



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 27, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Liam Garland, Director, Public Works
Subject: Dana Complete Street Pilot Project by AC Transit

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution: 1) approving the Dana Complete Street Pilot Project, including a conceptual design repurposing an existing traffic lane to install a two-way cycle track, construction of a boarding island for bus passengers, and specified changes to parking and loading zones, as necessary, and directing the City Manager to direct staff to work with Alameda-Contra Costa County Transit District (AC Transit) in developing the detailed engineering design of the project; 2) authorizing the City Manager to direct staff to grant permits for construction activities within City Right-of-Way, contingent on Public Works staff approval of final construction drawings and specifications from AC Transit, and directing the City Manager to direct staff to work with AC Transit on the evaluation phase of the project following construction.

SUMMARY

AC Transit has proposed a Dana Complete Street Pilot Project to improve transit operations and bicycle safety on Dana Street between Bancroft Way and Dwight Way. AC Transit's Dana Complete Street Pilot Project is consistent with the City's 2017 Bicycle Plan, General Plan Transportation Element Policy T-4 "Transit First", September 27, 2016 City Council support of Southside pilot projects, and an incremental approach to implementing Southside Plan Policy T-C2 as described in a July 14, 2015 City Manager referral. The pilot project complements the City's Southside Complete Streets Project. AC Transit will construct and evaluate the pilot in order to recommend possible changes to the design for the City's Southside project for Dana Street. AC Transit, in partnership with Public Works staff, has developed a conceptual design, conducted public engagement, and refined that design based on input from the public and technical staff from various City Divisions and Departments. AC Transit seeks the approval of the Berkeley City Council for the pilot project, including the conceptual design, and authorization to proceed with detailed engineering design, application for construction permits, construction activities in the City right-of-way, and post-construction evaluation of the pilot project. A detailed project timeline is found later in this report.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The project is funded and managed by AC Transit. There are no direct fiscal impacts to the City, and it is anticipated that the contribution of Public Works staff time would be no more than a few hours a month for project review and internal coordination. AC Transit is utilizing various federal, state, and local funds for design, construction, and evaluation of the Dana Complete Street Pilot Project, which includes installation of a two-way cycle track and a bus boarding island within the project limits. Fiscal impacts of the City's Southside Complete Streets project, which will construct permanent improvements based on the AC Transit pilot project, will be addressed in a future report.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

AC Transit, in partnership with Public Works staff, has developed a conceptual design, conducted public engagement, and refined that design based on input from the public and technical staff from various City Divisions and Departments.

Traffic, Parking and Commercial and Passenger Loading Zones

As shown in Attachment 2: the Dana Complete Street Pilot Project would reduce the two existing traffic lanes to one remaining traffic lane to make space for a continuous protected bi-directional cycle track on the west side of the street. Dana Street is one-way southbound for drivers in the project area – no change in directionality of vehicle traffic is proposed. The traffic operations analysis conducted for the Dana Street/Haste Street intersection where the new bus boarding island would be constructed has confirmed that the intersection would continue to operate without significant delays with the proposed project.

In order to reduce potential conflicts between bicyclists and buses as well as meeting access requirements for fire apparatus, on-street parking spaces and commercial and passenger loading zones, except for one blue zone disabled parking space, are proposed to be moved from the west side of the street to the east side of the street. Overall, paid parking supply on Dana Street would be reduced, while Residential Parking Permit (RPP) and passenger loading zones would be increased. The proposed project would remove approximately ten of the 20 existing paid parking spaces along Dana Street. The proposed project would also result in an increase of two new residential permit parking spaces. The project adds a total of four new passenger loading zone spaces (white curb), converts one existing commercial loading zone (yellow curb) to paid parking, and adds two new commercial loading zones (yellow curb). The project proposes to relocate one blue zone disabled parking space from Dana Street to Haste Street, around the corner from the existing location. AC Transit staff have worked closely with City staff to develop a conceptual design that ensures continued parking accessibility as part of the new bikeway design. Details regarding changes to parking and ADA accessibility as a result of public input are described in the next section.

AC Transit is the responsible agency for environmental clearance of the Project. Following changes to CEQA resulting from Senate Bill (SB) 288, the Project qualifies for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facility categorical exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is categorically excluded from National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements as an improvement to existing street facilities.

Public Engagement

On April 15, 2021, AC Transit staff presented the conceptual design to the Berkeley Transportation Commission, which marked the start of Public Comment Period and start of community stakeholder engagement meetings. In mid-May, AC Transit sent letters to 54 property owners, 47 business owners and 266 residents along Dana Street between Dwight Way and Bancroft Way in announcing a virtual community meeting in late May. In addition, details of the meeting were announced on AC Transit's website (www.actransit.org) and via email to eNews subscribers. AC Transit and City staff met virtually and in person with major stakeholders and important institutions along the corridor, such as the Telegraph Business Improvement District and the University of California, Berkeley as well as reaching out to transit riders, walking, and bicycling advocacy groups, and community-based organizations such as the First Congregational Church of Berkeley and the Church in Berkeley. The Dana Street Project virtual community meeting was held on May 27th, 6pm to 7:30pm and was attended by over 30 people. The virtual community meeting recording is available on the AC Transit website.

The public comment period closed on June 7, and as of June 8, AC Transit had recorded 55 individual comments via email and online virtual community meeting Q&A. Public comments received included support for the project, concerns for changes to parking and loading spaces, need for parking and loading spaces on Dana Street in front of their properties, need for clear signage, lane marking and bicycle detection for people riding bicycles, need for a roadway design that accommodates buses, emergency vehicles and large trucks, and concerns about the location of consolidated bus stops and the proposed bus boarding island.

Based on comments received, the City and AC Transit have refined the conceptual design as shown in Attachment 2. In response to comments from UC Berkeley, AC Transit has modified the parking along two student residential properties, Blackwell (Bancroft Way to Durant St) and Unit 3 (Durant St to Channing Way). Parking along the frontage of these UC properties has been modified to ensure adequate maintenance, solid waste, and freight access for UC Berkeley facilities operations. Based in part on comments received from and a field meeting with First Congregational Church (Durant St to Channing Way), the existing bus stop on Durant St at Dana St would be consolidated with the nearby existing bus stop on Durant St at Ellsworth St, and this former bus stop location on Durant St at Dana St would be converted to a passenger

loading zone (white curb) to serve the church and the East Bay School for Boys which is co-located on the property. To serve this loading zone, AC Transit is proposing to make spot accessibility improvements to the sidewalks on the accessible path of travel to/from this new passenger loading zone to the church’s disability access ramp on Dana St. Based in part on comments received from a field meeting with the Church in Berkeley (Haste St at Dana St), three existing two-hour time-limited unpriced parking spaces on Haste St would be converted into a passenger loading zone adjacent to the church’s disabled access ramp. Because these new passenger loading spaces would require access to the passenger side of vehicles from the street, AC Transit would slightly modify the roadway striping in this area, utilizing surplus roadway space to create a painted buffer passenger-side loading area. The intent of this area is to allow passengers additional space to load, away from passing vehicles. The City's final approval of the Project and granting of construction permits will be contingent on receipt of acceptable final construction drawings and specifications from AC Transit.

On June 17, 2021, AC Transit staff provided project updates and summary of the public outreach activities to the Berkeley Transportation Commission, which voted unanimously (Ayes: Ghosh, Gosselin, Greene, Leung, Lutzker, Parolek, Zander. Noes: None, Abstain: None, Absent: None, Motion carried 7-0-0-0) to recommend approval of the pilot project by the Berkeley City Council.

Dana Complete Street Pilot Project Timeline

- Conceptual Design, Preliminary Engineering, Public Outreach, and Environmental Review June 2018 to July 2021
- Detailed Engineering Design Summer 2021 to Fall 2021
- Advertise project & award construction contract Winter 2021/2022
- Construction Spring 2022 – Fall 2022
- Evaluation Fall 2022

BACKGROUND

The Dana Complete Street Pilot Project would improve safety and access for people walking, biking, riding transit, and driving on Dana Street between Bancroft Way and Dwight Way. Project objectives are to improve safety for everyone traveling along Dana Street; provide a more comfortable bicycling and walking experience for people of all ages and abilities; and improve connectivity and accessibility to encourage transit, bicycling and walking trips.

AC Transit’s Dana Complete Street Pilot Project is consistent with the City’s 2017 Bicycle Plan, which recommends evaluation of a protected bikeway cycle track on Dana Street between Dwight Way and Bancroft Way. As a transit operations improvement

pilot, it is also consistent with General Plan Transportation Element Policy T-4 “Transit First”. On September 27, 2016 City Council expressed support for Southside pilot projects, which included a Dana Complete Street Pilot Project as one of three anticipated pilot projects on Bancroft Way, Telegraph Ave, and Dana St. The pilot is consistent with an incremental approach to implementing Southside Plan Policy T-C2 as described in a July 14, 2015 City Manager referral to “convert Dana Street between Dwight to Bancroft from a one-way street to a two-way street...to improve its safety and functionality as a bike route”.

As a pilot of the Southside Complete Streets Project, the Dana Complete Street Project is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing the City’s goals to provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities.

AC Transit’s Dana Complete Street Pilot Project complements the City’s Southside Complete Streets Project. Construction of the Dana pilot project is expected to be complete in 2022, followed immediately by an evaluation of the pilot project’s performance. AC Transit’s evaluation consultant will recommend additional design changes, if any are needed, for integration into the City’s Southside Complete Streets Project’s detailed engineering design process. At a minimum, the City’s Southside project would repave the entire street and would seek to make temporary elements of the Dana pilot project permanent.

AC Transit operates Line 6, serving 5,700 passengers on an average weekday (pre-COVID). Line 6 connects downtown Berkeley and downtown Oakland via Telegraph Avenue, one of AC Transit’s Major Corridors,. The Line 6 bus stop on the near side of Dana Street at Haste Street has no rider amenities except for a single bus stop sign. In addition, it is located along an ADA-inaccessible landscaped planting strip. The proposed far-side bus stop relocation and the construction of a new bus boarding island would provide improved rider amenities, an ADA-accessible bus stop, and improved transit operations. Together with other bus stop and signal improvements along Telegraph Avenue, the Pilot Project will improve operations of Line 6.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The Project would result in more efficient transit operations overall, and would encourage more people to use public transportation and engage in active modes of transportation instead of driving. Installation of a two-way bikeway on Dana Street is anticipated to increase the number of bicyclists, which is consistent with the 2009 Berkeley Climate Action Plan Policy 5.a. that calls for expanding and improving Berkeley’s bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The Plan sets targets of reducing transportation emissions 80% below year 2000 levels by 2050. The Plan further states that transportation modes such as public transit, walking, and bicycling must become the primary means of fulfilling the City’s mobility needs to meet these targets.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Dana Street Project implements the City of Berkeley Transit-first policy by giving priority to alternative transportation and transit over single-occupant vehicles on Transit Routes; evaluates a two-way cycle track as recommended in the 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan; incrementally implements Southside Plan Policy T-C2; and is consistent with past Berkeley City Council support of Southside pilot projects, including Dana Street.

As a pilot project, AC Transit will evaluate the pilot's effectiveness once it is constructed. Evaluation may identify additional design changes, if any are needed, for integration into the City's Southside Complete Street Project. The City's Southside Project is planned to repave Dana Street and make the Pilot project's temporary elements permanent.

Approval of the pilot project will keep the project on schedule for detailed engineering design and advertising for construction bids in late 2021, followed by construction of the project in 2022. Evaluation of the constructed project in 2022 complements and helps avoid delays to the City's Southside Complete Streets design phase, which is anticipated to be ongoing throughout 2022.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Council could opt not to approve the pilot project at this time, and instead defer the item to a future Council agenda. This decision would delay the subsequent detailed engineering design and construction phases of the project. Delays in the AC Transit pilot project could result in delays to the City's Southside Complete Streets project, which has grant funding deadlines.

CONTACT PERSON

Farid Javandel, Transportation Manager, Public Works, 981-7061
Eric Anderson, Senior Planner, Public Works, 981-7062
Dianne Yee, Associate Planner, Public Works, 981-7068

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Dana Complete Street Pilot Project Conceptual Design

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

DANA COMPLETE STREET PILOT PROJECT

WHEREAS, there is a gap in the City of Berkeley low-stress bikeway network on Dana Street between Bancroft Way and Dwight Way and the City of Berkeley Bicycle Plan recommends installation of a two-way cycle track on the segment of Dana Street between Bancroft Way and Dwight Way; and

WHEREAS, promoting environmentally beneficial alternatives to driving, including bicycling, walking, and taking transit, supports the goals of the Berkeley Climate Action Plan and Berkeley Strategic Plan and may also lead to improved public health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, improvements to transit service is supported by the City's General Plan Transportation Element Policy T-4 "Transit-First Policy" Transit First Policy, and improvements in efficiency and reliability of transit in the Southside neighborhood should encourage more people to use public transportation instead of driving, with this mode shift resulting in overall decreases in pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, AC Transit, in partnership with Public Works staff, has developed a conceptual design, conducted public engagement, and refined that design based on input from the public and technical staff from various City Divisions and Departments, and will continue to engage and seek the approval of City staff during the completion of detailed engineering design; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements for the Dana Complete Street Pilot Project (Project) will begin construction in mid-2022 and the construction project will be managed by AC Transit who will retain a construction management (CM) team, consisting of engineers and inspectors, during the construction of these improvements; and

WHEREAS, the City will grant permits for construction activities within City Right-of-Way, contingent on Public Works staff approval of final construction drawings and specifications from AC Transit, and City engineering staff and inspectors will provide assistance as typical for construction engineering permit activities in the City Right-of-Way.

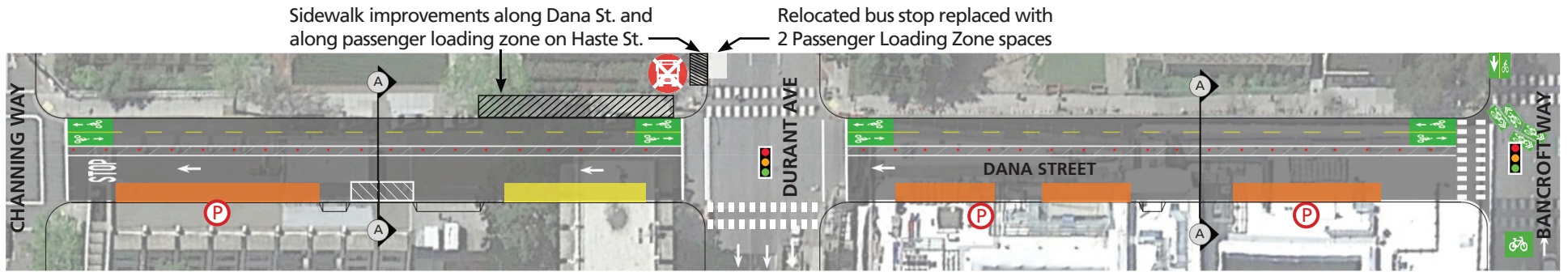
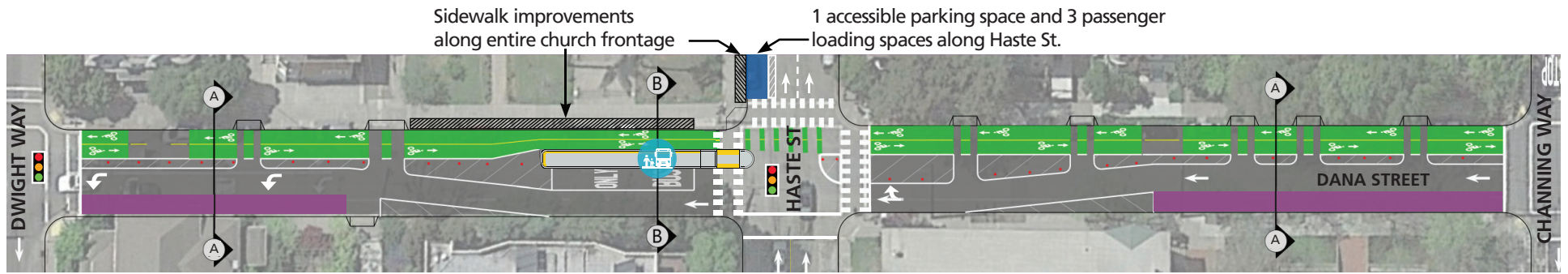
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council of the City of Berkeley approves the Dana Complete Street Pilot Project, including a conceptual design repurposing an existing traffic lane to install a two-way cycle track, a boarding island for bus passengers, and specified changes to parking and loading zones, as necessary, and directs the City Manager to direct staff to work with Alameda-Contra

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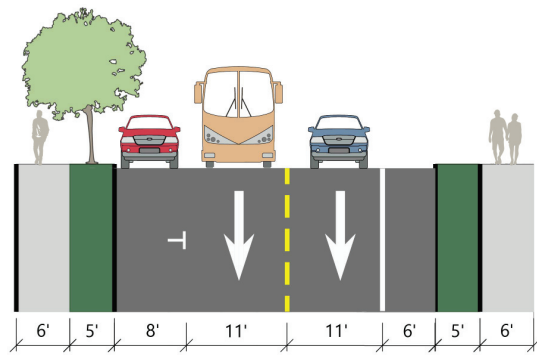
Costa County Transit District (AC Transit) in developing the detailed engineering design of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley authorizes the City Manager to direct staff to grant permits for construction activities within City Right-of-Way, contingent on Public Works staff approval of final construction drawings and specifications from AC Transit; and directs the City Manager to direct staff to work with AC Transit on the evaluation phase of the project following construction.

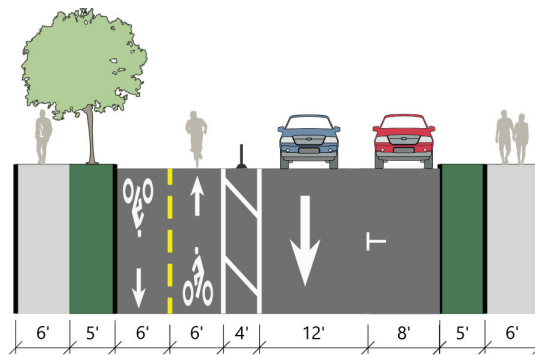
DANA COMPLETE STREET PILOT PROJECT ELEMENTS



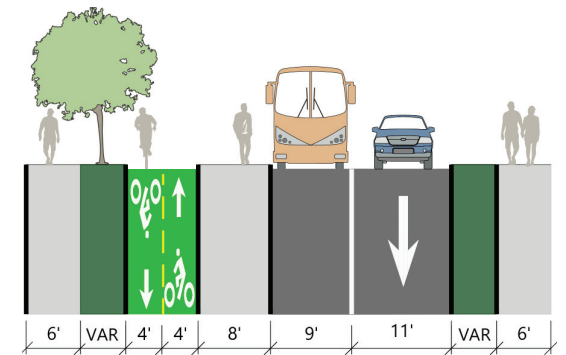
- Pay Parking
- Residential Permit Parking
- Accessible Parking Space (Blue Zone)
- Commercial Loading Zone
- Sidewalk Accessibility Spot Improvements
- Bus Boarding Island
- Bus Stop Removal
- Traffic Signal Improvement
- P Pay Parking Station
- Cycling Infrastructure



Existing Street Section



Proposed Typical Street Section



Proposed Section at Bus Boarding Island

