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Subject: AC Transit Realign Service Scenarios

Mr. Eshleman:

Frequent and reliable transit service is a pillar of the City of El Cerrito's transportation network. Whether serving the approximately 20 percent of El Cerrito residents who commute by public transit, students who travel to classes at one of the city's five public schools, or helping the city's growing senior population reach services, transit is valued by many El Cerrito residents.

City staff have reviewed the three *Realign* service scenarios and have the following comments.

72R Discontinuation

Common to all three scenarios is the discontinuance of line 72R; the redistribution of its operating resources to increase frequencies for the 72 and 72M lines; and the increasing of 72 and 72M stop spacing to improve speed. Conceptually, city staff recognize how service simplification could improve service reliability, but we also understand the 72R is popular among El Cerrito riders.

As part of *Realign's* next public outreach phase, city staff request additional data and findings be presented which explain the specific issues with the existing service pattern, how the proposed changes could benefit riders, and what steps would be taken to lessen the impacts of stop consolidations on riders with limited mobility. Additionally, City staff expects that should the stop consolidation process progress, that there will be opportunities for public input on proposed stop consolidations in El Cerrito.

Improved El Cerrito Plaza BART Station Connections

As part of BART's East Bay Transit Oriented Development Projects, approximately 750 mixed-income housing units will be built atop the existing El Cerrito Plaza BART station rider parking lots. The first phase is expected to start construction in 2025. About 150 of the existing 700 rider parking stalls will be replaced, necessitating new means of access for BART riders.

BART's 2023 [Berkeley El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan](#) (BECCAP) identified 14 corridor-wide multimodal access strategies, and 16 access strategies specific to El Cerrito Plaza station, five of which focused on bus transit service improvements (Page ES-9, Table ES-1). City staff request these be included as part of the Unconstrained Service Scenario for future resource planning purposes:

- Carlson Boulevard - Frequent Local Service (Line 71)
- Arlington Boulevard – Late Evening Local Service (Line 7)
- Richmond Street – New Local Service
- Arlington Boulevard – New Transbay Service
- Carlson Boulevard / Pierce Street – New Transbay Service

Richmond Street Service

As part of the near-term service scenarios (Frequent Service and Balanced Coverage), City staff request that AC Transit Planners consider adding service to the Richmond Street corridor. The Richmond Street corridor is relatively short and has little vehicle congestion (2-miles, approximately 10-minute travel time). Consider extending an existing route that currently terminates at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station, such as Line 79 or 71, to instead terminate at the El Cerrito del Norte BART Station, after traveling from El Cerrito Plaza via Richmond Street.

Other Transit Service

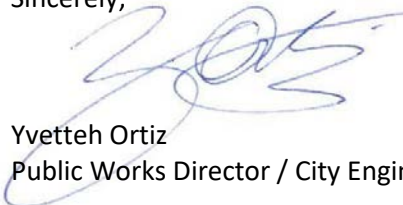
City staff encourage additional evaluation of current and projected Transbay and hillside travel markets, which have changed in the wake of the pandemic. For example, consider Transbay service along Arlington Boulevard and/or Carlson Boulevard / Pierce Street, as envisioned in the BECCAP (above) to serve markets that are not currently served by BART.

The City's hillside residential areas have limited non-auto transportation options which is a challenge for the City's growing senior population and others with limited mobility. While Line 7 provides direct service along Arlington Boulevard, which runs along the ridgeline, topography remains a major barrier to accessing Line 7 stops since many residential areas are separated from the ridgeline by steep street connections.

City staff recognize that the area's low density land use pattern and winding street alignments may be difficult to efficiently serve with traditional fixed-route transit service, but encourage the agency to consider on-demand, micro transit, or other service models to complement the existing Line 7 service.

Thank you for the chance to provide feedback and please contact me with any questions. We look forward to continued opportunities to collaborate with AC Transit.

Sincerely,



Yvetteh Ortiz
Public Works Director / City Engineer

CC:

Sean Moss, Planning Manager

Jarrett Mullen, Sustainable Transportation Program Manager