



News from: Office of the City Administrator

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Broadway Shuttle Extension Study Gets Green Light

Oakland, CA - The City of Oakland's vision of electric streetcars buzzing down Broadway has moved one step closer to fruition. On May 21, 2013, the Oakland City Council unanimously approved a consultant contract to begin studying the feasibility of extending the popular Free "B" Shuttle route to the MacArthur BART station and building an electric streetcar system on Broadway that would eventually convert the shuttle system to a fixed rail line. The City contracts with AC Transit to operate the shuttle and will partner with the transit agency throughout the study.

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"We want to build on the success and popularity of the 'B' by extending the route north to Kaiser Hospital and MacArthur BART," said Oakland Mayor Jean Quan. "This expansion would serve the growing number of workers and visitors who are spending time in downtown and support future investment in our city's core."

The goal of the project is to link downtown's major transit stations and destinations while solidifying Oakland as an attractive and accessible place for retail and office tenants. Major transit stations along the proposed route include Amtrak Capitol Corridor, SF Bay Ferry, AC Transit Uptown Transit Center and four BART stations: Lake Merritt, 12th Street, 19th Street, MacArthur.

"A streetcar system can be a powerful economic development engine that brings a strong sense of place and easy access to commercial districts along its route," said Zach Seal, Broadway Shuttle Project Manager in the City's Department of Economic and Workforce Development. "The study will evaluate the potential for a streetcar to serve as a catalyst for new retail and mixed-use development."

In operation since July 2010, the City's "B" Shuttle is an interim project designed to gauge demand for reliable and frequent transit service on Broadway. With more than 14,500 passengers each day and \$8.8 million in purchases by shuttle riders at businesses along the route, the service has proven to be successful.

This study is the next step towards the longer term goal of an expanded route and possible conversion to rail to address both the transit and economic needs of the corridor. The study's consultant team will be lead by Fehr and Peers and funded through a \$299,200 Urban Transit Planning Studies grant from Caltrans. The study is expected to be completed next winter. Upon completion of the feasibility study, additional environmental and design studies will be required should the City decide to move forward with the project.

"As the City's representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, I am going to continue working with City Council President Pro Tem Rebecca Kaplan to secure more funding and stabilize funding for the project once the study is complete," Mayor Quan added. "This project is a great solution for getting people out of their cars, reducing traffic, improving air quality and supporting commerce along the Broadway corridor."

For more information on the "B" Shuttle project, please contact Zach Seal, City of Oakland, at zseal@oaklandnet.com or 510-238-2937.

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