



I. The Beginning of Something Bigger

Berkeley's BeST Plan is the beginning of something big. It's about physically enhancing Berkeley's transportation network to improve access and mobility for all its users; improving safety for everyone traveling to or through our city; increasing access to favorite destinations and crucial parts of our great city; providing options for our disadvantaged communities; and protecting our environment. The BeST Plan is a cohesive and comprehensive guide to achieving the kind of transportation future that is defined by our adopted Complete Streets Policy and detailed in existing planning documents, capital expenditure plans, and other city policies and programs.



An Investment and Implementation Strategy

Ultimately, the BeST Plan provides a clear, prioritized, and comprehensive vision for how to implement improvements to Berkeley's transportation network over 5-, 10- and 30-year periods. This document will guide how the City spends its transportation dollars on local projects including General Fund Revenue and special funds such as Measure M, Measure G. Alongside those local funding sources, the Plan will guide how the City of Berkeley competes for County, Regional, State and Federal grant funding. Securing local and external funding sources is key to the success of the BeST Plan and the future of Berkeley's transportation system.

A key component of any investment and implementation strategy is an evaluation of how well it performs and meets the community's needs over time. The BeST Plan defines the methodology for measuring the success of the transportation improvements themselves and for the periodic review and update of the BeST Plan in the future. The opportunity has never been greater for Berkeley to improve its transportation network and provide Berkeley residents and visitors with a world-class transportation system.

As the funding increases though, so does the competition. As a result, never has the need been greater for Berkeley to be as prepared as possible to secure funding for its projects. The BeST Plan not only demonstrates Berkeley's commitment to Complete Streets transportation planning – serving all transportation modes equitably – but also our commitment to effective and efficient project delivery.

The BeST Plan Process

Drawing from our adopted planning documents, the BeST Plan culls all of Berkeley's existing transportation-related goals and principles and organizes them according to its Complete Streets Policy which was adopted in December, 2012. The BeST Plan also consolidates every identified transportation improvement that will shape our streets and pathways, and provide a more effective and efficient transportation system. The BeST Plan "bundles" those individual projects programmatically, by corridor, and by planning area. Those "project bundles" serve as the basis for future project planning, phasing, cost estimation, and – eventually – implementation.

Strategic Plan Community Engagement

The BeST Plan team sponsored a series of open houses to educate residents, employees and visitors about the BeST Plan process, project evaluation, and project prioritization. The open houses also provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the City's numerous project bundles identified in various planning documents. Held in March of 2016, the first open house meeting encouraged participants to provide feedback regarding project evaluation and ultimately to rank project evaluation criteria. A public survey was also made available starting on the day of the first open house and for the next 4 weeks, and received 780 responses. The survey asked people to rate the importance of the evaluation criteria. The results of the community survey were then used to weight the project evaluation criteria and subsequently finalize the project bundle prioritization. The second and final open house, held in April 2016, was used to present the results of that survey effort, discuss final prioritization results and explain the implementation plan for the transportation improvements and the more immediate next steps for the BeST Plan.

Alongside the two open houses, the BeST Plan team met with a series of focus groups including business associations, neighborhood leaders, and representatives from neighboring jurisdictions and transit agencies. These focus group meetings were used to complement the open houses and engage specific groups about more fine-grained details of the BeST Plan. They also provided additional feedback about the evaluation criteria and were used to gather opinions about weights and final prioritization.

Chapter 3: How to Achieve the Vision discusses the result of that community engagement process as it relates to the final evaluation criteria weights and final project bundle prioritization.

Project Delivery and Department Coordination

The BeST Plan team, including consultants and city staff, invited representatives from several City of Berkeley Department of Public Works divisions, alongside representatives from other departments within the City, to participate on a technical advisory committee concerning BeST Plan implementation. These divisions and departments together represent the total group of individuals who are responsible for designing, funding and constructing capital improvements in Berkeley. During three technical advisory meetings, members were encouraged to identify issues related to various phases of project development, coordination and implementation. Following those discussions, the latter meetings focused primarily on organizing a series of tools and strategies to overcome obstacles and improve coordination, communication and project delivery. Those strategies and solutions are detailed in Chapter 4: moving forward and measuring success, and represent both short-term and long-term goals for the city of Berkeley.



Our Vision

The BeST Plan is guided by a Vision for Berkeley's transportation system. The City's existing policies serve as a clear foundation for the Vision's development. Most importantly, the City's Complete Streets Policy is at the heart of the Vision which identifies a commitment to creating and maintaining...

"Complete Streets that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel along and across streets...through a comprehensive, integrated transportation network that serves all categories of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, emergency vehicles, seniors, children, youth, and families." (*Complete Streets Resolution, Exhibit A*)

The Vision's foundation not only prescribes the functional aspects of the transportation system but describes the broader vision for Berkeley's future as well:

- "Enhance public open spaces and streets to benefit pedestrians, improve Downtown's livability and foster an exceptional sense of place. In particular, create new public gathering places that support nearby uses and Downtown as a destination." (p. IN-19) – Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan, 2013
- "Improve the appearance and use of commercial streetscapes to create a joyful and festive pedestrian oriented, multi-cultural commercial environment." (p. 74) South Berkeley Area Plan, 1990
- "Maintain safe and inviting streets, parks and plazas that contribute to the success of businesses and the well-being of residents." (p. IN-20) Downtown Area Plan Economic Development, 2012

Berkeley Complete Streets Policy

The main purpose of Berkeley's Complete Streets policy is "... to further the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and environmental well-being of... communities". The Complete Streets Policy is the cornerstone of the Berkeley Strategic Transportation Plan.

Berkeley's Policy describes Complete Streets as "a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, emergency vehicles, seniors, children, youth and families."

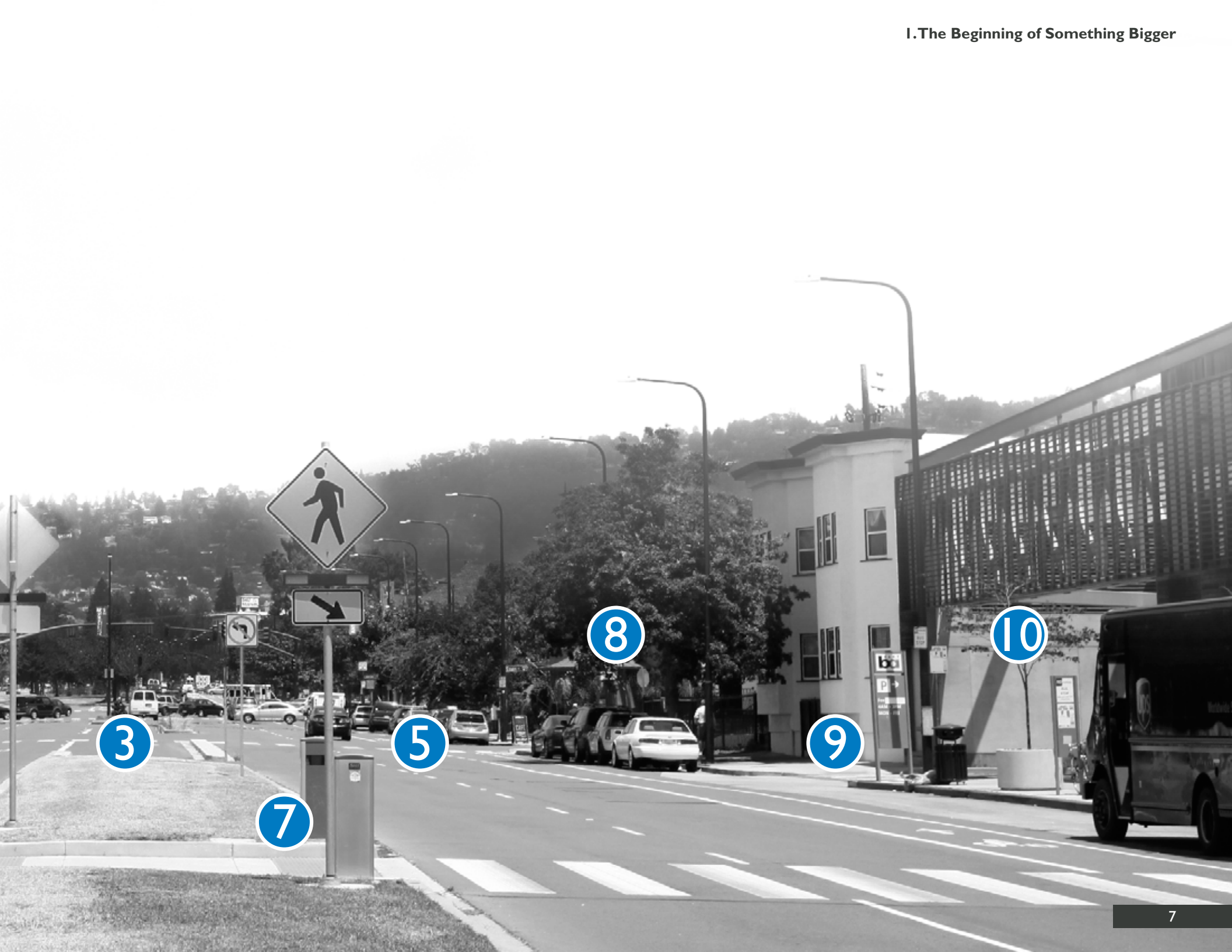
Furthermore, the policy acknowledges the benefits and value of Complete Streets for public health, coordinated investments and cost savings. ¹

¹ City of Berkeley Complete Streets Policy, Resolution NO. 65,978

Benefits of Complete Streets

- ① **Sidewalks** – provide space for people to walk for a variety of purposes including access local businesses and to transit; sidewalks also provide opportunities for extra seating space and signage for neighboring businesses, and generally for social life in the city
- ② **Bulb-outs** – shorten width of roadway that people must walk across and increase safety making people more visible
- ③ **Pedestrian refuge islands** – provides additional safety at intersection and mid-block crossings as people can walk across one half of street at a time
- ④ **Bikeways** – provide designated space for people bicycling on busier streets
- ⑤ **Parking spaces** – manage efficient use to enable repurposing for parklets, landscaping, and bulbouts
- ⑥ **Bicycle parking** – bicycle parking provides a safe and convenient space for people to store their bike at their destination
- ⑦ **Landscaping** – transportation improvements serve as an opportunity for stormwater management, reinforce neighborhood character, and buffer pedestrians from traffic
- ⑧ **Street trees** – provide shade, reduce urban heat island, and reinforce neighborhood character
- ⑨ **Universal design** – wide sidewalks, ramps and crossing design, signals and wayfinding for users of all ages and abilities
- ⑩ **Pedestrian-scaled lighting** – lighting for the safety and security of people walking and taking transit.





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