Complete Streets
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN AND PLAN FOR
SAN PABLO AVENUE AND BUCHANAN STREET
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CHAPTER 4
Chapter 4 cover: Local Government Commission
1 Background and Study Process
1 Background and Study Process

PROJECT PURPOSE
The goal of this project is to help create a safer, more comfortable, and aesthetically pleasing environment along San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street in the City of Albany, to accommodate all users and all abilities. This project utilized an intensive charrette process bringing together a diverse set of community members to discuss issues and seek consensus in a highly engaging and productive design environment. The project was further tailored to the present needs of the community in the context of other planning efforts.

This streetscape vision looks beyond mobility and guides the look and feel of the streetscape to create places that reflect the character of the community, improve social interaction, and contribute to the economic health of the district. A complete street is a roadway designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable multi-modal access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transport users of all ages and abilities. Beyond this, however, complete streets are also intended to promote:

- An active, defined, retail-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood district
- Well-designed building facades and a mix of uses that help achieve a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Appropriate transitions between public spaces such as sidewalks, and privately owned plazas, courtyards, and entries

The vision to transform San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street into complete streets can help build regional connectivity, foster economic revitalization, promote community identity, and create a strong sense of place that serves both ecological and social functions. The design strategies in this document build on past planning endeavors encompassed in documents like the 2001 San Pablo Avenue Streetscape Master Plan and the 2012 Albany Active Transportation Plan, which emphasized creek crossings, gateways, major intersections, enhanced furnishings, and bicycle boulevards.

The planning effort was made possible through a California Department of Transportation Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant received by the City of Albany in partnership with the Local Government Commission (LGC). LGC is a Sacramento-based nonprofit organization that works with local governments and communities to create healthier and more vibrant and resource-efficient places.

The project partners assembled a multi-disciplinary professional team to develop the plan. Dan Burden of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute assisted LGC with the public visioning process. The design team is made up of staff from Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates Inc. and Wallace Roberts & Todd Design (WRT) provided community planning and design expertise and prepared the plan document.

Figure 1-1 Project Timeline

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CITY OF ALBANY SAN PABLO AND BUCHANAN COMPLETE STREETS REPORT 1-1
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Overview
This study addresses the desired character of two important streets and gateways in the City of Albany: San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street. Both streets are wide, designed to move cars, and could benefit from enhancements that serve transit, pedestrians, and bicycles. Their width and design make these streets barriers that divide the city into quadrants rather than knitting it together. Both streets lack sufficient street trees and other amenities needed to create a comfortable, welcoming pedestrian experience and promote a positive identity for the city. Beyond their similarities, however, the two corridors serve different functions in the region and community. San Pablo Avenue is a Caltrans Highway (California 123) and regional arterial traversing several cities in the region and serving local retail main street destinations. Buchanan is a major access thoroughfare through a neighborhood and past institutional uses, connecting regional freeways with several neighborhoods in Albany and Berkeley. Their respective design strategies must differ accordingly.

The City of Albany is a small urban city of 1.5 square miles with a population of 18,217. One quarter of Albany residents are under 18 years of age, 65% are between 20 and 64, and 10% are over 65 years of age. For commute to work trips, public transportation is widely utilized (22%), as is carpooling (9%), biking (7%), and walking (5%). Just over half of the working population of Albany commutes to work by driving alone in a car (52%).

As shown in the project area map, the two streets included in this project are two main gateways to the city: San Pablo Avenue, which runs north-south, and Buchanan Street, which runs east-west.

5 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
San Pablo Avenue
San Pablo Avenue (SR-123) is part of the California state highway system and is the major north-south corridor through the city. The posted speed limit along San Pablo Avenue is 30 mph, but the observed 85th percentile is 40.1 mph. The street extends 1.07 miles in the city and carries an average of 25,284 vehicles per day. San Pablo Avenue has four lanes (two in each direction), a center turning lane, and parking on both sides of the street. Both sides of the street have sidewalks. There are no designated bicycle facilities. The roadway is auto-oriented in nature, with numerous off-street parking lots; there are 88 driveways in this one-mile segment of roadway, approximately one every 115 feet.

The roadway experiences issues with speeding, vehicular congestion, and limited pedestrian crossings. During the site visits, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings, the team learned that the uncontrolled marked crossings, limited crossing opportunities, and high motor vehicle volumes make this roadway very challenging for bicyclists and pedestrians. Crossings are infrequent, and there are several uncontrolled crosswalks with only transverse markings—two parallel lines across the street. There is also limited bicycle parking along the arterial and a lack of street furniture.

Due to the central location of this street in Albany, it is a critical connector and, in its current state, acts as a significant barrier between east and west Albany. Many school-aged youth in the city must cross the street daily to reach their schools, and parents expressed concern about the risk of this crossing. The commercial district along San Pablo Avenue also suffers due to the auto-oriented nature of the street; businesses outside the core do not do as well as those nearer to the walkable commercial district of Solano Avenue.

Sidewalks along San Pablo Avenue are generally wide (13 feet), but are frequently interrupted by driveways, tree root upheaval, and other barriers placed in the right-of-way (e.g., signs, fire hydrants, and telephone poles). Due to the numerous driveways, cars and other obstacles are often blocking the sidewalk, posing a particular threat for those with physical or vision impairment and those pushing strollers or carts. Commercial driveways are often built with excessive slope, encumbering pedestrian travel along sidewalks. Curb ramps are generally placed at diagonals, directing wheelchair users and other pedestrians toward the center of the intersection before they can enter the crosswalk in either direction. There is no pedestrian-oriented street lighting on San Pablo Avenue, as there is on nearby Solano Avenue.

Some bicyclists who ride in the outside travel lane of this roadway were noted to swerve in and out of the parking lane, likely due to the discomfort of riding alongside vehicles travelling up to 40 miles per hour. This is a dangerous behavior, as is the tendency for cyclists to ride on the sidewalk on San Pablo Avenue. Sidewalk riding, both wrong- and right-direction, was observed and mentioned frequently during the outreach process as a major concern for this roadway. Bicycling on sidewalks endangers pedestrians, and also puts bicyclists at more risk when crossing driveways and intersections.

In the last decade (2000-2009), the total number of collisions on San Pablo Avenue was 414; the highest number of collisions occurred at San Pablo Avenue’s intersections with Solano Avenue, Brighton Avenue, and Washington Avenue. The intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Washington Avenue had the highest number of collisions involving bicyclists (4) and the intersection of San Pablo and Solano Avenues had the highest number of pedestrian-involved accidents (11).
San Pablo is a wide street with broad travel lanes that encourage speed at the expense of pedestrians and locally serving retail establishments. The street is lined with mature, widely spaced trees which do not adequately frame the street and create an inviting sidewalk environment. Retail signs are typically oriented toward the street only and, due to their height, conflict with trees, suggesting that an alternative signage strategy is needed to attract due attention to the retail frontages.

Sidewalk paving is mundane and uneven in places. Trees are planted in small tree wells with limited additional plants. Some businesses have added planters. The streetscape features few amenities that contribute to pedestrian comfort in the public realm. Missing items include benches, consistent bike racks, and elements of color or visual interest. Lighting mimics highway conditions with tall, widely spaced cobra heads that illuminate the street but fail to appropriately light the sidewalk.

The creek is a significant ecological resource that is diminished by the busy roadway and obscured to everyone passing by, even pedestrians. Stormwater passes directly into the creeks – a condition partially being addressed by the current “Green Spine” project.

In contrast to San Pablo Avenue in Albany, the Berkeley segment of San Pablo is characterized by wide, green, well-maintained medians with high canopy trees.
Buchanan Street

Buchanan Street is the main gateway to the city from Interstate 80 and Interstate 580, and is classified in the Albany Traffic Management Plan as a major arterial, carrying over 30,000 vehicles per day. The roadway is prone to fast speeds despite its 25 mph speed limit (the 85th percentile speed is 30.4 mph), and has few buildings fronting the street, resulting in an environment that encourages higher driving speeds. Land uses on Buchanan Street vary from residential on the north side to public facilities on the south side, including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)—one of the largest employers in the city, Ocean View Park, Ocean View Elementary School and City Hall. UC Village is located along the Marin Avenue segment east of the Buchanan/Marin merge.

Buchanan Street has numerous unsignalized intersections, with five consecutive residential streets that terminate at Buchanan Street and have unmarked crossings. This results in limited crossing opportunities between Ocean View Elementary School and the Albany Waterfront a half-mile to the west. The one-mile street segment in this study has a roughly 80-foot cross section, with four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction), a nearly continuous landscaped median, and three signalized intersections (two of which are on San Pablo Avenue, since the street splits west of City Hall and continues as Buchanan Street north of City Hall and as Marin Avenue south of City Hall.

Buchanan is an east-west connection for the city to the bay and its recreational opportunities, and as such experiences moderate cyclist and pedestrian volumes. The street has a continuous sidewalk on the north side and the Marin Avenue segment adjacent to the University of California property has a partial sidewalk on the south side. The sidewalk on the north side is very narrow (4.5 feet) with diagonal curb ramps and numerous driveways, some at steep slopes. There is no pedestrian-oriented street lighting on Buchanan Street. The south side of the roadway is currently under construction and a new 8-to-10-foot shared use path will soon be in place. More about this project is detailed below.

In parts of the Marin Avenue segment of Buchanan Street without parking, the sidewalks lack a buffer between the sidewalk and the travel lane. The north side of the street has short segments of on-street parking with no posted time restrictions. The south side has no parking or sidewalk with the exception of the segment in front and east of Ocean View Elementary; some spaces are passenger loading, others are unrestricted. There are no marked bicycle facilities on the roadway, and during the site visit a significant amount of wrong-way bicycle riding was observed on the north sidewalk.

The number of bicycle collisions on Buchanan Street from 2000 to 2009 was 153 (including 52 collisions at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue). The Buchanan/Pierce and Buchanan/Cerrito intersections experienced the highest number of collisions.

Of the controlled intersections along both roadways, all are pedestrian actuated for both north-south and east-west crossings, meaning that a person must push the button to get a walk signal during the signal cycle. There are no bicycle-specific signal loop detectors with identifying pavement markings on cross-streets of San Pablo Avenue or Buchanan Street, except at the newly redesigned intersection at Jackson/Buchanan, outside Ocean View Elementary School.

On both roadways, some signalized intersections offer only two or three marked crosswalk legs rather than four, forcing pedestrians, including those with impaired mobility, to travel longer distances to cross to desired destinations. At intersections with and without marked crosswalks, some stop bars are too close to the intersection or are missing entirely, encouraging drivers to stop very near or in the crosswalk.
On Buchanan Street, the lack of a mature tree canopy for scale contributes to high speed conditions. While the community effort to install the adapted coastal scrub planting improvements several years ago is applauded, the median requires ongoing maintenance in order to keep sightlines clear. Future plantings should address sightlines to crosswalks and crossing vehicles.

There is widespread concern in the neighborhood about high speeds on Buchanan Street as well as cars cutting through residential streets to avoid traffic congestion on the corridor. The entries to these neighborhood streets lack cues indicating their residential use—a strategy that could discourage non-local car traffic and provide general traffic calming.

Buchanan's sidewalks are quite narrow, with trees confined to tight planter strips along the curb. The paving and general conditions of the sidewalks are poor. Private improvements and the steep grade further constrict passage for pedestrians.

The configuration of the skewed Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue intersection creates a series of underutilized, "leftover" median spaces. The configuration also prevents pedestrians from safely accessing the City Hall sidewalk on Marin Avenue from the north side of Buchanan Street.
Transit Service
San Pablo Avenue is a Rapid Bus Corridor and is served by six AC Transit bus routes, including the 72 Rapid, with 12-minute headways from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Along this corridor, all signalized intersections have transit signal priority (TSP); however, the technology was installed in 2003 and is first-generation TSP technology. AC Transit has noted that many intersections do not currently function as intended and may not have functioning TSP at all times.

Other transit priority improvements on this corridor include signal interconnections and queue-bypass lanes. Bus stops for the 72R are placed at the far side of intersections when possible.

Buchanan Street is served by fewer and less frequent transit service than San Pablo Avenue; it has one AC Transit route and one UC Berkeley shuttle that travels between campus and Richmond Field Station.

PLANNING BACKGROUND
San Pablo Avenue
San Pablo Avenue has been the subject of numerous design studies, but does not have any current or planned projects. Past studies include a design guideline analysis in 1989, a vision plan in 1997, and a streetscape master plan in 2001. In addition, the Albany Active Transportation Plan (2012) proposed medians and pedestrian crossing treatments at intersections with a high incidence of collisions. Unlike Buchanan Street, no pedestrian-enhancement project has been implemented along San Pablo Avenue and there has not been a public process directed at merchants or residents of the adjacent communities until this design charrette.

Proposed Development at University Village
The University of California is proposing to develop two of its University Village parcels fronting San Pablo Avenue with a grocery store and mixed-use retail/senior housing. This development includes pedestrian crossing treatments at the intersections of San Pablo Avenue with Monroe Street and Dartmouth Avenue. The City will also explore the feasibility of incorporating a cycle track along the west side of San Pablo Avenue.

Buchanan Street
The 2000 Albany Bicycle Plan proposed a bicycle facility along Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue in order to close the existing gap in the bicycle network between the Ohlone Greenway and the Bay Trail. This proposal, known as the Buchanan/Marin Bikeway, was ranked the highest priority in the 2006 Alameda Countywide Bicycle Plan. The City has obtained several grants for different phases of the Buchanan/Marin Bikeway implementation. These grants include funds to develop Plans, Specifications, and Estimates and environmental work for the project (Regional Measure B, 2007) and another federal grant for the construction of Phase I and II, from San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan Street overcrossing (CMAQ, 2010).

The Buchanan/Marin bikeway project includes a Class I bicycle facility along the south side of Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street from San Pablo Avenue to the freeway overcrossing (CMAQ, 2010). The project also includes a traffic signal at the intersection of Pierce Street and Buchanan Street, the Buchanan Avenue closure (a segment that provides access to Cleveland Avenue from Buchanan Street), and several bulb outs along the south side of Buchanan Street that will provide traffic calming on Buchanan Street and serve as areas to replace trees that will be impacted by the project. The project will also realign the USDA driveway by merging its Y-shaped entrance into one that brings the intersection at a 90 degree angle with Buchanan Street. It also includes a flashing stop sign beacon at the new USDA driveway/bikeway intersection.

In addition, the City obtained a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant and recently implemented pedestrian enhancements at the intersection of Buchanan and Jackson Streets, including a new traffic signal with protected left turns on the four legs and pedestrian bulb outs. It also includes an advance stop bar and pavement markings indicating where bikes should be positioned in order to be detected by the video detection system.

The recently adopted Albany Active Transportation Plan (ATP, 2012) identified areas along Buchanan Street that still need attention in order to make Buchanan Street a complete street. The identified areas are: the intersection at Taylor and Buchanan Streets, the bicycle facility proposed for Jackson Street (crossing Buchanan Street), and the Marin Avenue/Buchanan Street merger just west of City Hall.

2
Public Design Charrette
Community input and participation in the planning process was an essential component of developing the design recommendations presented in this report. As a first step, LGC worked closely with the City of Albany to identify leaders from the community and other key stakeholders to serve as Community Advisory Group members responsible for providing guidance to the overall planning process and specifically the community planning events or “charrette.”

In the City of Albany, LGC and the design team worked with the Community Advisory Group to receive feedback on the direction of the Caltrans-funded planning effort, stakeholder group meetings, and the series of community workshops used to engage residents. The charrette was scheduled over the days of December 6-12, 2012, and included a series of focus group meetings, presentations, and workshops with residents, businesses, community organizations, and local government staff. The kickoff community event was held on the evening of Thursday, December 6, 2012, when residents were introduced to the project, listened to educational presentations by Dan Burden (Walkable Communities), Michael Moule (Nelson\Nygaard), and Paul Zykofsky (LGC), and shared their priorities and values for these corridors and for the City of Albany. The top-rated priorities and values are shown in the box to the right.

Six focus group meetings were held at the beginning of the charrette. These meetings allowed the design team to meet with and learn from parents, teachers, and administrators at nearby schools; representatives from the bicycle and pedestrian advocacy and ADA accessibility community; public agencies and University of California representatives; the business and economic development community; emergency/police services employees; and nearby residents. A comprehensive list of attendees and notes from the focus group meetings are included in Appendix 2 of this report.

A half-day community walk and design workshop was held on December 8, 2012. Residents were invited to a “walking audit,” where participants were led on an hour-long walk, guided by LGC representatives and members of the Community Advisory Group.

Values
- Community and neighborhood
- Child-friendly, families, schools, education
- Walkable, accessible
- Small town scale, village feel
- Bay, trees, wildlife, parks, waterfront

General Priorities
- Trees
- Connections to regional bicycle trails
- Traffic calming on Buchanan
- Cafes and outdoor places
- Safe mid-block crossings
- Gateways/sense of arrival/spirit
- Protected bicycle lanes

Banner at City Hall advertizing the community meetings.

Focus group meetings were held with a variety of community stakeholders.
of the design team, to discuss positive and negative aspects of the two corridors. Participants then returned to Ocean View Elementary School and worked at tables around large aerial maps to identify opportunities and challenges related to the two corridors. A final public presentation of plan concepts was held on Wednesday, December 12, 2012, where the design team presented draft site design recommendations and other visuals for residents to comment on. The design team used all input received at the Albany charrette to create and refine the design recommendations presented in this report.

The residents were supportive of the ideas presented and pointed out several additional issues to be considered. Ideas included reducing speed limits around the schools, consistent street lighting on Buchanan Street and San Pablo Avenue, safe crossings, sustainable stormwater infrastructure, and the need to identify funding for capital costs and operations and maintenance.

The streetscape plan promotes a series of broad principles identified with the community during the outreach and charrette process. These include:

- Lower speeds to 25 mph on San Pablo
- Improve crossing at Castro
- Improve crossing at Brighton
- Bike lanes
- Bulbouts at corners and crossings
- Protected bike lanes with narrow median
- Future parking garage?

Participants engaged in envisioning a new San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street.
A well-defined, multipurpose public right-of-way with ample pedestrian zones facilitates convenient pedestrian and bicycle movement and provides the social space to accommodate the city’s public life, in conjunction with retail and civic destinations (Palo Alto, CA)
Defining discrete sidewalk zones helps to manage activities in a way that benefits pedestrians and adjacent businesses. The amenity zone typically accommodates street furniture, trees, low-growing planting, and lights. The sidewalk zone provides a well-defined path of travel for pedestrians. The frontage zone allows additional private amenities to spill out of businesses and create dynamic street life that may include for-sale items, café seating, gated dining areas, and planters.

Public sidewalks must provide adequate horizontal and vertical clearance to accommodate convenient and comfortable pedestrian circulation, with sidewalk widths proportional to pedestrian traffic levels. Ideally, the pedestrian zone will comprise at least 50% of the sidewalk width (Santa Barbara, CA).

The pedestrian zone of the streetscape is designed to be visually inviting and comfortable, creating a setting predominantly free of conflicts with vehicular traffic. Highly articulated paving materials can reinforce a sense of place and provide a higher visual articulation appropriate for a retail environment (Santa Cruz, CA). Well-articulated facades on buildings facing onto the street help define the public realm through attention to scale, transparency, architectural articulation, and amenities.
The character of streetscape design elements should foster a strong sense of place and identity, celebrating Albany, its community, history, ecology, and local businesses. (Berkeley, CA).
3
Recommendations
3 Recommendations

CORRIDOR-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Several design strategies associated with complete streets should apply to both corridors, emphasizing the creation of a safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian experience. Treatments should include paving for sidewalks and crosswalks, street lights, and street trees, and should be applied consistently along each corridor to reinforce a single identity.

Narrow Lanes

Existing travel lanes on San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street in Albany are typically 12 feet wide. Travel lanes that are 11 feet wide are recommended as part of the proposed complete streets project. Several research studies have shown that 10-, 11-, and 12-foot lanes have similar safety and capacity characteristics. Narrower lanes also encourage motorists to drive more slowly and preserve right-of-way for other uses. For these streets, 11-foot lanes are recommended due to the need to carry frequent bus traffic and occasional truck traffic.

Intersection Geometry and Other Physical Changes

At both signalized and unsignalized intersections, there are several intersection geometry changes that should be considered to improve safety and usability by people walking and bicycling:

- Reduce corner radii to the minimum needed for the appropriately sized large vehicle (bus or truck) that regularly makes right turns around the corner in question. Small corner radii reduce turning speeds, reduce crossing distances, and make it easier to place crosswalks and curb ramps.

Figure 3-1  Project Context Map
• Install curb extensions (also called bulb-outs) where there is on-street parking, to reduce crossing distances, improve sightlines between pedestrians and motorists, and reduce vehicle turning speeds.

• Continuous raised medians encourage slower vehicle speeds, provide access control to reduce turning conflicts, and allow pedestrians to cross streets in two stages, greatly simplifying the crossing task.

• Caltrans has supported other cities using a texturized, flush median for the left turn lane and other cues to indicate a visual narrowing of the street.

**Signalized Intersections**

Signalized intersections have both positive and negative impacts on pedestrian and bicycle travel. On one hand, the signals stop traffic along the major street to provide gaps that allow pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists to cross. But on the other hand, pedestrians and bicyclists are at risk from crashes from concurrent turning movements by motor vehicles, and also due to all users’ occasional failure to obey signal controls. The following general recommendations improve signals for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Where possible, set pedestrian signals to “recall to walk,” concurrent with the green vehicle intervals. At a minimum, this feature should be provided for all crosswalks parallel to the major street at each intersection, concurrent with the green interval that is set to “recall to green” (north-south crosswalks along San Pablo, and east-west crosswalks along Buchanan). At locations with frequent pedestrian crossings across the major street (e.g. San Pablo Avenue at Solano Avenue), or where there is significant green time needed for vehicles crossing the major street (e.g. San Pablo Avenue at Marin Avenue during peak hours), consider setting signals to recall to walk for pedestrian crossings across the major street as well.
- Where signals are not set to recall to walk, pedestrian pushbuttons should be placed where they are convenient to the crosswalk they serve. New guidance on convenient pushbutton locations is included in the 2012 California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA-MUTCD).
- At signalized intersections approaches with vehicle detection, ensure loop-detector or video detection technology is calibrated to detect bicycles, and that proper markings are painted to ensure cyclists know where to position their bicycles to trigger the signal detection. New standards in the 2012 California MUTCD require bicycle and motorcycle signal detection.

**Crosswalks at Unsignalized Locations**

Research indicates that marked crosswalks at unsignalized locations should be enhanced with additional pedestrian crossing treatments. There are four controlled marked crosswalks along San Pablo Avenue and numerous unsignalized intersections without crosswalk markings along both San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street. In the sections with specific recommendations for each corridor, enhanced crosswalks are recommended at several locations. The following general recommendations should be considered for all existing and proposed crosswalks:

- Use high-visibility longitudinal crosswalk markings for all unsignalized crosswalks. Wide lines should be spaced to avoid the wheel paths of vehicles, thus reducing maintenance costs.

**UN SIGNALIZED CROSSING PRECEDENT IMAGES**

Use high-visibility longitudinal crosswalk markings for all unsignalized crosswalks. Wide lines should be spaced to avoid the wheel paths of vehicles, thus reducing maintenance costs.
Raised medians are recommended at all unsignalized pedestrian crossings, as either part of a continuous median as recommended above, or small median islands placed specifically at the crosswalk locations. Medians make it much easier and safer for pedestrians to cross streets, reducing pedestrian crash risk by approximately 40%.4

4 Ibid

Rectangular rapid-flash beacons are new traffic control devices that indicate when there are pedestrians in crosswalks, as approved by the Federal Highway Administration.5 These new high-intensity LED devices are more effective than standard incandescent yellow flashing beacons and in-roadway flashing lights. Some are solar-powered and operate by radio frequency to avoid the need for hard-wiring.

5 FHWA interim approval for RRFBs.  http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/interim_approval/ia11/fhwamemo.htm
All unsignalized crosswalks should have illumination so that pedestrians can be seen adequately at night. Illumination should be placed on the upstream side of the crosswalk for each direction of travel so the sides of pedestrians are illuminated, not the tops of their heads. Illumination layouts and lighting levels should be as shown in the Informational Report on Lighting Design for Midblock Crosswalks.5


On multilane roadways, many crashes at marked crosswalks are the “multiple threat” crash type, occurring when a motorist in the first lane stops for the pedestrian but stops in close proximity to the crosswalk, reducing sightlines between the pedestrian and motorists in the next lane. By placing a yield line and accompanying “Yield Here to Pedestrians” sign in advance of the crosswalk, sightlines are improved, and the chance of a crash is reduced. Advance yield lines are recommended at any unsignalized crosswalk on multilane roadways in Albany, as long as the lines can be placed at the intersection in a manner that does not create potential for driver confusion.
GATEWAYS

Gateways work in several ways for the betterment of a community. Most simply, they establish the identity of a community; they introduce visitors to a place; and offer residents a sense of collective, positive pride. More generally, they make motorists aware of a context change. Drivers who are conscious that they are entering a neighborhood or main street are more likely to slow their speeds, contributing immensely to the increased safety and quality of a place. Gateways can also add interest to the approach of a main street, and may invite travelers to explore its shops and spaces further. San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street are key entry routes into Albany, and the first introduction to the community for most visitors and through-travelers.

A gateway to a community can be communicated in many forms. Beyond welcome and identification signage, public art or monuments are commonly used to draw attention to gateways. Special landscaping, such as a tree-lined street, also calls attention to a change in context. Gateways are especially effective when they are articulated by changes in the structure of the road. Medians and roundabouts are two great examples, and they work well with other gateway features, as they enable signage, monuments, and landscaping elements to be placed in the center of the thoroughfare. Both the south and north end of San Pablo Avenue in Albany are ideal for major gateways, as well as the western end of Buchanan Street east of the freeway ramps.

Boundary markers can create a gateway to the community and help brand the corridor (Anaheim, CA).
Buchanan at Freeway
At the railway overcrossing west of Pierce Street, there is an opportunity to present vibrant signage and introduce landscape elements that will carry along Buchanan Street to San Pablo Avenue.
North End of San Pablo
Introduce the north border of the city with El Cerrito with visual signage and landmarks.
Figure 3-4  Design for Gateway at North End of San Pablo
South End of San Pablo
Demark Codornices Creek as well as the southern gateway to the city with Berkeley.
Figure 3-5  Design for Gateway at South End of San Pablo/Cordonices Creek
Other Design Elements

Although there will be similar design strategies used, each corridor requires a design tailored to its unique function. San Pablo Avenue is a retail main street, while Buchanan is more of a neighborhood parkway where vegetation complements both its residential and parkway functions. Their respective designs should offer visual cues that indicate their distinct uses and amenities.

Enhanced sidewalk paving creates the basis for an attractive pedestrian zone (San Jose, CA).

Consistent use of street trees reinforces the character of the street and softens the city’s hard surfaces and sharp edges, not just by screening but also by adding organic forms, colors, textures, and movement to the urban setting. Street trees of sufficient size to create an overhead canopy are known to cause drivers to reduce their speed. (Berkeley, CA)

Street lights should illuminate the sidewalk at the pedestrian scale and also meet roadway illumination requirements. (Palo Alto, CA)

Tree grates protect trees and create a clean, accessible ground plane. Larger openings benefit tree health by maximizing non-compacted soils. Subsurface treatments to improve soil volume for tree roots should also be studied for San Pablo Avenue. (Castro Valley, CA)
**Bike Parking**
Install bicycle racks at key destinations along both corridors, in front of businesses on San Pablo Avenue, and at important community sites such as Ocean View Elementary on Buchanan Street. The City should use inverted U-shaped racks or other designs that support the frame of the bicycle at two spots.

**Transit Facility Improvements**
The following transit facility improvements are recommended for the San Pablo and Buchanan Street corridors:

- Work with AC Transit to provide real-time information to riders at key stops along San Pablo Avenue.
- Improve route signage and provide information about connections to local attractions with pedestrian-scale wayfinding signage.
- Consider installing bus stop bulb outs to provide more waiting space for high-usage bus stops and also enable the bus to stop in-lane, reducing the need to merge into traffic and improving transit efficiency. Since the overall stop time of the bus is reduced, the delay to vehicles behind the bus is also minimized. In addition, because the bus does not need to maneuver in and out of the parking lane, bus bulbouts sometimes allow a few parking spaces to be added to the street.
**Sidewalk Function Zones**

There should be **three functional zones** of public sidewalk—an amenity zone near the curb including street furnishings, a pedestrian zone for circulation, and a transitional frontage zone in front of buildings—accommodate the right-of-way’s various uses.

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**SAN PABLO RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Overall Design**

San Pablo Avenue should have a street environment that is welcoming to all modes and celebrates Albany’s unique sense of community, ecology, and local businesses. The streetscape of San Pablo Avenue should exhibit a strong identity with amenities that encourage people to linger in the public realm and patronize its business. Conceptual design ideas highlight the community entries at each creek, provide well-defined sidewalks with ample amenities, maximize medians for street trees, and mark pedestrian zones within the road.

Successful improvement strategies for the public realm should address both near and long term opportunities. Major streetscape projects such as what is needed to revitalize San Pablo Avenue take time to fund and design. Small-scale implementation projects like creek gateways, street tree planting, sidewalk repair, and street furniture may be accomplished as discrete projects. Programming activities such as festivals, sidewalk chalk art, parklets, and pop-up parks are popular methods to instill a sense of place through high-value/low-cost projects.
Decorative paving can help define the amenity and pedestrian zones of the sidewalk (Walnut Creek, CA).

The Amenity Zone can accommodate a variety of functional and aesthetic amenities (Bay Street, Emeryville CA).

High-quality street furnishings in the public streetscape—including seating, bollards, planters, tree grates, street lights, bike racks, waste receptacles, and more—help provide an attractive and comfortable environment for people to congregate (Castro Valley, CA).
Creative uses of **planters and plant materials** enrich the pedestrian experience, enhancing the street’s aesthetics and improving the ecological function of the urban environment (Cloverdale, CA).

A **frontage zone** within the pedestrian realm, where sidewalk widths allow it, supports adjoining commercial uses by accommodating private elements, features, and activities within the public right-of-way.

Well-defined, transparent **building façades** with treatments including window awnings, sills, canopies, and recessed frames contribute to ground floor animation and support an active pedestrian life (San Jose, CA).

Signs oriented to the sidewalk better serve pedestrians (Healdsburg, CA).
Planting in medians helps express the community identity and soften the aesthetics of the roadway.
(Half Moon Bay, CA)

Marking creek crossings helps celebrate the ecology of Albany and enriches the pedestrian sense of place. At Lake Merritt, the names of underground creeks are displayed with special paving. (Lake Merritt Oakland, CA)
Whether or not pedestrians choose to cross at dedicated crossing points, medians improve crossing safety by permitting pedestrians to only have to focus on one direction of oncoming traffic at a time.

Figure 3-6  Staggered Median Crossing
San Pablo General Recommendations
San Pablo Avenue currently has a 74-foot cross section, with a 10-foot median and four 12-foot travel lanes, 8-foot parking lanes and 13-foot sidewalks. Just beyond Albany’s southern border in Berkeley, the median is wider, about 14 feet, with a 10-foot outside travel lane.

During the charrette and design finalization process, the team developed two options for San Pablo Avenue—one option with continuous bike lanes and one option without bike lanes. As a baseline, curb extensions and improved crossings are added throughout, and specific location recommendations are detailed in the following section.

Stakeholders, city staff, and officials expressed varying needs and concerns regarding these features. In exploring options for bicycle facilities and medians along San Pablo, the team also addressed the issue of on-street parking. Each option would require some amount of parking removal on the corridor, and a parking inventory and demand study was conducted to further explore the parking impact of the options.

Figure 3-7  San Pablo Section - Existing Conditions

At the Berkeley border, the median is 14 feet, with 12-foot inside lanes and 10-foot outside lanes.

Figure 3-9  San Pablo Avenue - Overall Plan
Figure 3-8  San Pablo Section - Existing at the Berkeley Border
Medians
The provision of medians is a key element for a healthy streetscape along San Pablo. Medians have been proposed at some locations on San Pablo Avenue for all options, based on feedback received during the charrette, including the need for enhanced pedestrian crossings, opportunities for median landscaping, and opinions of emergency response stakeholders about leaving open portions of the median. Business owners along San Pablo Avenue expressed concern about losing left turn access to their driveways, and so several major left turn locations have been preserved. For Option 1, a minimum median and a moderate median option have been developed as described below.

Minimum Medians
In the minimum median option (1A), raised medians were placed at the most important locations along the corridor, including at unsignalized crosswalks, where the median serves as a pedestrian refuge. This option also includes raised medians to frame major intersections and to serve as gateway treatments at the north and south ends of the city.

Moderate Medians
In the moderate median option (1B), raised medians were provided at most locations along San Pablo Avenue, except at specific locations as needed for emergency response and for important left turn movements. From north of Washington Avenue to just south of Solano Avenue, there is significant median length shown. However, for very short segments, such as the stretch between Washington Avenue east and west of Solano Avenue, there is no median recommended.

In this option, there is a large gap in the median between Buchanan Street and Solano Avenue, where there are many shops and driveways and where emergency responders need to use the center turn lane to bypass congestion in an emergency.

The figure below provides a visual comparison of median coverage between the two options. From this study, it can be seen that the north end of San Pablo Avenue has fewer medians in option 1A. There are about 20 to 25 tree planting opportunities in the minimum scheme and 50 in the moderate scheme.
Figure 3-11  Minimum Median - Plan View Example

Figure 3-12  Moderate Median - Plan View Example
Green Shared Lane
The bicycle facility treatment recommended here is a shared lane marking supplemented with a green band in the center of the lane. It highlights that bicyclists will be using the outside lane, and has been used successfully in Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, and Long Beach, CA. Long Beach found that there were far fewer cyclists using the sidewalk and that it was more successful than just a standard shared lane marking.

Option 1
Option 1 includes the use of a shared lane marking for bicyclists on San Pablo Avenue. A “super-sharrow” design with shared lane markings placed within a continuous wide green band in the center of the lane is recommended. This design with green paint supplementing the shared lane markings will have to be submitted as a formal Request to Experiment to the California Traffic Control Devices Committee by the City of Albany. Shared lane markings without the green paint are in the California Manual of Urban Traffic Control Devices and therefore would simply require approval from Caltrans to be installed on San Pablo Avenue because it is a state route.

With the shared lane marking design, 11-foot travel lanes are recommended, and a 14-foot median is proposed, wide enough to allow for large trees to grow. In addition, 14 feet provides enough room approaching intersections to provide a 10-foot left turn lane and a 4-foot-wide median nose, wide enough to allow low-level landscaping. Additionally, with this width, two median variations are possible, a minimum amount of median (Option 1A) and a moderate amount of median (Option 1B) as described above. Parking loss in this option is minimized, located only in areas where curb extensions and new crosswalks are proposed along the corridor.

Figure 3-13  Option 1 Section

Section with green shared lanes and 14-foot median, showing left turn lane, 11-foot travel lanes and 8-foot parking lanes.
Option 2

Option 2 explores the feasibility of installing bicycle lanes on San Pablo Avenue by using varying median widths and parking configurations. In order to achieve this design with the least amount of parking removal, raised medians are recommended for similar portions of the corridor as with the moderate median alternative for Option 1. At locations where a continuous raised median is proposed, the median is recommended to be only six feet wide, in order to accommodate two five-foot bike lanes. Other recommendations for this option include narrowing the travel lanes to 11 feet and narrowing parking lanes to 7 feet. At turning locations, the median widens to 12 feet to accommodate a turn lane with a concrete median nose, making it necessary to remove parking from one side of the street to accommodate bike lanes. At locations with a two-way left turn lane, the median could be narrowed to 10 feet, which allows for a bit more space in the bicycle lane width—up to six feet on each side.

By tapering back and forth between these two cross sections, the parking loss is minimized and bicycle lanes are possible on both sides. The loss of parking is distributed throughout the corridor, and is discussed more in the parking section below. At several locations, the design includes tapers through intersections, which would need to be vetted with Caltrans.

Figure 3-15  Option 2 Narrow Median Section

Figure 3-16  Option 2 with Left-Turn Lane Section
Option 3
During the design refinement period, the team received feedback from the Albany Traffic and Safety Commission that led to the development of a third alternative, a hybrid option that places bike lanes where they are most needed in the corridor and retains parking where it is most in demand. Option 3 provides space for wide raised medians wherever possible; retains center turn lanes where needed; retains parking where demand is high; and provides bike lanes in some areas (Figure 3-17).

Option 3 includes bike lanes from the northern city limit to Clay Avenue and from Buchanan Street to Dartmouth Street. San Pablo Avenue through the core of the city would have shared lane markings (from Clay Avenue to Buchanan Street). This option results in a moderate parking loss, mostly in areas with low parking demand. Transition zones from bike lane to shared lane marking are accomplished with lane tapers. The rate of taper adheres to Caltrans guidelines based on the posted speed limit for the roadway. Based upon further feedback from the Albany Traffic and Safety Commission, a slightly modified alternative (Option 3A) was developed by the team. This option would have shared lane markings in the city’s core area, but include bike lanes in only the southbound direction from Brighton Avenue to Clay Avenue and from Buchanan Street to Dartmouth Street. North of Brighton and south of Marin to Dartmouth, bike lanes would be included in both directions.

At the April 25 Traffic and Safety Commission meeting, the commission decided to have the team move forward with Option 3, but directed the team to modify Option 3 to retain parking on the east side of San Pablo for the block between Marin and Buchanan.

- The transition from bike lanes to shared lane markings is shown on northbound San Pablo Avenue between Garfield Avenue and Clay Street. (close-up from plan above)

This option is recommended to be implemented with the proposed off-arterial bicycle boulevard network for Albany, proposed in the Active Transportation Plan and further explored in this study (Figure 3-18). The proposed network includes a parallel route on both Kains Avenue and Adams Street. The southbound bicycle lane on San Pablo Avenue between Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue will accommodate the connection for southbound bicyclists between Adams Street and the Marin/Buchanan Bikeway (under construction), as well as the proposed bicycle boulevard connection at Dartmouth Street. Where bike lanes are not provided on San Pablo Avenue, it is expected that cyclists travelling through the corridor will choose to travel on the parallel low-volume streets (Kains Avenue and Adams Street) or will ride on San Pablo Avenue with shared lane markings.

Recommended Option
Based on stakeholder input and direction from city staff and the Traffic and Safety Commission, the team recommends moving forward with Option 3. The key features of Option 3 are:

- Bicycle lanes on both sides of San Pablo Avenue from the north city limit to Clay Avenue
- Shared lane markings between Clay Avenue and Buchanan Street
- Southbound bicycle lane between Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue
- Bicycle lanes on both sides between Marin Avenue and Dartmouth Street
- Shared lane markings between Dartmouth Street and the southern city limit

Figure 3-17  Option 3 - Example Transition from Bike Lanes to Shared Lane Markings on San Pablo
Figure 3-18  Proposed Bicycle Network

Off-arterial bicycle network map
Parking Demand and Change Study

The parking recommendations included a rough analysis of parking needs on each side of San Pablo Avenue, including the presence of off-street parking, and the likely demand based on land use along the corridor. Figure 3-20 shows the estimated parking loss for each of the options based on existing supply and predicted loss. In the worst case, about 40% of parking spaces (roughly 113 of the total 284 parking spaces) would be removed to accommodate bicycle lanes throughout San Pablo Avenue. As can be seen, some blocks would experience a greater loss than others.

Peak Hour Occupancy

Figure 3-19 shows peak-hour occupancy for the study area, which occurred at 5:00 p.m. (based on a one-day survey conducted on Tuesday, February 26, 2013). This map shows the occupancy level for each individual block face, excluding block lengths with no available parking.

The highest parking demand experienced on both sides of San Pablo Avenue is between Brighton Avenue and Garfield Avenue, between Portland Avenue and Washington Avenue, and on the west side between Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue. These blocks have an 82% average occupancy rate in the peak hour. Albany City Hall and Albany Police Department on the west side between Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue likely contribute to the high demand for on-street parking on this block.

Low parking demand is experienced in the northernmost block of San Pablo Avenue between Brighton Avenue and El Cerrito Plaza, between Garfield Avenue and Portland Avenue, and on the west side of the street between Marin Avenue and Dartmouth Street. These blocks feature very low usage rates, averaging 25% occupancy in the peak hour. There is low demand for on-street parking north of Brighton Avenue due to the vast availability of off-street spaces in the neighboring El Cerrito Plaza shopping center. Low occupancy between Marin Avenue and Dartmouth Street on the west side of San Pablo Avenue is likely due to the open space and undeveloped parcels along this block.

The blocks of San Pablo Avenue between Brighton Avenue and Washington Avenue present an interesting case in terms of parking demand patterns during the evening peak hour. Southward from Brighton Avenue, parking demand is high until Garfield Avenue, then very low until Portland Avenue, and then very high again until Washington Avenue. The land uses and off-street parking availability are fairly uniform throughout. However, when examining all-day demand data—available in the Appendix D—it is apparent that these occupancy levels actually remain fairly low for all of these blocks throughout the day until the evening, when there is a slight increase in usage.
**Potential Impacts on Parking Supply**

Figure 3-20 provides the estimated number of parking spaces removed in each of the three design options, as well as the projected demand, by block and for the corridor, based on the February 2013 parking demand survey of San Pablo Avenue.

**Figure 3-20 Parking Supply and Demand on San Pablo, Existing and Option 1, 2 and 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross Streets</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Inventory</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From</td>
<td>To</td>
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<td>Number of Spaces</td>
<td>Peak Hour Demand</td>
<td>Number of Spaces Lost</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Dartmouth St</td>
<td>City limit</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>149</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>-29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimated change in existing parking supply**

-29 |

-131 |

-93 |

**NOTES:**

* Peak hour is 5pm, from one day survey on Tuesday, February 26 2013.
This revised estimates uses the ground survey to calibrate the inventory and reductions that were based on estimates from aerial images.
The scaling factor is 236/309 (ground survey inventory/aerial estimate inventory).
Parking Loss Estimates for Options 1, 2 and 3

**Option 1**
Option 1 generates only a 10% change in parking supply for the corridor, a loss of 29 of 303 existing spaces. Every block along the San Pablo Avenue corridor would retain at least two parking spaces. If this option were implemented, it is estimated that, based on current parking demand levels along the corridor, parking occupancy would increase by 5%, from the current 49% occupancy to approximately 54% occupancy at the 5:00 p.m. peak hour. A parking loss of this magnitude would still leave an excess supply of parking on the corridor.

**Option 2**
Of the three options, Option 2 generates the maximum impact on parking supply on San Pablo Avenue. This option would result in a loss of 43% of parking on the corridor, 131 of 303 existing spaces. This option proposes complete removal of parking on four block faces on the west side of San Pablo Avenue and on two block faces on the east side. Based on current parking demand levels, the overall occupancy in this option is estimated to increase 38%, from 49% to approximately 87%. This would be a substantial increase that could lead to parking supply shortages on individual blocks, but could likely be addressed with a parking management plan, as parking occupancy varies widely block-to-block.

**Option 3**
The proposed designs in Option 3 are expected to result in a loss of 31% of the existing on-street parking supply (93 of 303 spaces). Option 3 proposes completely removing parking from two block faces on the west side of San Pablo Avenue and one block face on the east side, in addition to minor losses within blocks to accommodate crosswalks and curb extensions. Based on current demand levels on the corridor, the parking configuration in Option 3 is estimated to increase overall corridor occupancy by 21%, from 49% to 71% occupied in the peak hour. These occupancy rates are within standard desired targets for parking occupancy rates. This option balances parking loss and demand on the corridor with the careful removal of underutilized spaces and retention of spaces that experience high demand along the corridor. Revised demand figures for San Pablo Avenue under Option 3 can be seen in Figure 3-21 above.
San Pablo Avenue
Site Specific Recommendations

San Pablo at Dartmouth

UC Village Planned Development

The University of California is proposing to develop two of its University Village parcels fronting San Pablo Avenue with a grocery store and mixed use retail/senior housing. This development includes pedestrian crossing treatments at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Monroe Street. The City will also explore the feasibility of incorporating a cycle track along the west side of San Pablo Avenue.

Bike Boulevard Crossing Option

The crossing of San Pablo Avenue between Monroe Street and Dartmouth Street is a critical connection in the city and regional bicycle network. In addition to the connection from Dartmouth Street to Monroe Street, there is a proposed shared-use path along Cordonices Creek. The proposed design, shown in Figure 3-22, includes access to that path, using a bulb-out and removing several parking spaces, as well as a protected crossing of San Pablo Avenue utilizing the center median to provide a refuge for pedestrians and bicyclists who cross here, and to provide left turn bicycle lanes in both directions. Left turn bicycle lanes independent of vehicle left turn lanes have been approved by Caltrans.

Cyclists travelling westbound on Dartmouth Street or northbound on San Pablo Avenue would cross into the median and travel in a left turn bicycle lane that remains separate of the vehicle left turn lane. Cyclists travelling eastbound from Monroe to Dartmouth would turn into the center median with the signal, or when traffic is clear, and travel in the southbound left turn bicycle lane, turning left at Dartmouth after yielding to northbound traffic. This left turn lane would also serve bicyclists traveling southbound on San Pablo Avenue who want to turn left into Dartmouth Street.

In order to provide the bicycle left turn lanes, it is necessary to ban motor vehicles from making westbound left turns from Dartmouth Street and southbound left turns onto Dartmouth Street. This supports the use of Dartmouth Street as a bicycle boulevard by diverting motor vehicles, an important aspect of proper bicycle boulevard design. The street network is fairly continuous and well connected in this area, so it is not expected that the impact would be onerous on vehicular access into the neighborhood. There is also a proposed bulb-out on the southeast corner of Dartmouth Street and San Pablo Avenue, to reduce the crossing distance and improve visibility for pedestrians.
San Pablo Avenue at Solano Avenue

The intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue is an important location in the city of Albany. This intersection experiences high pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle volumes and has a high demand for turning movements. Currently there is a bus stop on each side of San Pablo Avenue south of Solano Avenue. The northbound bus stop is therefore a nearside stop, which is not the preferred location for a stop by AC Transit. The team recommends moving this stop to the far side of the intersection. Other recommendations for this intersection include signal timing adjustments. The City should also consider removal of eastbound and westbound right turn lanes on Solano Avenue to provide more parking and to create a more urban intersection environment.

Signal Timing Study

Currently, the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue has split phasing for eastbound and westbound movements, which results in long wait times for pedestrians and vehicles. Behavioral observations during the study indicate that pedestrians begin walking during both the eastbound and westbound vehicle phase regardless of whether the WALK signal is displayed, thereby sometimes creating conflicts with vehicles turning left on the green arrow. This behavior likely occurs both as pedestrians intentionally minimize their wait times or due to confusion.

The pedestrian signals for all four crosswalks are actuated, requiring pedestrians to push the button to receive a WALK signal. Preliminary pedestrian and bicycle counts were conducted at this intersection between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17, 2013, and again between 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 2013, shown in Figure 3-24.

Figure 3-23 San Pablo at Solano Avenue - Plan View

Bicycle counts were relatively low, at 16 to 22 bicyclists per hour. However, pedestrian activity at the intersection is nearly continuous, with 186 to 213 pedestrians per hour. During the 2 p.m. count there were 63 pedestrians crossing the north leg and 81 pedestrians crossing the south leg, and there are only about 33 signal cycles during this hour. During the 4:30 p.m. count, there were 40 pedestrians crossing the north leg and 60 pedestrians crossing the south leg, and there are only about 28 signal cycles during this hour. With significantly more pedestrians crossing per hour than signal cycles, even if accounting for groups of pedestrians crossing simultaneously, it is quite likely that both the north leg and south leg pedestrian signals are actuated during most signal cycles during much of the day. The time necessary to run through two separate pedestrian walk and clearance intervals each cycle contributes greatly to the delay experienced by all users at this intersection. This supports removing the split phasing and providing walk signals every cycle during at least part of the day.
Figure 3-25 shows the results of traffic analysis for this intersection, evaluating the existing conditions and some of the recommendations for this intersection. As described below, these changes will improve conditions for pedestrians and likely reduce overall congestion, which may reduce some of the traffic diversion onto minor streets from Buchanan.

The following changes are recommended for this intersection:

- Request that Caltrans remove split phasing and provide concurrent eastbound and westbound through-movements and pedestrian walk intervals, with concurrent eastbound and westbound protected left turns occurring during a different phase. The traffic analysis table below shows that the intersection will operate somewhat better without split phasing using the existing 130 second cycle length for the p.m. peak period (compare the “Existing” column to the “Prot. LTL” column).

- Request that Caltrans consider shorter cycle lengths throughout the day. Cycle lengths currently range from 98 seconds to 130 seconds depending on the time of day, resulting in significant pedestrian and vehicle delay. As indicated by comparing the two columns labeled “optimized” with the other columns, shorter cycle lengths could result in lower overall vehicle delay at the intersection. Average pedestrian delay would also be reduced.

- Remove the eastbound and westbound right turn lanes and provide additional on-street parking in the core of downtown where demand is often high. The parking on the northeast corner also would make up for parking loss on this corner due to the relocated bus stop and potential bus bulb-out. The columns in the analysis table labeled “no EW RTL” show that removing these turn lanes has only a minor effect on delay and level of service, except for these specific right turn movements.
• Request that Caltrans set the pedestrian signals for north-south movements along San Pablo Avenue to “recall to walk” (this recommendation applies to all intersections along San Pablo Avenue). Due to long green times to serve the northbound and southbound through-movements, providing walk signals every cycle will have no measurable effect on motor vehicle delay, level of service, and capacity.

• Request that Caltrans set the pedestrian signals for east-west movements along Solano Avenue to “recall to walk” for at least the portions of the day that there is significant pedestrian activity, as indicated in the discussion above about pedestrian counts. The traffic analysis assumed that pedestrian actions would take place during nearly every cycle.

Notes:
1. All analyses are of the afternoon peak hour, as this is when the highest traffic volumes occur at this intersection.

2. 130-second cycle lengths were used for most of the analyses, since this is the current cycle length used during the PM peak hour for the coordinated signal system on San Pablo Avenue.

3. The “No EW RTL” scenarios look at removing both the eastbound and westbound right turn lanes, to consider the possibility of providing on-street parking instead of turn lanes.

4. The “Prot. LTL” scenarios replace the existing split phasing for Solano Avenue with phasing that provides protected left turn phases separate from the through movements on Solano.

5. It appears that the 2009 analysis didn’t consider as many pedestrian calls as indicated by recent pedestrian counts at this intersection, thus explaining the difference in overall delay between that analysis and the 2013 analysis. In addition, the pedestrian clearance intervals are probably longer in the current signal timing than they were in 2009 (there has been a change in this standard in the MUTCD).

6. The “Optimized” scenarios use a shorter cycle length than the 130-second cycle length, as a way of favoring cross traffic (including pedestrians) over through traffic on San Pablo Avenue. Shorter cycle lengths would need to be implemented throughout the corridor, in order to maintain a coordinated signal system. Cycle lengths between 80 seconds and 110 seconds are also possible, and would provide similar operations (and less delay for pedestrians and traffic on Solano Avenue).

### Figure 3-25 Traffic Analysis for the Intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue

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<th>Existing (F&amp;P 2009)</th>
<th>Existing (Nelson\Nygaard 2013)</th>
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<th>Prot. LTL</th>
<th>Prot. LTL (Optimized)</th>
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AC Transit Bus Stops

Transit safety and operations efficiency would be enhanced by relocating the northbound bus stop at San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue to the far side of the intersection and adding a bus bulb. AC Transit prefers far side intersection bus stops because it reduces bus delay approaching the bus stop and reduces congestion when pulling away from the stop. Far side bus stops also improve pedestrian safety because passengers cross behind rather than in front of the bus.

Intersection observations concluded that at the existing near-side stop, the bus arrives at the stop on a green 80% of the time, but by the time passengers have boarded and alighted, the signal has turned to red, increasing dwell time and decreasing on-time performance. Indeed, observations indicate that, on average, buses spend about one minute dwelling at this stop, and the bus blocks the lane over 50% of the time, thus causing congestion for northbound traffic. It is anticipated that moving the stop to the far side of the intersection will reduce the average stop time to less than 30 seconds. Overall intersection performance will improve due to the ability of the bus to go through when the light is green.

This change will result in a net loss of 1-3 parking spaces, including the spaces that will be regained on the nearside of the intersection at the current space. This is in part due to the fact that Route 18, which turns right, would need a separate stop on Solano Avenue east of San Pablo Avenue.

The recommendation for a far side stop should be pursued independently of the recommendation to install a bus bulb-out at this bus stop, pending further discussion by Albany staff and Traffic and Safety Commission, as well as Caltrans approval.

AC Transit bus crossing intersection of San Pablo and Solano

Narrow sidewalk space at bus stop for Route 72 Rapid on San Pablo at Solano.

Bus stopped at northbound bus stop at Solano Avenue, with the back of the bus remaining in the travel lane, blocking overtaking traffic.
San Pablo Avenue at Washington Avenue

Bike Boulevard Crossing Option

The Active Transportation Plan proposes a Washington Avenue bicycle boulevard treatment, connecting the proposed Kains Avenue and Adams Street bicycle boulevards, and providing a low-stress bikeway across this portion of the city. A special crossing treatment is recommended at San Pablo Avenue and Washington Street as an option to accommodate this proposal (as shown in Figure 3-26). As the two legs of Washington Avenue do not align, left turn bicycle lanes in the center median are recommended, similar to the proposed design at Dartmouth and Monroe Streets. To accommodate these left turn bike lanes, northbound and southbound left turns movements would need to be restricted from San Pablo Avenue to Washington Avenue. As with Dartmouth, turn restrictions support the use of Washington Avenue as a bicycle boulevard by diverting motor vehicles, reducing traffic volume to a more comfortable level for bicyclists.

The northernmost leg of Washington Avenue (connecting to and from the west) is currently signalized, while the southernmost leg (connecting to and from the east) is unsignalized. If the signalization remains the same, eastbound bicyclists on Washington Avenue could use the signal to make their way to the left turn lane, but westbound bicyclists would need to wait for a gap in both lanes of northbound traffic in order to turn right directly into the left turn lane. Working with Caltrans, it may be possible to modify the existing signal so both legs of Washington Avenue would be signalized. This will allow both eastbound and westbound cyclists to use the signal to make their way to the left turn lane. In addition, it would provide a signalized pedestrian crossing on the south leg of this intersection, where there is currently an unsignalized marked crosswalk.

Figure 3-26  Bicycle Boulevard Crossing at San Pablo and Washington - Plan View
Enhanced Unsignalized Crosswalks on San Pablo Avenue

There are several existing unsignalized crosswalks on San Pablo Avenue, and most are simply identified with only two transverse lines across the roadway, along with pedestrian crossing signs. In addition, new crosswalks are recommended at two mid-block locations. It is recommended that all of the unmarked crosswalk locations described below include the following combination of treatments to enhance their usability and safety, as described in more detail in the general recommendations section of this chapter:

- Raised medians (continuous raised medians or small median islands)
- Curb extensions, where there are parking lanes, and where driveways or other constraints allow for the construction of a curb extension
- Advanced yield lines with “Yield Here to Pedestrians” signs
- High-visibility longitudinal crosswalk markings
- Rectangular rapid-flash beacons
- Pedestrian-scaled illumination

Garfield Avenue

The existing crosswalk on the south leg of this intersection should be enhanced with the recommended treatments. Because there is no street on the west side of the intersection, a median can be placed at this location.

Castro Street

The existing crosswalk on the south leg of this intersection should be moved to the north leg of the intersection and enhanced with the recommended treatments. Moving the crosswalk to the north leg will allow for a median to be placed at this location, since there is no street on the east leg of the intersection.

Portland Avenue

The existing crosswalk on the south leg of this intersection should be enhanced with the recommended treatments. Because there is no street on the west side of the intersection, a median can be placed at this location.

Washington Avenue

The existing crosswalk on the south leg of this intersection should be enhanced with the recommended treatments, unless the intersection is signalized as described in the bike boulevard crossing recommendation for this intersection. Because there is no street on the west side of the intersection, a median can be placed at this location.

This photo simulation shows the existing crosswalk at Portland Avenue modified with the combination of treatments described above.
Midblock Crosswalk Between Solano Avenue and Buchanan Street

A new midblock crosswalk is recommended in this long block in the core of Albany. In downtown settings, crosswalks spaced between 300 and 600 feet are recommended to serve pedestrians, as long as there are origins and destinations in the area. The nearest crosswalks are spaced over 900 feet apart, and this proposed crosswalk is recommended in the vicinity of Happy Donuts and Albany Ford Subaru, roughly midway between the existing crosswalks. A crosswalk at this location allows people to cross back and forth between businesses, including the car dealer employees who regularly cross in this area to drop off or pick up cars in nearby parking lots. The crosswalk should be enhanced with the recommended treatments shown in Figure 3-27, and also include an offset between the two halves of the crosswalk, to encourage pedestrians to look toward the traffic stream that they will cross next.

Midblock Crosswalk Between Marin Avenue and Monroe Street

A future midblock crosswalk is recommended for consideration in this long block. With current land use, a crosswalk in this location may not be appropriate at this time. But as properties in this area redevelop, a crosswalk should be considered to reduce the 800-foot gap between the existing crosswalks of San Pablo Avenue at Marin Avenue and Monroe Street. If installed, the crosswalk should be enhanced with the treatments recommended above, and also include an offset between the two halves of the crosswalk, as shown in Figure 3-28.
BUCHANAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Design
The complete street design for Buchanan Street should create a welcoming entry sequence to Albany from the west and enhance the primary access corridor to the shoreline from the neighborhoods. The streetscape needs to advance an appropriate character that says “neighborhood parkway,” not “high speed connector.”

During the design charrette, a number of key features were identified to enhance and improve the Buchanan Street corridor, in addition to the planned (under-construction) shared-use path on the south side of the street and new crossing of Buchanan Street at Pierce Street.

Figure 3-29 Design Charrette Brainstorming and Visioning

Buchanan is a challenging bicycling environment but is a vital connection to the Albany Waterfront.
Proposed improvements for Buchanan Street include:

- moving the concrete joint line to the inside edge of the northbound bicycle lane, adding a green band to highlight the shared marking on the south side of the corridor
- providing bulb-outs on the north side (in addition to south side bulb-outs that are under construction)
- improving landscape features on the center median and tree islands.

Bulb-outs will also serve as a traffic calming measure to tighten up the visual width of the corridor and communicate the transition from freeway to neighborhood on Buchanan Street. The community expressed cut-through traffic concerns on the neighborhood streets north of Buchanan Street. It is recommended that visual cues along Buchanan Street be used to neck down entries to neighborhood streets as well as pavement surface textures at street entries (decorative concrete or stamped asphalt) that say: “You’re entering a neighborhood.”

Sidewalks should be repaved to enhance the comfort of pedestrians and the aesthetics of the streetscape (Berkeley, CA).

Creating an attractive frontage to residential and community amenities such as Oceanview Park and Elementary School will enhance their presence on the corridor and help define Buchanan Street’s identity and importance in the community. (Emeryville, CA)
Clearly marking bike lanes help guide cyclists and identify the multimodal use of the street to slow down motor vehicles.

Curb extensions (bulb-outs) expand the pedestrian zone, provide space for amenities like planting and bike racks, and shorten crossing distances.

The entry to residential streets off of Buchanan Street should be designed to signal their uses by means of planting and traffic calming measures, which will help deter non-residential traffic.
Buchanan Street Site Specific Recommendations

Buchanan Street at Pierce Street
At Pierce Street, a new traffic signal and crossing is being installed during the summer of 2013. The project will also close off motor vehicle access from this intersection to the short segment of Buchanan Street west of Pierce Street and develop a small pedestrian plaza at Pierce Street. This plaza can function as a gateway and potential gathering spot—a location to provide amenities to cyclists or potentially develop retail frontage.
Currently there are only two pedestrian crossings on Marin Avenue/Buchanan Street west of San Pablo Avenue, at Jackson Street and at Pierce Street (under construction). This project (and the Buchanan Bikeway Project) initially proposed two possible options for an additional pedestrian crossing between Jackson and Pierce Streets, either at Polk Street or Taylor Street. During the February meeting of the Traffic and Safety Commission, the commission decided to move forward with the Taylor Street crossing. The Taylor and Buchanan Streets intersection is the natural crossing for pedestrians going to Ocean View Park and USDA, as this crossing is a direct link between the residential areas to the north of Buchanan Street and Ocean View Park/Baseball Field. Currently, there is no marked crosswalk at this intersection. The recommended treatments are to provide a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (sometimes called a HAWK signal), provide high-visibility crosswalks, and reconfigure the median to facilitate pedestrian crossings, similar to the recommendations of the ATP.

An unsignalized treatment here is not recommended, due to the nature of the crossing. The recommended design is shown in Figure 3-33.

**Buchanan Street at Taylor Street**

Figure 3-33 Proposed Pedestrian Crossing at Taylor and Buchanan
Buchanan Street at Jackson Street
(Ocean View Elementary)

Jackson Street is the primary crossing location for bicycle and pedestrian access to Ocean View Elementary School and Park. Recent improvements to the Jackson Street and Buchanan Street intersection included high-visibility crossings on the north, west, and south legs, and video detection technology for bicyclists on the north and south legs. The east crosswalk remains closed, and it is the recommendation of this project that this crosswalk be reopened, as shown in Figure 3-34. There may be utility relocation issues that will need to be addressed in order to reopen this crosswalk. New barrier treatment at the school could also be used to improve the visual environment and protect students from vehicle exhaust and noise.

Future plans for this street show bicycle facilities on Jackson Street to connect residents of UC Village and Berkeley cyclists with the bicycle network north of Buchanan Street through the residential areas of Albany, El Cerrito, and Richmond. The ATP proposes the installation of bicycle lanes along Jackson Street between Buchanan Street and Solano Avenue.

Figure 3-34 Buchanan and Jackson - Plan View

Currently, the crossing at Jackson and Buchanan is utilized by high volumes of students during school hours. The east leg of the intersection is currently closed.
San Pablo Avenue and Marin Avenue

At the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Marin Avenue, signal modifications are recommended to accommodate the new Buchanan Bike Path, in addition to an exclusive right turn lane for eastbound right (EBR) turning vehicles. At a meeting on May 9, 2013, the city met with Caltrans to discuss options to improve the south crosswalk of this intersection. The current preferred options, which would support the Complete Streets environment of both corridors in this study, are:

- Leading Pedestrian Interval: Use a LPI and an LED Blank-Out Sign to enforce a “No Right Turn on Red” for eastbound right turning vehicles
- Standard Right Turn Overlap Phase: Use an overlap signal phase with a green arrow for eastbound right turn traffic with the northbound left turn green arrow

In addition, the following options could be studied further and implemented in Phase III of construction.

- Eliminate Conflicting Movements: Use multiple overlap phases to eliminate eastbound right turning vehicles potentially conflicting with the south crosswalk walk indication.
- Install Bike Signal: Install bicycle signal heads for the south crosswalk (would require bike detector loops). Caltrans indicated that bicycle signal warrants must be met prior to the installation of a bike signal. However, given that the geometric design of this crossing creates inherent, unexpected conflicts between right turning motorists and through bicyclists, it is recommended that a bike signal be installed as soon as possible, to eliminate these concurrent conflicting vehicles movements.

The City also plans to add a bike detector loop on the eastbound bike path approach to the intersection, to precede a potential future bicycle signal installation. The design is shown in Figure 3-35.

Figure 3-35 San Pablo and Marin - Plan View

Current intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Marin Avenue.
Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street (City Hall)
The Buchanan Street/Marin Avenue merge is the point where Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue meet west of the Albany Fire Station. Currently, this merge layout is not pedestrian-friendly and lacks sidewalks and crosswalks, presenting a walking barrier to pedestrian travel along the north side of Marin Avenue. The ATP proposes a reconfiguration of this merge by creating a pocket park.7 As part of creating a more urban, walkable environment on Buchanan Street, the team recommends reconstructing the intersection so that east leg of Buchanan Street meets Marin Avenue at a right angle, as shown in Figure 3-36. This creates a pocket park or plaza in the old Buchanan Street right-of-way between Madison Street and the east leg of Buchanan.

Figure 3-36  Reconfigured Intersection of Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street - Plan

4 Implementation
4 Implementation

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR ALBANY

Complete Streets Improvements
The improvements discussed in this plan will not be implemented all at once. A combination of time and persistence, grant writing, collaborating, bundling and leveraging of multiple funding sources will be necessary to bring the complete streets solutions for San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Streets from conceptual design to construction.

The most promising programs available to help fund proposed improvements are identified below. The majority are coordinated and/or administered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC). MTC is the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. ACTC coordinates countywide transportation planning efforts, programs local, regional, state and federal funding, and delivers projects and programs, including those approved by voters in Alameda County transportation expenditure plans. Other potential sources of funding for improvement are identified as well.

The ACTC Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance Program (SC-TAP) Call for Projects will provide Alameda County jurisdictions with significant support in the form of on-call consultant expertise for Priority Development Area planning and implementation, complete streets policy implementation and bicycle and pedestrian planning and engineering technical support. An application workshop is scheduled for July 16, 2013 at 1:30 p.m., and grant applications are due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, September 17, 2013.

For more information visit: http://www.alamedactc.org/news_items/view/11245

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
The new Moving Ahead for the 21st Century (MAP-21) federal surface transportation program authorizes funds for the HSIP program to be administered through state Departments of Transportation. This competitive grant program is based on a safety index, collision data, and a benefit/cost ratio. Eligible projects include: bicycle and pedestrian facilities, correction or improvements to safety in the roadway; traffic calming, traffic signs, sight distance improvements, pavement markings, and roadway realignment.

For more information visit: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/hsip.htm

One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG)
ACTC implements the OneBayArea Grant (OBAG) Program, which is funded by the federal surface transportation act. ACTC is estimated to receive $63 million over four fiscal years (FY 2012-13 through FY 2015-16) from the OBAG program for transportation investments in Alameda County. Jurisdictions can apply for funds for local streets and roads, bicycle and pedestrian projects and transit-oriented development. Per the OBAG requirements, ACTC must spend 70% of the funds in priority development areas (PDAs). San Pablo Avenue in Albany is designated as a PDA. MTC, the agency that distributes the OBAG funds to ACTC, requires jurisdictions receiving OBAG funding to either adopt a Complete Streets policy resolution that is consistent with regional guidelines or have a general plan circulation element that is in compliance with the state Complete Streets Act. Albany adopted a Complete Streets policy in January 2013.

For more information visit: http://www.alamedactc.org/app_pages/view/8495 http://onebayarea.org/

Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA)
Administered by Caltrans, this state fund can be used for city and county projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. Eligible projects include improving and maintaining existing bikeways, building new bikeways, constructing median crossings, installing bicycle/pedestrian signals, and planning. Annual BTA funding is in the range of $5 million a year. To be eligible for BTA funds, a city or county must prepare and adopt a bicycle transportation plan that meets requirements outlined in the California Streets and Highways Code. Adoption of a plan establishes eligibility for five consecutive funding cycles.

For more information about the BTA funding, visit: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bta/btaweb-Page.htm

Transportation Development Act (TDA), Article 3
TDA funds are derived from a statewide quarter-cent retail sales tax. This tax is returned to the county of origin and distributed to the cities and county on a population basis. Under TDA Article 3, 2% of each entity’s TDA allocation is set aside for walking and bicycling projects; this generates approximately $3 million in the Bay Area annually. Eligible projects include the design and construction of walkways, bicycling paths and bicycling lanes, and safety education programs. According to MTC
Resolution 875, these projects must be included in an adopted general plan or bicycle plan and must have been reviewed by the relevant city or county bicycle advisory committee.

For more information visit: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STA-TDA/

**Safe Routes to School Programs**

Caltrans administers state and federally funded Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs to improve walking and bicycling conditions in and around schools. State grants are primarily focused on infrastructure (capital) projects. Applications for funding under the federal program can include both infrastructure or non-infrastructure (education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation) projects.

For more information visit: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm

**Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC)**

MTC created the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program in 1998. It provides technical assistance and funding to cities, counties, transit agencies, and nonprofit organizations for capital projects and community-based plans that encourage multimodal travel and the revitalization of town centers and other mixed-use neighborhoods. The program funds projects to improve bicycling and walking to transit stations, neighborhood commercial districts, and other major activity centers.

For more information visit: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/tlc_grants.htm

**Congestion Management Agency Transportation Improvement Program (CMA TIP)**

As the congestion management agency for Alameda County, ACTC programs the county’s share of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a comprehensive listing of surface transportation capital projects prepared by MTC for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area at least every four years.

For more information visit: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/tip/

**Measure B and Vehicle Registration Fee Funds**

Local transit agencies, jurisdictions and Alameda County receive monthly Measure B and Vehicle Registration Fee pass-through payments to meet regional transportation priorities for several programs: Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety, Local Streets and Roads, Local Transportation Technology, Mass Transit, Paratransit and Transit for Congestion Relief. A portion of Measure B funds is also distributed through a competitive grant program. More detail is provided below.

Measure B: Alameda County voters approved a half-cent transportation sales tax through Measure B in 2000. ACTC administers Measure B funds, which are distributed through competitive and the non-competitive programs. The non-competitive program (pass-through payments) is distributed to jurisdictions based on population. The competitive portion includes all modes of transportation and is implemented in cycles throughout the county. Grant programs include:

- Countywide Discretionary Fund Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program
- Express Bus Service Grant Program
- Paratransit Gap Grant Program
- Transit Oriented Development Grant Program

For more information visit: http://www.alamedactc.org/app_pages/view/4617

Vehicle Registration Fee: The Measure F Alameda County Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) Program was approved by voters in 2010. The goal of the VRF program is to sustain the county’s transportation network and reduce traffic congestion and vehicle related pollution. The program includes four categories of projects:

- Local Road Improvement and Repair Program (60%)
- Transit for Congestion Relief (25%)
- Local Transportation Technology (10%)
- Pedestrian and Bicyclist Access and Safety Program (5%)

ACTC distributes a share of the funds among four planning areas of the county over successive five-year cycles. Geographic equity is measured by a formula, weighted 50% by population of the planning area and 50% by the number of registered vehicles in the planning area.

For more information visit: http://www.alamedactc.org/app_pages/view/8089

**Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA)**

TFCA is a grant program administered by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The purpose of the program, which is funded through a $4 surcharge on motor vehicles registered in the Bay Area, is to fund projects and programs that will reduce air pollution from motor vehicles. A sub-program of the TFCA is the Bicycling Facility Program (BFP), which provides funding for bicycling paths, lanes, signed routes, bicycle parking, bus racks, and other bicycling-related projects. Grant awards are generally made on a first-come, first-served basis to qualified projects. Funding for bicycling projects is also available through the TFCA’s County Program Manager Fund. Under that sub-program, 40%
of TFCA revenues collected in each Bay Area county is returned to that county’s congestion management agency (CMA) for allocation (the ACTC, in Alameda County’s case). Applications are made directly to the CMAs, but must also be approved by the BAAQMD.

For more information on the TFCA Bicycling Facility Program visit: http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/grants_and_incentives/bfp/index.htm

For more information on the TFCA County Program Manager Fund visit: http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/grants_and_incentives/tfca/cpm_fund.htm

Or visit: http://www.alamedactc.org/app_pages/view/8076

**CAL FIRE Urban and Community Forestry Grants (UCFG)**

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s Urban Forestry Program is a source of grant opportunities for urban greening, urban forestry planning, management, and tree-planting programs.

For more information visit: http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

**Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund (BAWQIF)**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency manages a competitive grant program to support projects to protect and restore San Francisco Bay. This grant program, known as the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund (SFBWQIF) began in 2008. The SFBWQIF has invested over $27 million in 48 projects through 20 grant awards. These projects include 69 partners who are contributing an additional $103.6 million to restore wetlands and watersheds, and reduce polluted runoff.

For more information visit: http://www2.epa.gov/sfbay-delta/sf-bay-water-quality-improvement-fund

**City General Fund (GF)**

The City’s General Fund is a potential source of funding for public facilities and infrastructure improvements, particularly short-term loans. General Fund revenue is mainly derived from tax revenues including property tax, franchise tax, and sales/use tax, and is used to pay for basic municipal services such as police, fire, and public works. Because the City’s General Fund revenue is limited, it should be viewed as a secondary source of financing for public facilities and infrastructure improvements.

**Property and Business Improvement District (PBID)**

A Property and Business Improvement District (PBID) is a mechanism of funding improvements through assessments to businesses and real property within the established PBID boundaries. Under the Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994, revenues from PBID assessments may be used to fund capital improvements and maintenance costs for projects such as parking facilities, street furniture, public restrooms, art, parks, street and streetscape enhancements, and plazas. A PBID formation petition, which is initiated by property owners, requires the signature of more than 50% of the property owners, weighted by assessment liability. PBIDs are formed with an initial term of five years and may be renewed for another five years. However, if debt is issued to finance capital improvements, assessments can be levied until the bonds mature. The term of debt service for PBID bonds is not to exceed 30 years. Without bond issuance, the maximum term for a PBID district is 10 years.

**Infrastructure Financing District (IFD)**

Infrastructure financing districts (IFDs) allow cities and counties to pay for public works projects by diverting property tax increment revenues from their general fund for up to thirty years. IFDs are a form of tax increment financing based on the idea that public enhancements cause property values to rise, generating higher property tax revenues. IFDs can issue bonds secured by expected future property tax revenue to fund upfront infrastructure development costs. IFD funds can be used to finance construction of and improvements to highways, transit, water and sewer systems, flood control systems, child-care facilities, libraries, parks, and solid waste facilities. IFDs cannot pay for maintenance, repairs, operating costs, or services.

To form an IFD, the City must develop an infrastructure plan, send copies to every landowner, consult with other local governments, and hold a public hearing. Every local agency that will contribute its property tax increment revenue to the IFD must approve the plan. Schools cannot shift their property tax increment revenues to the IFD. Once the other local officials approve, the County must still get the approval of the voters in the IFD area to:

- Form the IFD (requires 2/3 voter approval)
- Issue bonds (requires 2/3 voter approval)
- Set the IFD’s appropriations limit (majority voter approval)
Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program (ISRF)

Subdivisions of a local government, which include cities and counties and joint power authorities, can apply for low-cost financing ranging from $250,000 to $10,000,000 with terms of up to 30 years through the ISRF program for a wide variety of infrastructure projects. Interest rates for the month of November 2012 were at lows of 2.02% for 20-year loans and 2.29% for 30-year loans. Eligible project categories include city streets, county highways, state highways, drainage, water supply and flood control, educational facilities, environmental mitigation measures, parks and recreational facilities, port facilities, public transit, sewage collection and treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, water treatment and distribution, defense conversion, public safety facilities, and power and communications facilities.

For more information visit: http://www.ibank.ca.gov/infrastructure_loans.htm
### Project Funding and Implementation Schedule

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**NOTE:** This table to be filled in after a meeting with city staff to discuss priorities, feasibility of various elements, and available funding sources.
Appendices
Appendix B  Focus Group Meetings

BIKE/PED, ADA, ACCESSIBILITY FOCUS GROUP
Thursday, December 6, 2012 / 10:45am – 11:45am
Albany City Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Harry Chomsky – Albany Strollers and Rollers; Amy Smolens – Albany Strollers and Rollers; Peggy McQuaid. Margaret Tong, Michelle Jordan. Seniors, Jody Ames; Ken McCroskey – Albany Strollers and Rollers; SRTS Parent Champion; Jennifer Grove, Milo Drussai, Linda Zagula, and Jim Kletzing – Center for the Blind; Tenisha Neal; Michael Moule – Nelson\Nygaaard (Consultant); John Gibbs – Wallace Roberts Todd (Consultant); Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (Consultant); Josh Meyer – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Paul Zykofsky – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Shani Alford – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Danielle Rose – Nelson\Nygaaard (Consultant)

MEETING PURPOSE: Participants met with design team to discuss and share opportunities and challenges along San Pablo and Buchanan Streets.

OPPORTUNITIES:
- There are a lot of cyclists and pedestrians using San Pablo today, despite its unfriendly biking and walking environment, there is huge demand for using this road.
- There is a misperception that busy streets need audible signals the most, but on those streets traffic noise will give the sound cue to persons with visual impairments who are crossing. It is at low traffic intersections that audible signals are really needed.
- Audible signals and street crossings in Alameda at Atlantic, residential area, also one at Pine and San Pablo, a new signal. When you push the button it will say “wait” and then “walk” and it will have a Braille directions

CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:
- Cycling on sidewalks is a huge hazard for pedestrians, especially at night.
- Son rides his bike on San Pablo to Ocean View and she instructs him to use the sidewalk, as it is the only way to get to school.
- There is no safe way to get to the Target by bike or foot, especially for kids.
- There is a lot of reported crime on San Pablo. It can be looked at in the crime reporting database available online. Some people do not feel safe walking there at night.
- There are a lot of roots and broken sidewalks in the city, which is very challenging for persons using a wheelchair, as well as for people with visual impairments.
- There is a tree limb across the sidewalk on San Pablo near the carwash.
- At Brighton and San Pablo it is a very long wait time for people turning onto San Pablo and so people are turning against the red, which is dangerous for pedestrians crossing in the crosswalk.
- Placement of pedestrian buttons is often too close to the curb cut, and so if a person is in a scooter or wheelchair may have to be at a steep angle to reach the button. Also, the pedestrian signals shouldn’t be actuated, but should turn automatically.
- Crosswalk signal timings are too short and it is hard to get across in a slower scooter

- Bike from Albany to Berkeley, excited about a light at Pierce to cross Buchanan, currently goes under overpass and comes up, she is confident on Buchanan, a lot of cars parked and drop offs, people come off freeway quickly, it will be nice to have a bike lane.
- The light timing crossing San Pablo from Marin onto Buchanan is an issue. Bikes have to sprint across to avoid traffic and bikers don’t feel seen by cars travelling westbound on Marin and turning right onto San Pablo, often at risk for a right hook.
- Cycling on San Pablo is okay late at night because it’s well lit and traffic volume is lower
- On San Pablo there is a lot of stuff in the sidewalk furniture zone, there isn’t room to unload the wheelchair from the vehicle
- Guy wires are an issue for people with visual impairments if they aren’t placed out of the pathway.
- Cars overhanging on the west side of San Pablo, and all over town, people park across their driveways, which blocks the sidewalks and is a particular hazard for people in wheelchairs or with vision impairments.
- Often there is construction blocking the sidewalk which forces people to have to walk into the street, a very dangerous situation.
- Streets without a planting strip, driveways are cut into the sidewalk and on the scooter it is tilted, old driveways, feels like she might fall over in the scooter
- Sidewalk cut outs with truncated domes, look to be non-slip but are actually slippery in wet weather on a bicycle or on foot. Tactile warning surface
- Curb ramps aren’t in consistent places leading into the crosswalk, gets confusing and can be hard to see
- On San Pablo, some of the ramps are at the diagonal, have to go into busy traffic, need to have ramps on both directions not just one in the middle. Drainage issues at the curb cuts, often there will be a large puddle there.
- Crossing distance across San Pablo is long, how do people feel about a median refuge?
  - Needs to be big enough for a scooter or wheelchair
  - Can’t likely put in new signals due to volume requirements, but there are tools like the pedestrian beacon and the median
  - Having kids wait in the median with traffic coming in both directions does not feel safe as a parent
  - Median, slows down drivers as a perceived obstacle
  - Concerns about the hybrid beacon
  - Pedestrian hybrid beacon, red light signal device – can get approval with only 20 peds per hour, much lower threshold. Other is a yellow flashing beacon, we recommend a rectangular rapid flash beacon with the ped crossing signs, and is as effective or more effective
  - Concerned about pedestrians, false sense of security with crosswalk markings,
  - Advanced yield lines in El Cerrito.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS GROUP
Friday, December 7, 2012 / 9:30am – 10:30am
Albany City Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Allen Cain – Director, Solano Avenue Association; Tod Abbott – Albany Chamber of Commerce; Datchanee Colvin – Metta Traditional Thai Massage; Aleida Andrino-Chavez – City of Albany; Ken Friedman – Albany Bowl; Jason Alabanza – Mechanics Bank; Winkie Campbell-Notar – Albany Chamber of Commerce; John Nakamura – Albany Ford Subaru; Tim Hilliker – Kaddy Car Wash; Michael Moule – NelsonNygaard (Consultant); John Gibbs – Wallace Roberts Todd (Consultant); Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (Consultant); Josh Meyer – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Paul Zykofofsky – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Shani Alford – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Danielle Rose – NelsonNygaard (Consultant)

MEETING PURPOSE: Participants met with design team to discuss and share opportunities and challenges along San Pablo and Buchanan Streets.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The Albany Bowl is on a three acre site fronting San Pablo. The signalized intersections around the parcel are intended to enhance the future development potential of the site.
- Business owners want to make San Pablo more inviting and walkable; make people notice where they are in Albany. One idea is to activate a few intersections with diagonal crossing and make the street very visible and easy to cross. It’s very challenging for businesses on the west side of San Pablo at Solano.
- San Pablo at Solano is the only enhanced crosswalk along the corridor.
- The regional impression of Albany is of traffic along San Pablo, but auto-related businesses are important for sales tax revenue.
- What is the unique identity of Albany? Small town feel, a village, but it’s also urban. People want an intimate, small, friendly, casual, laid back, and traditional neighborhood but there is a major thoroughfare going through it.
- The vision is to have an urban environment where people have to slow down and enjoy the town when they get off the freeway.
- Solano has diversity of businesses, independently owned businesses, and a majority of business owners live within the community.
- A lot of infrastructure needed to pull off public art like something grand, focus more on the village than the urban, we can’t compete with the national brand draws, has to be a unique village kind of atmosphere.
- Business would like a mural program related to historical scenes of Albany. Could use it to tell the history of the corridor. The Albany Bowl used to be the Jetson Dynamite Company.
- Business owners did a zipcode survey that suggested about 50/50 business is from Albany and outside of Albany.
- It would be great to better connect Solano and San Pablo to increase the Solano pedestrian district.
- Bay Street in the East Bay is a good example of a walkable retail area. People spend time and money there and it’s only three blocks long, and they have parking structures on Bay Street. Walnut Creek is another good example of a new walkable area, with sidewalks, sitting areas, trees, and a shopping center.

CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:

- Due to the residential nature of the street behind the Bowl, there are no commercial uses along those streets. There are parking issues back there so the Albany Bowl closed the rear driveway entrance to their parking lot.
- There are a lot of small parcels along San Pablo so it is hard to encourage development. They down-zoned from four to three-story height limits along this area.
- The City Maintenance Department is only four people, and they are very strained. Any new improvements to the street could cause a burden for them.
- The intersection at San Pablo and the Bowl is a well-traveled intersection for students. A child was hit at Clay and Brighton at San Pablo.
- Local businesses cannot survive on just 18,000 people (the population of the city), so they need to bring people in from out of the town. National retailers see Albany as a great place to serve Berkeley and Richmond as well. The city is located very centrally for the east bay. Although parcel sizes on San Pablo are very small and parking is limited. The neighborhoods are very opposed to parking garages.
- Need major anchor retailers and parking to go with it on either end of San Pablo. Have to have a balance, though a concern is parking and traffic generation. Also juxtaposed against concept of “local” and sustainability.
- Apple looked at Solano for a store. While the weekday foot traffic numbers are very good, with two schools, insurance agencies, and banks, but it’s pretty empty on weekends.
- A raised median would negatively impact the car wash, which serves 1,000 cars per day, so there must be a turn lane there. The Subaru dealer also needs one; they have about 75 cars per day and are hoping to grow.
- Medians also raise concerns about trash and overgrown plantings. It may create a maintenance issue.
- Some business owners feel that the center lane is critical for the businesses. Some have heard that El Cerrito businesses are not doing so well since they put in their median.
- Since there aren’t alleys behind the businesses, the center median is used for delivery van parking space. Business owners are very concerned about restricting access, some business rely on “impulse” traffic of those passing by who can easily access the business without having to make a u-turn. If the median impacts the automotive businesses, it hurts the city by reducing sales tax revenue.
- A couple years ago the city considered parking meters on Solano and businesses were against it until it was expressed what the benefit would be and how it would help the businesses. The argument for medians needs to be made very obvious for businesses to accept it. Show that they will make the area more appealing and will permit safer pedestrian crossings of San Pablo.
- 90 minute parking is not long enough for the Thai massage business; they need two-hour parking limits.
- It would be useful to demarcate businesses with visual markings to indicate where a person should turn in for the driveways for each business.
- Walkability is important for retail on San Pablo. However, there is a unique challenge here because residential is directly behind the businesses.
- Street tree root encroachment into buildings and sidewalks is ruining the sidewalks and foundations of the buildings. The planter boxes on El Cerrito define the tree areas and are a good example.
- The crossing at Washington is an issue. Pedestrians are fearful of crossing the street, and there is a signal ½ block down, so it would be tough to put in another, but there needs to be a way to cross at Washington for the success of the businesses and for pedestrian safety.
- A diagonal crossing at Solano and San Pablo would really help the visibility and identification of the node and might help pull more people onto Solano.
- There are large trees on San Pablo that distract from or obscure the signage of businesses. There is concern that customers won’t see what businesses are there. Also, tree leaves are a hazard for slipping and require a lot of maintenance by business owners.
- Bicycle racks are very limited on San Pablo; there need to be more bicycle racks because a lot of people bike to BART or work in the area.
- Currently businesses have to pay for the bike rack; it would be great if there was a city program to pay for bike racks.
- Business owners would like to see smaller trees along San Pablo to communicate the small town feeling rather than a grand boulevard. At the east end of Solano Ave there are Japanese Maples, which is a good tree.

**EMERGENCY/POLICE STAKEHOLDERS FOCUS GROUP**

Friday, December 7, 2012 / 2:00pm – 3:00pm
Albany City Hall

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Battalion Chief Brian Crudo – Albany Fire Department; Ava Snyder – UC Berkeley Police; Ken Torres – UC Berkeley Police; Lt. John Geissberger – Albany Police Department; Chief Mike McQuiston, Albany Police Department; Chief E.W. Tubbs – Albany Fire Department; Captain Dustin Wiggins – Albany Fire Department; Claire Griffing – City of Albany; Michael Moule – Nelson\Nygaard (Consultant); John Gibbs – Wallace Roberts Todd (Consultant); Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (Consultant); Josh Meyer – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Paul Zykosky – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Shani Alford – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Danielle Rose – Nelson\Nygaard (Consultant)

**MEETING PURPOSE:** Participants met with design team to discuss and share opportunities and challenges along San Pablo and Buchanan Streets.

**CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:**
- Emergency responders use the center turn lane for emergency access along San Pablo when the roadway is congested. While fire trucks can clear some medians, if the city installs raised medians it may be an obstacle to emergency response times in the city.
- San Pablo is the secondary route when there is an issue on the freeway, which usually occurs during peak hours, so emergency access along that route is critical.
- San Pablo, Marin, and Solano are the major routes to get to the four quadrants of town, as they are quicker and safer for use by the large vehicles. Fire engines have continued to get bigger over the years.
- Fire code requires 20 feet for emergency vehicles roadside, but San Pablo is not one to bargain with.
- Currently, the open center median is used by delivery trucks on San Pablo during the day to prevent blocking traffic and double parking.
- The city’s only station house is located at City Hall (San Pablo and Buchanan).
- The intersection control at San Pablo and Solano is problematic for emergency vehicles. At San Pablo and Buchanan and at Santa Fe, the Fire Department controls that intersection when they pull out of the station house.
- The Fire Department runs crews as small as two people. There are six on duty at all times, and they staff an engine, ambulance, and truck. They strive for a five minute response window, and have back up aid from Berkeley, Richmond, and El Cerrito. Those cities use San Pablo as well.
- The uncontrolled crosswalks on San Pablo are too dangerous. They need flashing lights like they have in Berkeley to light up the crosswalk. The crosswalk at Washington is a major issue.
- On the block with the Ford Subaru, service employees cross mid-block without a crossing and the city allows this because it has not created an issue.
A center turn lane is very functional for emergency response and deliveries for businesses along San Pablo. In Berkeley, where they do not have a center lane, it results in much more double parking and traffic. Our philosophy is to let businesses use it for deliveries.

There are very few loading zones on San Pablo and parking is at a premium. At Kaines just south of Solano there is a loading zone, but it is not large enough for a double decker car transport carrier.

There is a Jump-in Lane in Emeryville for emergency vehicles to cross the median, not drive along it.

There is concern that trees will block visuals along the street when they're located in the median.

Corner turning radii have to take turning requirements of the largest Fire Department apparatus into consideration.

At San Pablo and Brighton the crosswalk seems to be on the wrong side. There have been quite a few collisions there with pedestrians. People making the left turn don’t see the pedestrians. That intersection is also a middle school crossing with a lot of kids walking through there.

Crime issues are usually due to people coming to Albany from outside of the area.

Marin is a very dark street at night and there are CPTED issues. The neighborhood isn’t well lit and commercial and residential are located very near to each other, so the residents don’t want lots of lighting on Marin like it is on San Pablo.

The city considered closing off the leg of Buchanan behind City Hall to give the police station more space. The argument against it was due to the truck route. Solano and San Pablo are the truck routes; trucks are not permitted on Marin. The truck route requires that segment of Buchanan to be used as the primary in and out because trucks can’t make the right turn from southbound San Pablo to westbound Marin.

Speeding on Buchanan has always been a problem. Cars exit the freeway and treat Buchanan like an off-ramp.

Traffic backs up west of Jackson on Buchanan.

Could use landscaping screens on the bridge near the freeway.

The front of fire station is not striped and there have been a number of issues and near misses.

QUESTIONS:

What is the long term plan for maintenance and care of center medians? It will be important to maintain sightlines.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Marin St road diet has worked really well for Albany. While they reduced the number of through lanes it didn’t reduce the capacity. There are longer queues but traffic flows more smoothly. It is easier for pedestrians to cross and is a way to improve a facility without creating barriers and forcing a neighborhood cut-through.

The UV project is supposed to install a hawk signal at Dartmouth.

CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:

Residents are worried about traffic around the proposed University Village at Buchanan and Jackson, although if traffic is restricted from turning it might improve the situation.

In Albany, children walk all around the city. Parents have hired crossing guards at San Pablo and Buchanan to get children from the UV and West Albany to and from all three elementary schools in the city.

San Pablo is dangerous to cross. After a fatal traffic injury of a child at Monroe and San Pablo the UV got a stoplight installed at that location.

The corner of Marin and San Pablo is a problem spot.

The intersection at Jackson and Buchanan is much better since it’s been updated.

There is an issue with cut through traffic through the neighborhood north of Buchanan. People cut through there to avoid San Pablo. There is also rampant running of red lights at Marin and San Pablo.

UV residents use Dartmouth to bike to campus. The turn is really dangerous at Marin and Dartmouth (jogged turn) to cross San Pablo. and that turn at sp is really dangerous. Dartmouth is the only east-west connector to the Bay Trail for 10 or so miles, so for the route to recognize the
creek, connect to the community garden, and create a legible route to our amazing waterfront would give the city an identity as a waterfront city.

- People drive over 25 mph on Marin, even though that is the speed limit.
- The priority in this process should be about making alternate modes of transportation work better.
- Some of the neighborhood streets are organizing to get traffic slowing devices installed, like speed bumps, to slow the cut through traffic.
- Marin is great for biking except for nearing Buchanan and San Pablo. The right turn lane for westbound Marin is problematic. The loop detector doesn’t recognize bicycles. There is also the gas station driveways, parked cars, and traffic that is speeding up that creates hazards for bicyclists.
- Cars parked over the sidewalk makes it very hard for people in wheelchairs to get through.
- Like in Berkeley, Albany should divert traffic off the neighborhood streets onto San Pablo and Solano. One resident would like to see ‘No Lefts during Commute Hours’ on Buchanan, and also restricting U-turns.
- It isn’t safe for children to walk to the fields at UV from the homes on the north side of Buchanan. The crosswalk at the USDA building was removed because it was too used, and since then traffic has gotten even faster. It is impossible to cross in a safe way at that end of Buchanan. Police used to enforce speeding, but it does not seem like they are out there enforcing the speed limit anymore.
- Non-vehicular access to USDA is very challenging.
- Speeding on Buchanan is a major concern for residents of the area.
- San Pablo is not an attractive walking destination.
- Encountering bikes on sidewalks as a pedestrian is very scary.
- Lots of people try to walk to target but it is unsafe and unattractive. With the new improvements there will be a plaza. At that location there should be a sign to tell people how to get around to Target by going under the overpass.
- Something should be done to make that proposed plaza a better place to arrive, with a café perhaps.
- Standardization of curb cuts along San Pablo is needed.
- When crossing San Pablo at Marin and Dartmouth, some bikes turn into the car rental business driveway and make a mad dash across the street by cutting through the key shack parking lot. It is dangerous for bikers and pedestrians.
- There is no contiguous connection between east and west Albany because of San Pablo. There need to be some consideration of visual aesthetic and tree canopy along the roadway.
- There is no sense of scale on Buchanan, nothing to break up the long roadway stretch. There needs to be a pedestrian crossing at Taylor to the USDA driveway, maybe with flashing beacons.
- If there is a traffic signal at Pierce Street, it could use westbound traffic speed detectors and cut off the green light if traffic is going too fast. They’re doing it in Boulder, Colorado.
- There needs to be pedestrian-scale lighting on San Pablo and Buchanan.
- There is resistance to development over three-stories on San Pablo by the residents who live behind those parcels.
- With the proposed retirement community on San Pablo, there will be pedestrian safety issues. It needs to be very safe and easy for seniors to cross, with bulb outs and medians, and restrict parking around the crossing to improve visibility.

- There doesn’t seem to be parking enforcement on San Pablo, seems that some cars are parked for over 90 minutes, very long times.

QUESTIONS:
- Is there anything else that can be done to facilitate development on San Pablo? The three-story height limit makes things really challenging, but land uses need to change along there. It’s an auto row right now.
PUBLIC AGENCIES FOCUS GROUP
Thursday, December 6, 2012 / 12:30pm – 1:30pm
Albany City Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Jeff Bond – Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Liaison; Lee Huo – ABAG; Isabelle Leduc – Arts Commission Staff Liaison; Josh Bradt – San Francisco Estuary Partnership; Aleida Andino-Chavez – Traffic and Safety Commission Staff Liaison; Sean Ho – MTC; Eric Anderson – City of Berkeley; Yvetteh Ortiz – City of El Cerrito; Kevin Hufferd – UC Berkeley; Claire Griffing – Sustainability Committee Staff Liaison; Rochelle Wheeler – Alameda County Transportation Commission; Stephen Newhouse – AC Transit; Nathan Landau – AC Transit; Michael Moule – NelsonNygaard (Consultant); John Gibbs – Wallace Roberts Todd (Consultant); Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (Consultant); Josh Meyer – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Danielle Rose – NelsonNygaard (Consultant)

MEETING PURPOSE: Participants met with design team to discuss and share opportunities and challenges along San Pablo and Buchanan Streets.

OPPORTUNITIES:
- The Climate Action Plan’s vision is to make the city more walkable and bikeable, with parking management strategies as well.
- San Pablo is seen as a transit corridor to be enhanced and maintained.
- The Alameda Countywide Bike Plan does not have a designated bikeway on San Pablo.
- There is a Complete Streets policy requirement at the county-level; all jurisdictions in the county are currently developing these policies. The MTC also has a Complete Streets policy for all projects in the Bay Area.
- The Bay Trail Project is for a 500 mile trail along the shoreline. In Albany, the Bay Trail is mostly complete, except for Golden Gate Fields, and the priority is connecting the urban areas, like Solano and San Pablo, to the Bay Trail. The freeway corridor is an obstacle. The City has an Art in Public Places ordinance and a Public Art Master Plan, and has an interest in ensuring the inclusion of art along San Pablo and Buchanan. There could be art gateways at both ends of San Pablo in Albany so that you know you have arrived in the city.
- The Estuary Partnership is a green streets project along San Pablo in partnership with seven cities. They advocate for projects such as stormwater treatment in the public right-of-way. There are two creeks in Albany, at the north and south end of San Pablo, and there is a creek restoration effort currently underway. Recently, Salmon was found in the Cordmies Creek. The City of Berkeley is interested in connection to Albany, including bike lanes on 9th Street and Verme Avenue. The median along San Pablo in Berkeley does not continue through Albany, and picks up again in El Cerrito.
- The University Village is a 77 acre housing development owned by UC Berkeley. It is mostly student housing for international students and students with children.
- Along San Pablo Ave, the University is planning to develop a 6 ½ acre parcel into a mixed use development with assisted senior living, a 45,000 ft² grocery store, and 30,000 ft² of retail.
- However, the development has been delayed due to environmental challenges. The specific development will depend on tenant needs that have yet to be determined. The parcel at Buchanan and San Pablo is known as the Gill Tract, and it will remain agricultural land.
- University Village residents commute to the University every day, and there are several bus routes that serve the University Village.
- San Pablo in El Cerrito is designated as a state route with regional traffic and a rapid bus route. Because it is a state route, it needs to be a multimodal corridor and function well for autos, transit, and all modes.
- San Pablo in Berkeley between University and Addison is a quite lively block. There is continuous street frontage and pedestrian activity. This is a good example on the corridor and was featured in the MTC’s Pedestrian District Strategy.

CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:
- San Pablo is designated as one of the top six corridors at AC Transit. The agency has an interest in ensuring that improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists along the corridor are also positive or neutral on transit operations. For instance, pedestrian bulbs at intersections can be problematic, but if they are extended into bus bulbs and located at bus stops, or are located at the other corners of the intersection where there is not a bus stop, then they will not impact or will improve transit operations. In general, AC Transit locates bus stops at the far side of signalized intersections when possible.
- Currently the Route 72 Rapid has signal priority on San Pablo. There is a bus (local or rapid) every 7-8 minutes in each direction on San Pablo.
- In El Cerrito, the center median created issues for the Police Department as viability was reduced when the plantings grew. They have since replaced it with turf. It is the City’s responsibility to maintain the median.
- The City proposed making Kains and Adams streets two-way (they are currently both one-way) to make them more viable options for non-arterial parallel bike streets. The residents of those streets rejected the last proposal.
- Along San Pablo, single family homes are backed up right against San Pablo properties, so there is some potential conflict of use there.
- Currently there isn’t anything along San Pablo to make people want to stop, like it is along Solano. It’s just a conduit for cars, needs to reflect Albany’s identity and have nice elements like parklets.
- Albany is really walkable around the high school and on Solano. On San Pablo, the vehicle traffic is very loud, and restaurants on the west side of the block at Solano fail because people do not want to cross over the street when coming from Solano.
- Bike lanes on San Pablo would require narrowing lanes and a narrower median.
- AC Transit noted that it’s buses are 9.5 feet wide and they need at least 11 foot lanes for both the inside and outside lanes, as the Rapid passes the local buses using the inside lane.
- Berkeley has invested in bicycle boulevard connections paralleling main arterials like San Pablo rather than separated facilities.
- There is a lot of bicycle traffic on the sidewalk on San Pablo, so this issue needs to be addressed.
- The group discussed bicycle access to and through the planned University Village development.
- The Rollers and Strollers wanted a two-way cycletrack along the west side of San Pablo adjacent to the development. However, UV had issues with conflicting uses, as there will need to be a bus stop in front of the site, as well as a loading zone for the senior facility.
• The senior housing facility plans to propose an auto entrance to their project along San Pablo, not just a loading zone. This driveway may further complicate the bicycle facility. Other suggestions are to connect the bicycle facility behind the new development and connecting to Jackson. A Class I bike facility might be more easily accommodated on Jackson than San Pablo due to continuity and traffic volumes.

• The crossing of San Pablo from the UV development to Dartmouth, which connects to a Berkeley bike boulevard, is currently very dangerous and challenging. Some bikers wait in the center turn lane to make the full crossing.

• The intersection of Buchanan and Jackson intersection sees a lot of foot traffic during school hours.

• There are more traffic concerns when children are crossing at Buchanan and Jackson.

• The weather can create traffic congestion and safety concerns at the crossings used by students/parents coming and leaving the school grounds. This is the case at all schools.

• Most traffic tends to head south on Jackson.

• Albany Middle School does not have a parking lot, so teachers and staff tend to use Key Route Boulevard for parking.

• There is a Children Center located on Jackson, where there is some vehicle congestion, which is a concern.

• There are no school buses in Albany, but there may be busing for special education.

• Marin Elementary School and Ocean View Elementary School will be going through major construction in the next two years.

• Key Route Boulevard and Santa Fe have speed bumps.

EDUCATOR FOCUS GROUP
Thursday, December 6, 2012 / 9:30am – 10:30am
Albany City Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Maya James – Parent, Cornell Elementary School; Ralph Boniello – Parent, Cornell Elementary School; Tom O’Brien – Parent, Marin Elementary School; Jill Cooper – Parent, Albany Elementary School; Stefan Cajina – Parent, Marin Elementary School; Johanna Pace – Teacher, Albany Middle School; Claire Griffing – SRTS Coordinator, Albany High School and Middle School; Liam Kelley – City of Albany; Nick Armour – City of Albany; Michael Moule – Nelson\Nygaard (Consultant); John Gibbs – Wallace Roberts Todd (Consultant); Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (Consultant); Josh Meyer – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Paul Zykofsky – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Shani Alford – Local Government Commission (Consultant); Danielle Rose – Nelson\Nygaard (Consultant)

MEETING PURPOSE: Leaders from local schools districts met with design team to discuss and share opportunities and challenges along San Pablo and Buchanan Streets in Albany related to student and school transportation issues.

OPPORTUNITIES:

• School aged youth in the city often walk from one school to another, either for after school programs or classes. The middle school holds some classes at the high school. Because of this, and the school choice program in Albany, students are coming from a number of locations to each of the four elementary schools, middle school and the high school.

• The efforts of Walk and Roll to School day have led to more kids walking and biking to school in Albany.

• Of all Safe Routes to School grants the city gets, 10% is applied to education programs, which is used to organize parents and implement Walk and Roll programs. The Environmental Clubs at the school are also involved.

• The signalized crosswalks in El Cerrito on San Pablo between Fairmont and Central are really nice. There is a pedestrian beacon and in pavement flashing and it is working really well, pedestrians are crossing there now.

• At Harding Elementary School in El Cerrito, they have put in bulb outs around the school and a crossing table with curb extensions. These treatments are very high contrast and seem to work well. There is also a right turn on red restriction at that intersection.

CHALLENGES/CONCERNS:

• Need to increase awareness for cars of the presence of bikers and pedestrians throughout the city. Specifically, Masonic and Brighton at the Middle School has an issue)

• It is dangerous and challenging to bike at Marin Ave and San Pablo when approaching the east leg of the intersection travelling westbound. The bike lane ends at Stannage and the road
QUESTIONS/OTHER NOTES:

- Pedestrian counts are available for peak hour on Brighton for school and non-school days.

narrow, and many cars are making a right onto San Pablo. This makes it hard to get from Cornell to Ocean View Elementary.

- There need to be more trees and medians on San Pablo to create more obvious crossings, as well as bigger and bolder crosswalks. Crossing San Pablo is very dangerous and intimidating, especially at unsignalized and marked crosswalks. There have been several pedestrian’s hit, some deaths, in the past few years, including children.
  
  - At Monroe and San Pablo, the access to University Village a child was killed crossing San Pablo, which led to a safety campaign and the closing of the northern crosswalk at that intersection.
  
  - Crossing at Jackson travelling northbound from Ocean View, there isn’t a good place for bicyclists to wait at the signal or travel through the intersection. This is an issue as motorists are travelling at higher speeds and trying to beat the stoplight.

- The crossing at Santa Fe Ave and Marin Ave outside Albany Middle School feels unsafe due to conflict with left turning vehicles.

- San Pablo is a much nicer street in El Cerrito because of the medians. In Albany, speeding is an issue on San Pablo.

- Due to all of the turning movements at the intersection of Marin and San Pablo, the bike path planned for the south side of Buchanan/Marin needs to extend through the intersection, on the left side of the right turn lane. There needs to be a place for bikes at that intersection.

- Students are concerned about turns into their lane when they’re in a crosswalk and the lights don’t last long enough, particularly at Brighton and San Pablo and at Clay and San Pablo.

- There is no crosswalk between the intersection of Castro and Clay along San Pablo, so students just run across the street at Garfield.

- Walking feels unsafe at night on San Pablo in regards to crossing, especially at uncontrolled crosswalks. The street is very wide.

- Kids have to wait too long for the walk cycle at Solano and Brighton along San Pablo and it is a deterrent to walking to school and obeying the crossing signals.

- At the reconstructed intersection at Jackson and Buchanan, there is a missing crosswalk on the eastern side. Kids feel it is inconvenient and there is not enough time to cross. The Albany Active Transportation Plan recommended opening that crosswalk. Parents would also like to see a pedestrian lead signal there, like the one at Marin and Santa Fe.

- Many parents do not let their kids walk to school because they think crossing San Pablo is too unsafe.

- There are bike/ped/car conflicts at the Ohlone Trail and Albany Middle School.

- Crossing San Pablo at Dartmouth and Monroe is a challenge. This is an important bicycle connection. Currently, there isn’t a bike loop at Monroe, so you have to press the ped button. Also, people use the center turn lane or the sidewalk, and there are many hazards present.

- The walk signals in Albany don’t automatically trigger, they have to be pressed to show the walk sign. They should have to automatically change because it is frustrating for pedestrians.
## Draft City of Albany Focus Group Meetings

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Appendix C  Design Workshop Notes

SUMMARY OF GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS AT DESIGN WORKSHOP

On Buchanan Street

- More traffic control and speed calm speed, the median causes sightline blockage with tree canopies.
- Need a Z crossing between Pierce and Jackson somewhere on Buchanan.
- Need a hedge blocking the school playground from Buchanan.
- Add missing crosswalk at Jackson and Buchanan.
- Improve access to Berkeley bike boulevards down Jackson.
- Add bike sensors on the lights (throughout the area and at Jackson).
- Put in palm trees all along Buchanan from the Gilman Tract like along the San Francisco Embarcadero to define the connection from the waterfront to Albany, and maybe continue this up San Pablo. This would visually connect the waterfront.
- Median trees are currently an obstacle to truck traffic, so widen median or use palm trees.
- Move eastbound traffic to the center sooner before approaching San Pablo.
- Cut off the left turn at Pierce and extend the median between Taylor and Jackson. Could still allow a left at Taylor; it’s steeper so cars going up it would go slower.
- Jackson is a feeder street to get to Solano, so maybe block vehicle cut through access.
- At Buchanan and Marin, turn Buchanan a little to make it into a T-intersection, which would also allow for some developable street space.
- Still have concerns about the connection to the bay, even with the new path. The crossing over the bridge on Buchanan might not feel safe. Many people return on the sidewalk eastbound on Buchanan and cut through on Washington and Jackson. These streets should be part of an integrated network.
- The creek is a great connection to the north and south Berkeley bike boulevards, Eight and Ninth streets, and through Albany to the Bayside Trail.
- Create a ‘Civic Center’ area around City Hall, treat it as a gateway, and improve the “welcome to Albany”, the gas station appearance, and the Gilman Tract. Could put in art, a farm stand, pocket parks, or something else to give the area a sense of place and hold the corner.
- Need to connect the route along Dartmouth, coming down Monroe or the creek path and over to retail in Berkeley, and a connection from University Village to Dartmouth and the Ohlone Greenway. To connect Monroe to Dartmouth, could put a paseo through to Kaines, there is a house for sale and part of it is the Hertz parking lot.

On San Pablo Avenue

- Extend bike lane into the crosswalk at Marin and San Pablo
- Put in a bike corral by the café seating at the new planned University Village development
- Need more trees along San Pablo, landscaped medians, and a midblock crosswalk at the donut shop.
- Narrow the lanes on San Pablo to 11 feet.
- The crosswalk at Brighton and San Pablo is problematic. Middle school students cross there or at Clay and many students have been hit by cars over the years.
- There need to be mountable medians for emergency vehicles.
- There should be only one signal (pedestrian) control for the intersection at Washington, even though the streets are offset.
- Create a connection from Adams over the creek to San Pablo and open up the dead end street to pedestrian access.
- Put in curb extensions at all intersections on San Pablo.
- Put trees in the curb extensions to narrow the street.
- Make Adams and Kains bike boulevards.
- Create gateways in the city, like a banner over the street at Solano and San Pablo
- Reduce the speed limit on San Pablo to 25 mph
- Need bike lanes on San Pablo. Maybe narrow the medians or put in protected bike lanes behind the parked cars.
- Use the creeks as gateway elements with prominent crossings. Use the crosswalk as a map of the street.
- Cerrito Creek near the mall has been daylighted, but then goes underground at San Pablo. There could be a big blue crosswalk, Z-crossing, and then it would continue along the path, connecting it with Carlson street in El Cerrito.
- Need safe bike lanes on San Pablo. There are already a lot of bicyclists using San Pablo, some that want to travel at higher speeds than would be possible on Adams and Kaines. Those streets are for slower riders.
- Extend the Solano pedestrian lighting onto San Pablo and create a café atmosphere.
- Put in a median island for the crossing of San Pablo and Brighton. Could also create a leading pedestrian phase, since cars making right turns often approach the intersection at high speeds.
### Appendix D  Parking Inventory and Demand

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