



Berkeley City Councilmember

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Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District Board of Directors
1600 Franklin St
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March 7, 2023

RE: Restoring AC Transit service along Ashby Avenue (former Line 80)—Item 6a 3/8/23

Dear Members of the AC Transit Board of Directors,

I respectfully urge your support for restoring crosstown bus service along Ashby Avenue. Although complete restoration of Line 80 would be ideal, extension of Line 7 is a reasonable compromise that provides other benefits (e.g., additional transit options along overcrowded portions of the 51B route). I feel strongly that Line 7 extension is also a better option than elimination of the key transbay service provided to Berkeley and North Oakland by Line E.

South Berkeley lost critical transit service when the pandemic necessitated the suspension of Line 80—including easy access between Elmwood/Claremont, Ashby BART, Berkeley Bowl East and West, and jobs centers in West Berkeley. Reviving service along Ashby would restore the most-used part of the former Line 80 route, serve a highly urbanized area, and provide crucial connections between higher- and lower-resource areas of the East Bay.

I urge members of the Board to reevaluate staff's recommendation against prioritizing restoring Ashby service. Among all of the other lines that staff listed as higher priority (Lines 28, 70, 83, 90/98, and 99), only Line 83 currently has no service. Additionally, based on the best available [pre-pandemic ridership report](#), Line 80 had higher ridership and stronger ridership growth than Line 83. Although Line 80's overall performance metrics were worse than 83's, pre-pandemic data indicate that Ashby was Line 80's best performing segment.

I truly appreciate all the work that staff and Board members have done to explore and consider these options for service restoration. I also recognize that ridership has still not recovered to pre-pandemic levels and that even harder service choices may lie ahead. Nevertheless, we have an opportunity to restore critical service to underserved areas—for at least as long as feasible. This makes an enormous difference for those who rely on transit.

I urge you to vote to direct staff to prepare for and implement restoration of AC Transit service along Ashby as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Mark Humbert, Berkeley City Councilmember, District 8