



12 March 2025

Item 24-268a

## Safe Streets Feedback Needed Before Passing Transit-Supportive Design Guidelines

Dear AC Transit Directors,

In 2023, AC Transit initiated a conversion of its 2018 “Multimodal Corridor Design Guidelines” into the “Transit-Supportive Design Guidelines” [before you today](#), in part due to unfounded concerns that street safety measures and road diets such as Oakland’s Telegraph Corridor Improvements were slowing down buses.

Data on this belief has not been shown until tonight. From Management’s response in Attachment #4, to board member questions raised two years ago: “There doesn’t appear to be a clear correlation between complete streets projects and bus speeds in this analysis, since in most cases along Telegraph Ave and Park St the trends are consistent between segments with complete streets treatment versus without treatments.” The graphs in Attachment #2 show there is clearly no change in bus speed following street safety improvements, and bus speeds are actually higher in road-dieted segments than they are in areas without treatments.

Despite the now-clear lack of evidence for safety treatments’ impact on bus speed, the proposal before you seeks to cement an AC Transit position that hinders cities from removing slip lanes, installing raised crosswalks, reducing roads from 4 to 3 lanes, providing bike lanes on major streets, and building protected intersections. Examples of specific language impacting safety projects are included in the linked [November 2024 letter](#), matching concerns first sent to AC Transit in [May 2024](#).

Perhaps aware of the unpopularity of the drafted restrictions on street safety projects, AC Transit has not disclosed them in its outreach to public bodies. We have reviewed the meeting materials, listened to the recordings, or attended all of the public outreach events stated in today’s presentation. Invariably, AC Transit gave a simple presentation which shared only the renderings of bus stops shared with bike lanes, noted the addition of stop lengthening requirements, and asked for feedback on the bus stop design (e.g. as presented on [pages 35-56](#)). However, these bus stop designs are already part of the 2018 Multimodal Corridor Design Guidelines.

AC Transit did not include in its presentations the “Corridor-Wide” additions being made to the 2018 document, which make up the core and purpose of the “Transit-Supportive” redraft. The only public group which did get its hands on a draft copy, the Berkeley Transportation and Infrastructure Commission, [had strong feedback](#) for AC Transit on the proposed street design provisions. They requested that AC Transit reverse or remove its flow chart which first recommends rerouting bikes to “parallel” streets. They requested new outreach presenting the

complete draft, including to Berkeley's Disability Commission and to the ped/bike/transportation commissions in other cities. They asked that the Guidelines clarify what is optional and what is required, and distinguish between suburban and urban typologies. Commissioners told AC Transit that they saw in the document "a lot about conflicts with bikes and pedestrians, but not a lot about conflicts with cars," that there "needs to be a paradigm shift," and that bus speed is "not actually about bikes or speed tables; it's about what we're doing to manage cars."

In its responses at the Berkeley commission meeting, AC Transit explained that it has not been sharing the draft Guidelines for public review because they are "intended to be a guide for city planners and engineers." It also characterized the Guidelines as "Design minimums that are required for buses to operate safely." And it defended its prior positions on street safety infrastructure: "We're not opposed to bulbouts, we just want them extended to bus bulbs. A standard bulbout would never become a bus stop." Commissioners took issue with these frames, pointing out that 1) the Guidelines will affect the public through street design, 2) that the Guidelines include many agency-desired features for bus speed and service efficiency, such as turning speed, that are inappropriate to characterize as safety minimums and which cities should be encouraged to balance with pedestrian safety, and 3) that requesting safety features such as any bulbout along a bus route (typically 3-7 feet long) be extended to bus stop length (at minimum 50 feet, per the Guidelines) is similar to opposing them.

[Advocates have had to push back on AC Transit's opposition to new road diets](#) in public, while other safety treatments have faced agency opposition in discussions among traffic engineers behind closed doors. Under new management and new Board leadership, AC Transit has an opportunity to build trust with a coalition of car-free pedestrians, bike riders, and transit users. By turning away from the car+bus approach, which seeks to keep traffic fast in an adversarial relationship with safety-minded city planners, but which induces car demand that continues to slow down buses, AC Transit could adopt a new pedestrian+bus approach that will better support its transit-dependent riders and grow ridership through a safer urban realm.

The AC Transit Board must not authorize design "Guidelines" or "Minimums" that add friction to safe city streets without adequate public outreach. Please direct agency management to:

1. Make amendments to the Guidelines to coordinate them with received feedback from Traffic Violence Rapid Response and the Berkeley Transportation and Infrastructure Commission.
2. Bring the resultant draft, in full, to meetings of the following organizations, for feedback before making final amendments and returning to the Board for approval:
  - Richmond BPAC
  - Emeryville BPAC
  - Oakland BPAC (Infrastructure Committee)
  - San Leandro BPAC
  - Fremont Mobility Commission
  - BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force

- General Manager's Access Committee
- Oakland Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Berkeley Commission on Disability
- Bike East Bay

Sincerely,

Anthony Campana, TVRR



**Traffic Violence  
Rapid Response**

Robert Prinz, Advocacy Director



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