

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 7/14/2021

Staff Report No. 21-158a

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Board Policy 522 Update

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider approving a full amendment of Board Policy 522 and retitle the policy as “Policy for Transit-Oriented Development and Transit-Supportive Land Use.”

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

Increasing the amount of transit-oriented housing and workplaces will make it possible for AC Transit to provide more effective and efficient service.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

This action has no immediate budgetary or fiscal impact. In the medium term, stronger participation in transit-oriented planning could lead to more ridership and better fiscal outcomes for the District.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

AC Transit has had a longstanding interest in supporting transit-oriented development. The Board first passed Board Policy 520 “Policy Encouraging the Promotion of Public Transit in Land Use Developments within AC Transit’s Service Area” in 1994. That was before the term “transit- oriented development” (TOD) was in use and before many transit agencies were focusing on TOD. AC Transit supported this type of development even though it does not own significant developable land as some transit agencies do.

Yet, it was already clear that housing in certain locations--such as Downtown Oakland, Downtown Berkeley, and Downtown Hayward--would encourage transit ridership. Certain physical designs and layouts of buildings and housing complexes are also more supportive of transit use. However, in some cases, cities have focused TOD efforts solely around BART stations and not at bus hubs.

While AC Transit seeks to bring transit to residents and workers, it can also be effective to work with developers and cities to bring residents and workers to transit. This can make AC Transit’s service more efficient. In the decades since the original policy, TOD has been planned or built in such locations as Alameda

Point, the San Pablo corridor, and central Fremont.

This policy update provides an opportunity to streamline and modernize language and concepts, while including a focus on equity. The policy discusses which TOD plans and projects should be a priority for the District, what AC Transit's role in supporting TOD can be, and actions that the District can take to support TOD. The older policy's goal of increasing transit ridership through transit-friendly development remains the same. AC Transit has been active on the issue throughout the District's service area and this is reflected in the new policy language.

The draft policy has been reviewed by some outside stakeholders and advocates for feedback. They were generally supportive and comments from them are incorporated in this draft.

At the Board's request during the July 23, 2021 Board meeting, Staff has added provisions concerning student transportation and bus stop waiting facilities, such as benches and shelters, to the initial draft policy.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The advantage of replacing the policy is that it will allow the District to more effectively support TOD. Staff cannot identify any disadvantages to the policy update.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

The alternative would be to maintain the existing, somewhat outdated policy. Staff does not recommend this because, though the old policy was effective, the updated proposal is more current with terminology and actions.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Existing Board Policy 522

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Revised Board Policy 522
2. Original Board Policy 522

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