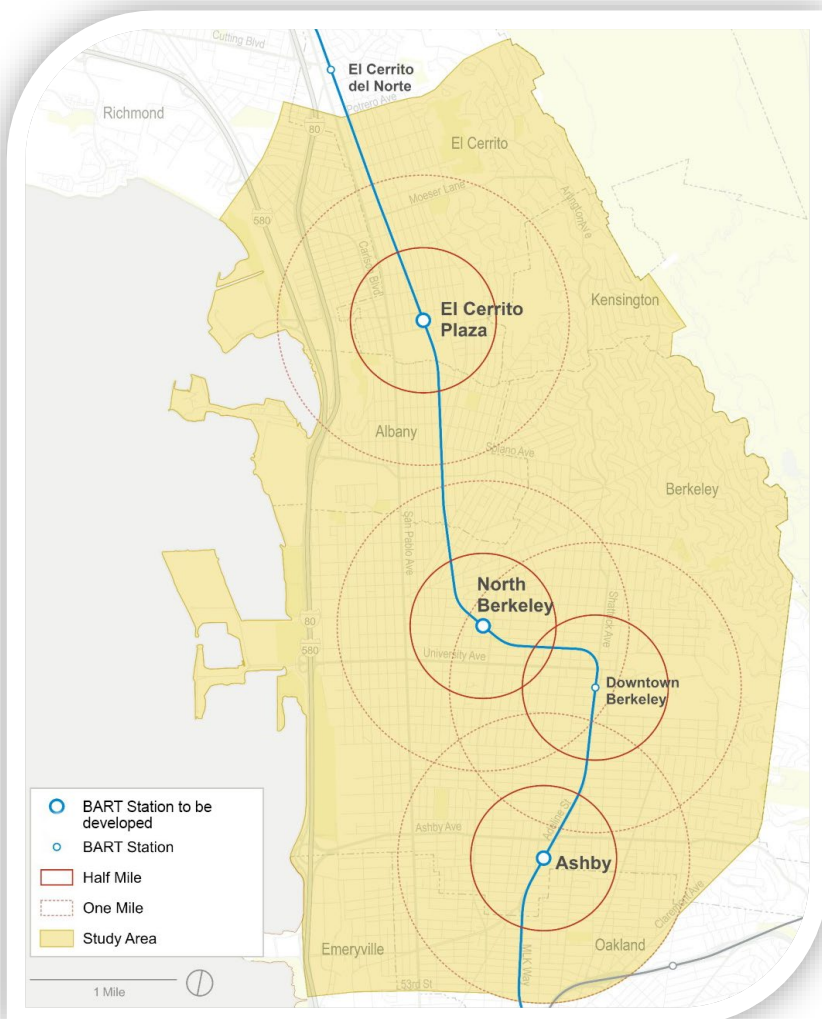
<sup>1</sup> Note: Public input about individual TOD projects received during the Corridor Access Plan outreach will be considered in the planning and development process for each station.



- Provide electric vehicle charging spaces.

**Safety and Security:** Concerns about the safety of walking in the neighborhoods and station areas were common, especially in low-light conditions. Some suggestions included:

- Install pedestrian-scaled lighting around the station areas and on neighborhood walkways and bikeways, though some residents are concerned about light pollution.
- Provide interactive amenities, such as art or historical points of interest, to encourage more “eyes on the street”.
- Implement strategies that reduce and calm vehicle traffic around the station areas and in surrounding neighborhoods.



**Universal Access:** Most who provided comments about BART riders with mobility issues (due to disability and/or age) want to ensure that their access needs are prioritized.

**Transit:** Many want existing transit service enhanced or expanded in addition to new service.

**Shared and on-demand mobility:** Some want to see services like on-demand transit, bike share, and ride-hailing options implemented, expanded, and/or subsidized.

**Station Area Design:** Input included increased connectivity between the stations and the surrounding neighborhoods for those who walk, bike, roll, and take public transportation to access BART, implement intuitive wayfinding and signage, and maintain station areas as transit centers.

The following pages summarize more specific public input for each station area in the following order:

- Ashby
- North Berkeley
- El Cerrito Plaza



## WHAT WE HEARD: KEY THEMES FOR ASHBY STATION

During this period of outreach, riders shared many suggestions for and concerns about changes to the way they get to and from the Ashby BART Station. Residents near the Ashby BART Station provided their opinions about how reducing the number of BART rider parking spaces will affect their neighborhood. In general, there is a high level of local support for TOD, particularly affordable housing, at this station, but there is concern about displacement of the existing Flea Market due to the development.

### Walking, Rolling, and Biking

- Implement and/or upgrade bikeways on Prince Street, Woolsey Street, Adeline Street, Ashby Avenue, and Shattuck Avenue.
- Improve pedestrian, cyclist, and wheelchair user crossings of Adeline Street, MLK Jr. Way, and Ashby Avenue around the station area.

### Safety and Security

- Calm traffic on the streets surrounding the station (Adeline Street, MLK Jr. Way, and Ashby Avenue).
- Implement more lighting on neighborhood streets that lead directly to the station, like Prince Street and Woolsey Street.

### Car Parking

- Concern about the availability of parking on Sundays due to the heavy concentration of churches in the area.
- Those living nearby indicated concerns that reductions in BART rider parking spaces will lead to less parking availability for residents and businesses in the neighborhood.

### Transit

- Reinstate bus transit service on Ashby Avenue to connect West Berkeley and Elmwood to BART.

### Station Area Design<sup>2</sup>

- Increase station connectivity to commercial areas to create a more vibrant and accessible destination.
- Better wayfinding to the station through Ed Roberts Campus.
- Add a second elevator.

## ASHBY OUTREACH SUMMARY

### **Hosted by the City of Berkeley**

#### **Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station Planning**

- Community Advisory Group Meeting #6 on April 29, 2021
- Community Advisory Group Meeting #7 on June 21, 2021
- Community Meeting #3 on June 26, 2021

#### **Online Open House and Survey Activities**

- Four virtual office hours, one hour each on August 9, August 11, August 16, and August 18
- In-person tabling at the South Berkeley Farmer's Market on August 10
- In-person tabling at the Ashby Flea Market on August 14

<sup>2</sup> Note: Public input about individual TOD projects received during the Corridor Access Plan outreach will be considered in the planning and development process for each station.



# BERKELEY-EL CERRITO CORRIDOR ACCESS PLAN



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## WHAT WE HEARD: KEY THEMES FOR NORTH BERKELEY STATION

During this period of outreach, riders shared many suggestions for and concerns about changes to the way they get to and from the North Berkeley BART Station. Residents near the North Berkeley BART Station provided their opinions about how reducing the number of BART rider parking spaces will affect their neighborhood. In general, there is a moderate level of local support for TOD, particularly affordable housing, at this station, but there is concern about the loss of BART rider parking.

### Walking, Rolling, and Biking

- Improve the Ohlone Greenway near the station area: Widen, fix poor pavement conditions, upgrade lighting, and improve street crossings.
- Implement and/or upgrade bikeways on Acton Street, California Street, Virginia Street, and Delaware Street.
- Improve pedestrian, cyclist, and wheelchair user crossings of Sacramento Street, Cedar Street, Rose Street, University Avenue, and San Pablo Avenue around the station area.

### Safety and Security

- Implement more lighting on neighborhood streets that lead directly to the station, like Acton Street and Virginia Street.
- Some expressed concern that the TOD will lead to more traffic on neighborhood streets.

### Car Parking

- Explore demand-based pricing for parking at BART and on-street.
- Identify opportunities for shared parking, such as on-site with TOD residents or near-by at publicly- or privately owned facilities.
- There were mixed reactions to providing BART rider parking spaces as part of the TOD development:
  - Most riders living further away expressed concern that distance, terrain, mobility challenges, errands, and lack of transit options would make it too challenging to access BART without a car and want some parking on-site.
  - Some riders living nearby expressed the desire to have no on-site parking to minimize traffic in the neighborhood, thus improving the overall public realm, particularly for walking and biking.
  - Other riders living nearby indicated concerns that reductions in BART rider parking spaces will lead to more traffic and less parking availability for residents and

## NORTH BERKELEY OUTREACH SUMMARY

### Hosted by the City of Berkeley

#### Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station Planning

- Community Advisory Group Meeting #6 on April 29, 2021
- Community Advisory Group Meeting #7 on June 21, 2021
- Community Meeting #3 on June 26, 2021

#### Online Open House and Survey Activities

- Four virtual office hours, one hour each on July 26, July 28, August 2, and August 4
- In-person tabling at the Downtown Berkeley Farmer's Market on July 31





businesses in the neighborhood.

- Some questioned why BART would build rider parking, which is expensive, land-intensive, provides the most benefit to the highest-income riders, and is contrary to its adopted policies to prioritize sustainable station access investments.

### Universal Access

- Prioritize access improvements for residents in lower-income areas, like west Berkeley.

### Transit

- Enhance public transit access to BART for residents who live in west Berkeley by increasing frequency and service times of AC Transit's Route 52.
- Enhance public transit access to BART for residents who live in the hills, such as increased frequency and service times of AC Transit's Routes 7, 65 and 67, which connects to the Downtown Berkeley BART station.
- Reinstate AC Transit's Route H Transbay Service.
- Provide new transit and/or shuttle service that connects residents in the hills and west Berkeley to the North Berkeley BART station.
- Implement on-demand transit or shuttles.

### Station Area Design<sup>3</sup>

- Include public charging stations for wheelchairs, e-bikes, and electric vehicles.
- Add a second elevator.



The City's BART Community Advisory Group (CAG) has been established for the purposes of drawing broad community participation and providing valuable input to the Planning Commission as it considers zoning standards that will be consistent with the City's obligations under AB 2923 for the

Ashby and North Berkeley BART station areas.

<sup>3</sup> Note: Public input about individual TOD projects received during the Corridor Access Plan outreach will be considered in the planning and development process for each station.



## WHAT WE HEARD: KEY THEMES FOR EL CERRITO PLAZA STATION

During this period of outreach, riders shared many suggestions for and concerns about changes to the way they get to and from the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station. Residents near the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station provided their opinions about how reducing the number of BART rider parking spaces will affect their neighborhood. In general, there is a moderate level of local support for TOD at this station, but there is concern about the loss of BART rider parking.

### Walking, Rolling, and Biking

- Improve the Ohlone Greenway near the station area: Widen path, upgrade lighting, and fortify street crossings, especially at Fairmount Avenue where Richmond Street and BART parking lot driveways are found in close to one another.
- Implement and/or upgrade low-stress, east-west bikeways on Central Avenue, Fairmount Avenue, and Cerrito Creek.
- Implement and/or upgrade low-stress, north-south bikeways on San Pablo Avenue and Carlson Boulevard.
- Improve pedestrian, cyclist, and wheelchair user crossings of San Pablo Avenue, Carlson Street, Fairmount Avenue, and Central Avenue around the station area.

### Safety and Security

- Install pedestrian-scale lighting on neighborhood streets that lead directly to the station, like Richmond Street and Central Avenue.
- Provide interactive amenities, such as art or bike repair kiosks, around the station to encourage people to walk and bike to increase the perception of safety.

### Car Parking

- Explore demand-based pricing for parking at BART and on-street.
- Identify opportunities for shared parking, such as on-site with TOD residents or near-by at publicly- or privately owned facilities.
- There were mixed reactions to providing BART rider parking spaces as part of the TOD development:
  - Most riders living further away expressed concern that distance, terrain, errands, and lack of transit options would make it too challenging to access BART without a car and want some parking on-site.
  - Some riders living nearby expressed the desire to have no on-site parking to minimize traffic in the neighborhood, thus improving the overall public realm, particularly for walking and biking.

## EL CERRITO PLAZA OUTREACH SUMMARY

### Virtual Community Meetings

- City Council Meeting on May 4, 2021
- Community Meeting on May 25, 2021
- BART Board Meeting on June 24, 2021

### Online Open House and Survey Activities

- Four virtual office hours, one hour each on July 12, July 14, July 19, and July 21
- In-person tabling at the El Cerrito Plaza Farmer's Market on July 17





## BERKELEY-EL CERRITO CORRIDOR ACCESS PLAN



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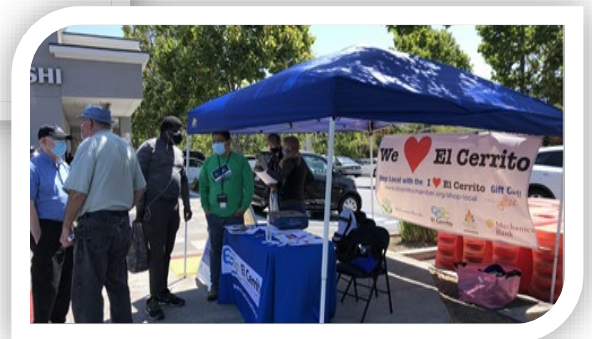
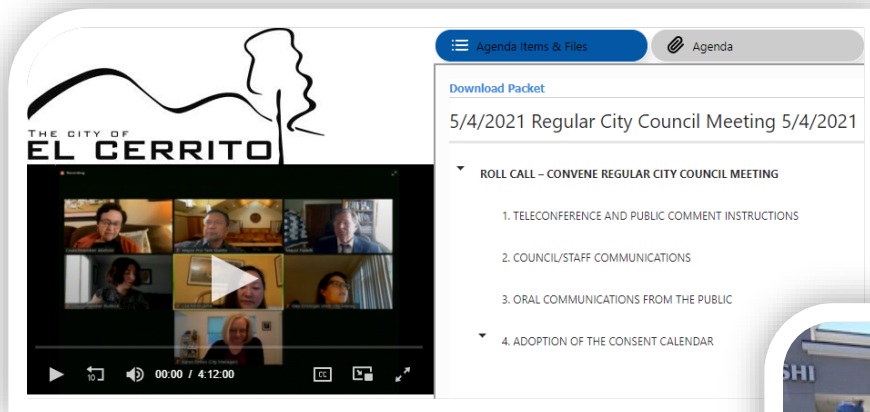
- Other riders living nearby indicated concerns that reductions in BART rider parking spaces will lead to more traffic and less parking availability for residents and businesses in the neighborhood.
- Some questioned why BART would build rider parking, which is expensive, land-intensive, provides the most benefit to the highest-income riders, and is contrary to its adopted policies to prioritize sustainable station access investments.

### Transit

- Enhance public transit access to BART for residents who live in Richmond Annex by increasing frequency and service times of AC Transit's Route 71.
- Enhance public transit access to BART for residents who live in Berkeley and Kensington by increasing frequency of AC Transit's Route 79.
- Provide new public transit access to El Cerrito Plaza BART for residents who live in the hills.
- Provide on-demand transit or shuttle service to connect residents who live in the hills and Richmond Annex to El Cerrito Plaza BART.

### Station Area Design<sup>4</sup>

- Increase station connectivity to commercial areas to create a more vibrant and accessible destination.
- Include public charging stations for wheelchairs, e-bikes, and electric vehicles.



<sup>4</sup> Note: Public input about individual TOD projects received during the Corridor Access Plan outreach will be considered in the planning and development process for each station.



## Outreach and Project Timeline

### Outreach

Outreach for the Corridor Access Plan is being conducted in three rounds:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Round (spring/summer 2021) – Needs:** Public input on access needs across the corridor, gathered through the online open house, project website, in-person events, and virtual meetings.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Round (fall 2021 through spring 2022) – Initial Access Options:** Public feedback on an initial set of options for area-wide station access and parking.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Round (summer 2022) – Draft Corridor Access Plan:** Public review of the plan, which will summarize the needs, confirm and prioritize the set of options for station access and parking, and identify funding opportunities to implement these options.

### Project Timeline

The project timeline and its relationship to each outreach phase is shown below:

