



October 26, 2020

Alameda CTC
1100 Broadway
Suite 800
Oakland CA 94607

Re: Revised Comments on Oakland Alameda Access Project

Dear Alameda CTC:

We thank Alameda CTC staff for providing feedback and meeting with us to discuss our earlier letter of October 19. In response, we provide the following updated response to the draft EIR for the Oakland Alameda Access Project (OAAP) to better reflect our concerns and understanding of the project.

Bike East Bay and Bike Walk Alameda have been closely involved in your development of the OAAP over the past several years and we appreciate the time you have committed to meet with us and discuss our concerns about bicycle and pedestrian access with this project. We also appreciate your prior commitment that allowed us to complete a feasibility study for a bike-ped bridge over the Oakland Estuary, which is our highest priority part of this project. We are encouraged to learn of the complete feasibility of a bike-ped bridge and look forward to hearing your ideas for advancing the final design and ensuring that the OAAP is truly a multimodal project when it comes to connecting Alameda and Oakland. We also appreciate your commitment to include a two-way cycle track on Oak Street with this project and we want to see that bikeway built before any other construction activity happens to ensure safety.

That said, we retain our concerns with the over-emphasis on cars with this project but for the following reasons are staying engaged in hopes that our concerns will be addressed. OAAP as envisioned in the DEIR does little to improve multimodal connectivity and access across the Oakland Estuary, which is what voters were promised when they approved the allocation of Measure BB and B funding almost 30 years ago. This is a critical shortcoming that needs to be fixed. For this reason, we are looking for your commitment to complete a PSR and PAED for the bike-ped bridge. This should be doable given the relative costs of these studies compared to the overall cost of OAAP. It does not matter to us whether funding to complete these studies comes

from OAAP or from another source. In addition, the project needs to improve the freeway underpasses of 880, and make further pedestrian safety improvements in Chinatown, as requested by Chinatown Coalition and Jack London District. Thank you for verbally committing to improving the pedestrian undercrossings of 880 in our most recent phone call. We look forward to seeing more details about these pedestrian improvements and their cost estimates. Should these deficiencies be addressed, then we can support the project enthusiastically and we hope to do just that.

Bike-Ped Bridge over Oakland Estuary

The proposed Webster Tube walkway is not a true bike-ped enhancement, but rather environmental mitigation and clearance for Caltrans. While maybe improving emergency pedestrian egress for drivers, it does not meet NACTO, or even Caltrans' own standards for a bikeway, or a shared-use facility. Because it will suffer the same issues as the Posey Tube walkway (noise, smell, dirtiness) and be only slightly wider, it will not attract new users, and it won't improve the bike and pedestrian network here in any meaningful way. This corridor needs real solutions for bicyclists and pedestrians, not more of a bad thing.

The bike-ped bridge was considered 'out of scope' for this project, but we feel it should have been included, as it squarely addresses multimodal access and connectivity within this corridor. The recent Estuary Crossing Study shows that by 2030, a bike bridge could induce significant mode shift through this corridor, projecting potentially 8-13% of cross-estuary trips by bike or foot, compared to 0-3% for the proposed Webster Tube walkway. The bike-ped bridge would mean significantly fewer vehicle trips through the corridor versus a walkway (between 45,000-50,000 fewer vehicle trips per week, depending on the alignment chosen), benefitting the broader community in many ways, particularly Chinatown.

We therefore think it's wholly appropriate and necessary, and can support the project, if Alameda CTC clearly identifies funds — approximately \$6M for the PSR and PAED (environmental document) — for the bike-ped bridge, and places it in its Capital Improvement Program. In addition, because of the regional, cross-jurisdictional nature of this project, we urge that Alameda CTC manage the bike-ped bridge project going forward, much as it is managing OAAP, the East Bay Greenway, HOV lanes, freeway interchanges, and many more important priority projects.

Oak Street Cycle Track Bikeway and related bike issues

Thank you for including the Oak Street cycle track in this project and extending its good design up to 9th Street to connect to Lake Merritt BART Station. This is a needed bikeway connection from the Embarcadero into Downtown Oakland and through an area with heavy freeway traffic. We want to make it clear, however, that we do not request a bikeway on 6th Street, as designed into this project. Our preference is to have a bikeway on 7th Street, which will become part of a connection from West Oakland BART to Chinatown and Laney College. We understand the CEQA reasons for including 6th Street in this project, in case for some reason a bikeway cannot be constructed on 7th Street, but 7th Street is our preference, not 6th Street.

Thank you for understanding our concerns and revising the projects to improve bicycling and walking safety, as discussed herein. We look forward to our next conversation with updates and more specifics as we stay engaged.

Sincerely,



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