

East Bay BRT

Oakland, California

(November 2009)

The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) is planning the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, a 17-mile BRT line from Downtown Berkeley, through Downtown Oakland, to San Leandro, terminating at the San Leandro Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station on the southern end of the alignment. Forty-nine new stations would be constructed along the East Bay BRT and thirty-one buses would be purchased to augment the existing fleet. When completed, the East Bay BRT would provide a continuous 17-mile BRT system connecting the heavily transit-dependent communities of Berkeley, Oakland, and San Leandro.

The East Bay BRT would improve transit service to one of the densest, and most transit dependent, areas in the San Francisco Bay area. The corridor is served by extensive local and express service (Routes 1 and 1R) that operate with very frequent headways, but existing bus services are delayed by traffic congestion and constraints caused by operating in mixed traffic conditions. Additionally, there is a large population of transit dependent people; approximately 46 percent of the corridor residents are below the poverty level and 20 percent do not own a car. The proposed East Bay BRT will improve transit travel times significantly by providing over 14 miles of dedicated right-of-way for rapid bus service to major employment centers in Oakland and Berkeley for residents from Oakland, San Leandro, and other communities along the corridor.

Summary Description	
Proposed Project:	Bus Rapid Transit 16.9 Miles 49 Stations
Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):	\$234.55 Million
Section 5309 Small Starts Share (\$YOE):	\$75.00 Million (32.0%)
Annual Operating Cost (YOE\$):	\$4.90 Million
Opening Year Ridership Forecast (2016):	42,600 Average Weekday Boardings 6,800 Daily New Riders
FY 2011 Local Financial Commitment Rating:	High
FY 2011 Project Justification Rating:	Medium-High
FY 2011 Overall Project Rating:	High

There have been no significant changes to the scope, cost, or ridership estimates since the East Bay BRT was approved into project development in December 2008. Thus, no new information was submitted to FTA. However, FTA's process for rating project justification has changed since that time. This profile reflects the new process.

Project Development History and Current Status

In 1999, AC Transit began a Major Investment Study to evaluate various alternative transportation solutions to improve mobility in the Broadway, Telegraph, International, and Shattuck Avenue corridors. In August 2001, the AC Transit board adopted BRT as the locally preferred alternative using Broadway and International Avenue alignments. In May 2004, AC Transit began preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate BRT alternatives along Telegraph Avenue,

International Boulevard, and East 14th Street through Berkeley, Oakland, and San Leandro. The DEIS was published in May of 2007. FTA approved the project into Small Starts project development in December 2008.

The project’s capital cost estimate appears reliable. The allocated contingency of 54 percent of construction costs should be more than adequate. However, risks associated with utility relocation, the use of allowances for right-of-way acquisition, and escalating labor and material prices will be addressed during project development

Project Justification Rating: Medium-High

The project justification rating is based on the weighted average of the ratings assigned to each of the following criteria: the cost-effectiveness criterion is weighted 33 percent; the transit supportive land use criterion is weighted 33 percent and the economic development criterion is weighted 33 percent.

Cost Effectiveness Rating: High

The cost effectiveness rating reflects the level of travel-time benefits (6,800 hours each weekday) relative to the project’s annualized capital and operating costs based on a comparison to a baseline alternative.

Cost Effectiveness	
	<u>New Start vs. Baseline</u>
Cost per Hour of Transportation System User Benefit	\$ 9.74*
Incremental Cost per Incremental Trip	\$ 9.71

*Indicates that measure is a component of Cost Effectiveness rating.

Transit-Supportive Land Use Rating: Medium

The land use rating reflects the population and employment densities within ½-mile of proposed station areas.

- In 2000, the station area employment was 171,600. The CBD area employment was 65,000. In 2000, the station area population density was 13,900 persons per square mile.
- Existing development is variable in character. Major activity centers have highly urban characteristics including a mix of uses and pedestrian-friendly design. Lower density residential areas exist in the corridor and lack the necessary pedestrian and transit amenities. Daily parking in downtown Oakland is expensive. Parking around the University of California is extremely scarce.

Economic Development Rating: Medium

The economic development rating is based upon the average of the ratings assigned to the subfactors below.

Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium-Low

- The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has adopted a transit-oriented development policy that would be applied to transit expansion projects throughout the Bay Area.
- The FOCUS program provides an opportunity for local governments and regional agencies to work together to create livable, complete communities. The program designates near-term priority development areas as locations where development is encouraged and priority conservation areas as locations which include regionally significant open spaces for which there exists a broad consensus for long-term protection.

- Zoning codes around each of the proposed BRT stations is strongly supportive of transit-oriented development. Permitted residential densities range from 30 units per acre to 300 units per acre although some areas (especially in San Leandro) have zoned densities as low as 20 units per acre.
- High density areas in downtown Oakland have no minimum parking requirements; however all of the other areas along the corridor do have minimum parking requirements.
- Downtown Oakland has a maximum commercial Floor Area Ratio of 20.0.
- The City of Oakland is beginning a citywide review of its zoning along transit corridors in order to make them more transit friendly. However, the zoning codes around the majority of the proposed BRT stations include language that encourages mixed uses, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods, and high densities.

Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium

- The Fruitvale Transit Village in East Oakland is a four story mixed-use development with housing (including affordable units), office space, community services and a retail plaza.
- Despite its high level of existing development, more than 15,000 households, 40,000 residents, and 35,000 jobs are expected in the corridor by 2025. The growth rate for population and housing units in the corridor is projected to mirror the rate of Alameda County as a whole; however, the estimated employment growth rate is projected to be slower than in the County.
- There are many vacant or underutilized parcels in the corridor available for redevelopment.
- Market support for development in the corridor is strong in Oakland because of the area's central location, good accessibility, relatively affordable space costs and land prices, relatively affordable housing, accessibility to a well-educated workforce, proximity to a major university, and the availability of space and land for expansion with pre-existing infrastructure.

Local Financial Commitment Rating: High

The local financial commitment rating is based upon AC Transit's acceptable financial condition; a reasonable plan for funding for the non-Small Starts share of capital costs; and evidence that the operations and maintenance cost of the project is less than five percent of the agency's operating budget.

Locally Proposed Financial Plan		
<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds (\$million)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Federal:		
Section 5309 New Starts	\$75.00	32.0%
FHWA Flex Funds	\$35.00	14.9%
Section 5309 Bus Discretionary	\$2.09	0.9%
STIP Funds*	\$52.70	22.0%
Local:		
Regional Measure 2	\$48.74	20.8%
Alameda County Measure BAC Transit	\$20.98	8.9%
Capital Funding	\$0.04	0.5%
Total:	\$234.55	100.0%

NOTE: The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

*State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds are state-administered Federal flexible funds augmented by state gas tax and other revenues. These funds are passed from the state to local transportation agencies as STIP funds, but all Federal requirements apply.

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