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Planning and Development Department

March 7, 2012

Jim Cunradi
East Bay BRT Project Office
AC Transit
1600 Franklin Street, 7th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Comments on the BRT Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report

Dear Mr. Cunradi:

Please accept this letter as the formal staff review comments from the City of Berkeley on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report (FEIS/R).

After reading through the report, staff has a few questions and comments:

1. The FEIS/R still does not address the location of a bus layover. This is an important part of the bus route and needs to be worked out prior to work beginning on the route.
2. The FEIS/R did not study either of the Locally Preferred Alternatives (LPA) provided by the City of Berkeley.
3. The impact to traffic at "off-alignment" intersections in Berkeley is puzzling, given that no lanes will be altered in Berkeley. The primary change in Berkeley will be the contraction of two bus lines (the 1 and 1R) to one line (either the BRT line without amenities or a new line between downtown Oakland and downtown Berkeley), a possible increase in the number of buses running along the existing route, and a reduction in the number of stops. It is unclear why these changes should affect traffic to the point that exclusive turn lanes, parking reduction and turn prohibitions must be considered.

Please consider whether the FEIS/R should be certified before these questions are resolved. It is especially important to identify the bus layover site and have an agreement with the host city before any work is started on this project.

Sincerely,


Wendy Cosin, AICP
Interim Planning Director

cc: City Manager, City Clerk, Mayor and City Council