

OAKLAND BROADWAY URBAN CIRCULATOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

E-MAIL COMMENTS - COMMUNITY MEETING #1 (JULY 2014)

	DATE	COMMENTS (VERBATIM)
1	7-Jul	<p>Sir. In general, I favor going forward with this project although several features/design alternatives need to be corrected/made more rider friendly.</p> <p>Item 1. Cutting off service at 10 PM makes the system useless; concerts at the Fox, Paramount, Yoshi's or other venues run much later.</p> <p>Item 2. If the Brooklyn Basin development is worth serving, then rail, which is inherently better from a rider perspective, should at a minimum be a studied alternative. (If some TAG member has issues w/ streetcars crossing the Union Pacific mainline, please note that Muni's 3rd Street T line does, and in Philadelphia SEPTA similarly crosses a mainline of CSX and has for most of a century)</p> <p>Item 3. Northern Terminal options. College Avenue is already a traffic disaster. However, having a Broadway route run as far as 51st and then west to the Children's Hospital complex opens up new markets including the Temescal district.</p> <p>Probably the route should have a split service half to CH and half to Macarthur (or possibly as far as the Emeryville shopping area.</p> <p>Item 4. It is critical that either the service continue as the current Broadway Shuttle (no fare) or be fare coordinated with AC Transit (whether operated by them or not)</p> <p>Item 5. The study claims streetcars are more subject to auto traffic generated delays. This is not true if streetcars are given dedicated lanes and all of the other "enhancements" proposed for the bus alternatives.</p>
2	11-Jul	<p>It would be helpful if at these meetings there was a flyer with how to get the project info online (with short URLs), sign up for the mailing list, and find other city projects you may be interested in. Oaklandnet is pretty hard to navigate, and I still have no idea how I even got signed up to the govdelivery lists!</p>
3	11-Jul	<p>Sir, During the meeting Thursday evening one of the city staff mentioned UP's possibly vetoing having the Brooklyn Basin to Broadway streetcar option. May I politely suggest that they have NO legal right to prevent the City of Oakland from crossing their ROW? The City crosses the UP ROW w/ city streets open to autos, trucks, buses, bicycles, etc. Furthermore, The East Bay Traction Lines, affiliate of Key System and predecessor of AC Transit crossed the then Southern Pacific both on Broadway and just east of Webster Street over a century ago.</p>
4	9-Jul	<p>Thanks again for the ongoing coordination and communication about transit issues and developments along the Broadway Corridor. I am planning to attend the Open House tomorrow night and will plan to introduce myself to the consultants and voice Sungevity's support for a streetcar option. Safe and reliable public transit service is critically important to our growing employee base here in Jack London Square. You also mentioned sending an email, so I wanted to touch on the reasons why we support a streetcar option: (1) Streetcars (aka trolleys) are a real public amenity that appeal to Oakland workers, residents, and visitors; (2) Trolleys provide a higher level of commuter safety given their short, fixed routes; (3) • Rail lines, once put in service, tend to become permanent fixtures, which helps businesses and developers attract new workers and residents to Oakland. I will plan to verbally share these thoughts with the consultants tomorrow night, but wanted to send your way as well.</p>

	DATE	COMMENTS (VERBATIM)
5	9-Jul	I'm not going to be able to attend the meeting tomorrow but wanted to say that extending public transit to serve our area whether it's the B bus or something else would be exactly what we need in our neighborhood. I love the B but find that it is just a little out of comfortable walking distance especially at night so I end up driving everywhere which is not ideal. Thanks for considering this. Please keep in touch.
6	7-Jul	At some point soon, I'd hope that the discussion of measures needed to support economic development on Broadway would be broadened to include the neighborhood commercial districts. As a long-time advocate for my own neighborhood, I'd specifically cite the need for better services to Grand and Lakeshore Avenue business . The problems associated with heavy traffic and inadequate parking are particularly acute on Saturdays in conjunction with the Grand Lake Farmers Market. A Saturday extension of the free Broadway shuttle up Grand and into the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to Splash Pad Park would provide substantial benefits at relatively minimal cost.
7	8-Jul	Thanks for the prompt reply. I think it's pretty unlikely that we could raise enough backing to fund alternative services at this time but it wouldn't hurt to investigate further. Long term, however, in the process of looking into enhanced transit services on Broadway and out to BART, I'd hope that the city would also consider extensions into the neighborhoods. In my original email, I focused on how such improvements would benefit the Grand Lake commercial district, but it is (literally) a two-way street and improved transit would help funnel shoppers from Piedmont and the lower hills into downtown, as well.
8	7-Jul	We are delighted to learn of the study to extend the Broadway Shuttle route to Kaiser and MacArthur BART, and support these proposals with great enthusiasm. At a recent town hall meeting at a senior residence off Broadway, the main request of the folks attending was for an extension of the Broadway Shuttle to Kaiser. You will make many folks' lives easier with this extension. (Although realistically these particular folks will likely be playing harps in heaven before the project is completed, but you have to start somewhere!) While there is nothing inherently wrong with buses, we've noticed that people get much more excited about riding (and supporting) street cars. This will enhance the upcoming development along Broadway. We look forward to hearing more as these projects develop!
9	7-Jul	I saw this email and I have mentioned on an occasion or two at OMLF meetings this proposal for an extension of the Broadway shuttle on Saturdays. It could greatly aid the merchants on Grand Avenue, some of whom complain that the Farmers Market causes so much traffic congestion that they lose business. In addition to helping commerce, it could greatly reduce carbon emissions from those cars that circle around looking for parking. The bus could quite easily cruise Grand from Broadway to MacArthur and back, letting people enjoy this side of Lake Merritt as well as Lake Shore and Grand commercial corridors.
10	7-Jul	As a resident living in downtown Oakland over 5 years, I fully support the idea of extending the current free shuttle service to Oakland Kaiser which will help many of the Kaiser members like myself for not having to make the short driving back and forth. I am sure it is our City's goal to encourage residents to use public transits such as BART, AC Transit, or the free shuttle rather than driving around. Any proposals or improvements to extend the transit services to Rockridge from Jack London will definitely improve our living environment. I support all these great ideas.

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11	7-Jul	As I said before, city buses aren't cool, although I can appreciate the merchants' notions that they will get more people to their door. It's going to take more than a bus to get doors open on Broadway. That's a socio-economic problem we architects and planners have yet to solve pretty much anywhere. I get really nervous at the idea of streetcars in there with all that other stuff. And trolley tracks are such fun in the rain. Alley Cat is a nodal system, and makes a fun ride between points. It would therefore strengthen the hubs very nicely. Even as planned on Alameda-the earliest incarnation- the nodes need a jitney system to spread the wealth into the surrounding fabric. As a private enterprise, Alley Cat needs to cater to a destination-oriented ridership, and therefore is less fine-grained than local buses. If at a future time you think an iconic device would work between the highpoints of Oakland, including Lake Merritt for sure, we are ready to talk.
12	6-Jul	Fantastic Idea will the Broadway shuttle still be free?
13	6-Jul	Great idea; loooonng overdue! Often asked AC Transit operators why the shuttle stopped at Grand/27th?
14	4-Jul	I have been working with Doppelmayr (of the new AirBART shuttle) on revisiting their earlier catenary proposal for a link from BART to Alameda. Things have grown since then. Attached is an excerpt of our overall proposal for a catenary to connect the new and old residential and commercial centers along the Estuary and Island. If your internet system blocks this material I would be glad to mail a disk. If at all possible I would like to present the concept to the public at the meeting. In any event I look forward to attending the meeting.
15	5-Jul	BART currently delivers folks almost 12 blocks from Jack London Square, a real turn off for most folks who might otherwise want access to the waterfront: plus which, the underpass at Broadway & 5th makes what might otherwise be a pleasant enough (though lengthy) stroll down the street a fairly scary option. What is missing from the picture here is a vision of Oakland in maybe fifteen or twenty years, a place with no need for the immense amount of garage space we have right now, sorta like the difference between Oakland at midcentury just a few decades ago when there were some 600,000 seats in the various movie houses we had in the downtown – all gone now, of course, due to that gol'durn high tech gismo, television. And just fifty or so years before that, there came the motorcar, taking horses off the street and allowing cities to exist without the kind of congestion we see today only in old timey two-reelers. And in the mid-2000s, will we see something as game-changing here in Oakland? Probably, because the economics of public transport – to say nothing of the mandate to provide better service to everyone from schoolkids to seniors – will require such such an upgrade everywhere throughout the Bay Area. Will Oakland, however, be the leader in pioneering this kind of change? That's a matter of our policymakers' ability to look beyond the official conclusions of substandard, consultant-driven planning efforts like some I could mention but won't right now out of respect for some of the folks involved who, for one reason or another, can't pull hard enough to change the momentum of the bureaucracy right now. Perhaps the WOSP Steering Committee should meet on its own recognizance and figure out a way to help steer the City of Oakland into a clearing where that future downtown can be more easily seen?
16	5-Jul	<b>Demand Response Transit</b> is an awesome tool for West Oakland. I am very excited about the fact that our community will be the first to get it. However, I think that most of our neighborhood working folks use BART to get their jobs and Broadway to play and dine. Having a bus in a loop would help keep a lot of our local dollars in town. Bob, Rebecca S, Rebecca K, Zach, when you are back at work please let us know if there is a way we can help get this going.

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17	5-Jul	As you know, our WOSP Steering Committee was finally able to get Demand Response Transit (DRT) written into the WOSP in spite of the consultants' clear preference for a streetcar. Streetcars are a nice amenity that may encourage folks to engage in a more ambient retail experience on certain streets, but in terms of providing greater convenience and public safety for those who have to walk more than a couple of blocks from the streetcar line – especially those who may not be quite as spry as most of the planners – the streetcars can also be seen as an extravagance in comparison to DRT, especially when looking at the future of innercity travel and connectivity. Because we have the technology today that didn't exist much back even a very few yeas ago, individuals can hail mini-shuttles right to their exact location simply by pressing an app on their cellphones – and have their rides paid for electronically even before hopping on board. Imagine no more waiting for twenty to forty minutes for a bus whose arrival you have no idea is even going to happen or not. And imagine also that mini-shuttle's driver waiting around while you get inside your front door before picking up or dropping off the next two or three passengers who may be already on board or just down the street waiting to be picked up.
18	4-Jul	I know this project is about Broadway. However, We in WO need transport in order to get our people out of the whole and into jobs. How about running the busses on a loop from the 7th Street BART Station down Mandela Parkway to 35th and looping around via Broadway and then back to 7th St. This is a serious need. We can't have this entire section of the city cut off from public transit.
19	3-Jul	Glad to see that you guys are requesting public comments on the Broadway Circulator. I'm out of town and won't be able to make the open house, but wanted to put a comment in. In particular: I would strongly support the development of a streetcar along Broadway, perhaps from Jack London up to Kaiser Hospital. The reason I would encourage a streetcar, rather than expanded bus service, is that the 'tracks in the ground' give private investors who want to invest in the corridor some certainty that service will always be there (and thus their investment is worthwhile). Buses, even BRT, can easily be rerouted or moved. A streetcar can't. Portland, OR found significant development impacts from their streetcar (MAX), and was able to revitalize several downtrodden areas by putting lines in. I think we could do the same for Oakland. Thanks for your time, and the work you've already done to get the B running.
20	3-Jul	Read with interest about the Broadway Transit Circulator Project. Would like to make a suggestion. The ideas presented for extending the existing Broadway Shuttle route from Jack London Square are very good. However, the idea for extending the route to the MacArthur BART does not generate the same enthusiasm – mainly because there are hospital shuttles going to/from MacArthur BART. Am not enthusiastic for tracked streetcars due to maintenance problems, tracks/road/streetcars. Instead of extending the route to the MacArthur BART, how about a “hospital” route from Jack London Square to Broadway and W. MacArthur Blvd. (Kaiser Hospital). Return to Jack London (general street route/unknown stops): Turn right at Broadway and W. MacArthur Blvd. Turn right from W. MacArthur Blvd. to Piedmont Avenue. Piedmont Avenue to Broadway. Broadway and Hawthorne Ave. Hawthorne and Webster Street (Alta Bates Summit Hospital, Merritt campus). Webster St. to 28th Street and Broadway. Continue along Broadway to Jack London Square.
21	3-Jul	How could you convince young people that "special front seats" are not for their feet, back packs, and garbage left behind? Perhaps schedules (electronic) should include some information to remind what is proper conduct in public areas.Long time AC user and best regards to bus drivers, Senior from Berkeley.

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22	3-Jul	I am in favor of the Broadway shuttle beign extended to Kaiser Hospital and to MacArthur Bart. I have ridden the Broadway shuttle and I find it very convenient.
23	3-Jul	We already went through this with the disastrously expensive “study” of BRT on Telegraph. Dedicated transit lines wreak havoc on parking and traffic. They were a great idea before the invention of the internal combustion engine. For California, I’m afraid too late, IMHO. And I don’t even DRIVE! What about loading platforms? Are the stops at the curb or down the middle of the street? There’s really no room for islands.
24	3-Jul	Assuming that the shuttle will continue to be free, I like the idea of extending the existing Broadway Shuttle route to Kaiser Hospital and MacArthur BART. I am not sure about a streetcar on Broadway, but I guess that is a wave of the future in public transportation.
25	3-Jul	Thanks for this email. I think these ideas are fantastic. I cannot really comment intelligently on the best option of the ones mentioned. My hunch is that extending the shuttle service might be the cheapest. It seems like doing rail will involve more infrastructure spending and planning (CEQA, yuck) and take longer to implement. I would be surprised if the benefits outweighed these drawbacks. I wonder what is meant by enhancing bus service – if that means AC Transit. I would definitely use a service that extended up to Kaiser from downtown as I go to that facility at least monthly. I am so happy to hear that Oakland is taking steps to improve transit in these ways, and I will be excited to see what develops. I think the green shuttles have already been a great success.
26	3-Jul	Since I can’t make it to the open sessions, here are my comments. Great idea about a street car line, just like SF’s F Line. You can accommodate more people in a streetcar than the current buses which is not necessarily environmental friendly. It might be an ultimate goal (streetcars) for traffic purposes but definitely more frequent buses for now. In any case maintenance and cleaning is important since in my own experience, as it is well used. It’s important to connect with BART, Ferry and perhaps with AC Transit cross town lines as well as major buildings. The Broadway Shuttle was definitely a valuable tool when BART was on strike provide up and downtown access. Also the shuttle will be valuable from MacArthur and Kaiser since they do not really have a well established shopping district there.

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27	3-Jul	Glad to hear there's no more confusion about the funding streams from the various agencies who all stir the pot (McBeth style?) when they meet as the Joint Policy Committee every so often! Be that as it may, I stand corrected; we all signed off on the petition to BAAQM last year to keep the Broadway B, underscoring the point that it was providing some relief to downtown parking and other issues of congestion. My concern, and that of the WOJLOO population (Jack London, Old Oakland and West Oakland businesses and residents) is that, splendid as it is, the B will likely come under attack from cost cutters again and again until our petitions don't work anymore, and then what? Meanwhile, I've talked to nearly everyone on this list more or less incessantly about the imminence of Demand Response Transit and the fact that it alone holds the promise of (a) serving the broadest population, (b) decongesting all of the City, not just Broadway, (c) provides more in the way of Public Safety than any other form of transportation, plus, plus, plus; but still very little in the way of progress in this conversation seems to be popping up on the list of options that these public meetings produce. ...and all I'm saying is that if there isn't a separate story board up on the wall for DRT (or LMT, Last Mile Transit, as the folks at Metro Bee prefer to call it), and everyone in the room is being asked to vote for a streetcar, a half bus / half accordion or a moving sidewalk, how can members of the public even know that any other, more pragmatic option is even available? Zach, DRT / LMT is either not getting its fair consideration because it is imperfectly understood or there's some political resistance coming from somewhere; and it's highly frustrating to me as a member of both the WOSP and EBOTS Steering Committees to see this opportunity for Oakland downplayed as much as it is.
28	3-Jul	YES, YES, YES! We definitely would be in favor of enhanced bus expansion along Oakland's Broadway Corridor. However, we also feel that putting in a dedicated rail system for this area would impede automobile flow along this already busily traveled street. But expanded bus service sounds like a GREAT IDEA for future travel to enhance the Broadway corridor. Also, there are many of us here in the Oakland hills area who could use some bus connection service. Currently, my closest bus stop is over 1.5 miles from my home in hilly terrain. So if you could think about putting into service some bus or van service that would connect the Montclair area along Broadway Terrace to this proposed new service, that would be greatly appreciated! We would definitely like to be able to take advantage of this new service, but currently we are isolated from any convenient bus service.
29	3-Jul	Chinatown Chamber is in favor of the extension and the project. It's been helpful in bringing customers to Chinatown!
30	3-Jul	No streetcar tracks on Broadway!
31	3-Jul	extending this service to Kaiser would eliminate a lot of the traffic on Broadway.
32	3-Jul	I'd like to comment on the Broadway Transit Circulator Study. The study focuses on 40th street as the "end of the line", but the area of Broadway that really needs development extends all the way to 51street. The busy Rockridge Center sits on one corner but the other 3 corners and entire area is run down and abandoned. Why is there not interest in Oakland for urban renewal on these long abandoned sites? They would be perfect for infill housing and retail. So I suggest you consider extending the free bus all the way up Broadway and create interest in the upper Broadway area. Now that Kaiser Hospital has caused a tremendous traffic snarl with it's new buildings all opening onto Broadway and with a mess of traffic lights in a congested area (with no retail at ground level), a rapid public route through all that, with traffic priority would be a great idea.

	DATE	COMMENTS (VERBATIM)
33	2-Jul	I would definitely support and use enhanced bus and/or streetcar service between Jack London Square and Kaiser/MacArthur Blvd. I go to a synagogue and shops and restaurants along that corridor and often find that the 51A and Broadway shuttle service are not frequent enough.
34	2-Jul	You know that I've been a huge supporter of the Broadway shuttle, both as an Oakland resident, and as someone with a business (Children's Fairyland) that the shuttle makes more accessible to travelers. In my role as a board member of the Lake Merritt/Uptown Community Benefit District, I've been pleased to be able to advocate for the service at key points in its development. I take the shuttle an average of two times a week; to go to civic meetings and to meet colleagues for lunch and to shop at Oaklandish or in Chinatown. Since I walk to work and to the shuttle stop, I rarely have to use my car; the shuttle is taking cars off of our streets, which I'm sure is a goal of the City of Oakland. I see first-hand how the shuttle has become one of the City's most highly regarded and valued services. It would be a natural—and no doubt much appreciated—extension to take the shuttle to Kaiser Hospital and MacArthur BART. And a streetcar would complement the historic nature of so many of the grand old buildings on Broadway, perhaps drawing even higher numbers. And a streetcar would be more comfortable (no more lurching!). Plus, I understand streetcars are better for the environment. As more families move into dense areas of Oakland (Jack London Square, the planned McArthur development), the shuttle will be a great way to visit Fairyland without the hassle of parking. The extension of the shuttle would also benefit my employees who live in Oakland; I have 50 on my payroll in the summer. Although I cannot attend your upcoming meeting, I wanted to articulate my strong support for the shuttle's extension, and if possible, for streetcars instead of buses.
35	2-Jul	It's wonderful that the Broadway Transit Circulator Study is considering extending the free shuttle to Kaiser Hospital and to the MacArthur BART station. I'm all in favor of that. But I'm opposed to putting any public transit on tracks. I've been on the 51 bus when part of College Avenue was closed because of a fire beside a movie theater and I think another time the police were after someone so they had yellow-taped the street off. Also there have been detours when College Avenue was torn up for street work--pipes, fiber optic cables (I was told--a rumor), etc. Also Bancroft Way has been yellow-taped off when there was a fire in a restaurant on Telegraph Avenue and when there was a hostage situation at a bar. Each time the bus was able to detour onto other streets. If the bus had been on tracks, it would have been stuck, couldn't move. I would have been late to work--maybe hours late. This is a city. Things happen in cities. You should expect that the buses will have to detour sometimes. Please don't put any public transportation on tracks. Thank you for considering my comments.
36	2-Jul	Excellent Idea to extend shuttle to Kaiser Hospital and the MacArthur Bart Station. Outstanding idea. This will make a lot of sense especially in light of the dropping of transfers.

	DATE	COMMENTS (VERBATIM)
37	15-Jul	<p>I'm new to these public planning processes, and (forgive me) I'm always amazed at how slowly things move. I'm sure a lot of work has gone into the yearlong study, but I thought things would have been further developed. Public surveys, economic impact analysis, bike lane compatibility analysis, traffic analysis, mode share impact analysis, carbon emissions analysis - those sorts of things. I see much more analysis in the reports on your website - these are much more informative than the open house. I was happy to hear that plans account for future expansion if successful - to Emeryville, and to Brooklyn Basin by bus. (Alternatively, couldn't the old railroad grade at Victory Ct be used to get the streetcar to 5th Ave, within a 2 min walk of Brooklyn Basin? This would then offer future connections to E 18th St. and Lakeshore/Grand). I was surprised to hear that a left-lane alignment was being considered on 40th in large part because of the existing bike lane alignment. I hope there are other reasons this alignment would make sense, since bike lanes can be re-aligned if necessary. In fact, I know that Bike East Bay isn't sold on the current bike infrastructure on 40th and may seek to change it in the future. I think it's important to work with bike advocacy groups to find a solution that works for all modes, but as both a bike rider and transit advocate, I believe that getting the streetcar design right has to be the top priority. After all, if necessary, bikes could always be routed along adjacent streets. Also, as a cyclist, I'm leery of the idea that streetcars in the left lane would stop at a station, forcing auto traffic to merge into the shared bike lane. I don't think this is a safe system for cyclists - unfortunately, I think it would be safer for stopping streetcars to be in the right lane, impeding cyclists and forcing them to choose a safe passing opportunity. I wonder if - at stops - parking could be removed, allowing streetcars to pull a few feet toward the curb and offering enough room in the lane for cyclists to safely pass. I did briefly scan some of the EBOTS materials, and saw the bar graphs of costs and anticipated ridership (what was missing was a graph of cost per passenger). This seems like a helpful and necessary analysis. I look forward to future meetings.</p>