



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR

November 29, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Liam Garland, Director, Department of Public Works
 Subject: Adeline Street at Ashby BART Conceptual Design

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the Plaza with Two-Lane Adeline option as the conceptual design for a street reconfiguration and new plaza along Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and authorizing the City Manager to direct staff to proceed with the detailed engineering design of the project.

SUMMARY

The Adeline Street at Ashby BART project consists of the redesign of Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way (MLK) in order to increase safety for pedestrians and people bicycling, while also meeting the needs of public transit and emergency vehicles. Features include a narrowing of the street primarily through a reduction in the number of traffic lanes and a new plaza on the west side of Adeline Street. The proposed design concept was based on previously adopted plans, policies, a Council referral, and refined through engagement with the public and stakeholders, including Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) staff and Board Directors, AC Transit staff, the Berkeley Flea Market Board and vendors, and the Ed Roberts Campus management and tenant organizations. Additional community engagement will continue as the high-level conceptual designs for the Adeline Street right-of-way at the Ashby BART are refined.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation has no fiscal impacts.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The project responds in part to a City Council Budget Referral (February 11, 2020) calling for an analysis of “the potential for a major redesign of the section of Adeline St. between MLK Way and Ward St., to improve the public space to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and people living with disabilities, while also meeting the needs of public transit and emergency vehicles.” The Referral requests that a two-lane option that reduces the width of the street be prioritized.

Following the approval of the above-described Referral, Adeline Street was prioritized for safety improvements through the City's planning efforts. It was identified as a high-injury street for severe and fatal traffic crashes in the Berkeley Vision Zero Action Plan, which was adopted in March 2020. Adeline Street south of Ashby Avenue was also identified in the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan (January 2021) as one of the City's top ten street segments recommended for pedestrian safety treatments based primarily on its high rate of severe traffic crashes with pedestrian victims.

Simultaneous to these planning efforts, the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan (ACSP) (December 2020) set goals related to transportation safety, including to improve intersection crossing safety for pedestrians, to provide universal access to improve mobility and safety for persons with disabilities, and to create new bicycle facilities integrated with the City's bicycle network. The ACSP also set a goal to improve transit and connections to transit. For the segment of Adeline between Ashby and MLK, the ACSP maintained the existing number of vehicle travel lanes and identified the west side of Adeline Street next to the Ashby BART station as a public space opportunity and as a future location for a cycle track.

The project also supports future housing development plans for the Ashby BART station by designing future plaza space that could accommodate the needs of the Berkeley Flea Market that currently utilizes the parking lot (west of Adeline Street), as reflected in recently approved zoning and City and BART Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the North Berkeley and Ashby BART Station Areas. Amenities anticipated to be located on the future plaza could include stationary artwork (e.g. a memorial wall to acknowledge the history of the Berkeley Flea Market and the Lorin District), a stage area for events, and a children's play area. Other amenities being considered, which may possibly be provided through the future development of the current western parking lot site, are public restrooms and a storage room for custodial equipment. The MOA establishes a timeline for milestones for the Ashby TOD project that includes "City Council agreement on roadway reconfiguration for Adeline Street" in November 2022.

The proposed conceptual design responds to the Budget Referral and the adopted plans and policies by incorporating pedestrian crossing safety improvements (including converting the intersection of Adeline and MLK into a right-angle intersection), a plaza and southbound protected bikeway (cycle track) along the west of Adeline, and transit priority treatments, as described in further detail below.

Project Description

This project focuses on right-of-way options for the segment of Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. It is related to other planning efforts for the entire length of Adeline Street in Berkeley ("the Adeline Corridor") and for mixed-use development on surface parking lots at Ashby BART Station.

The goals developed through and for the Adeline Street at Ashby BART project are as follows:

- **Enhance safety for all users** through management of vehicle speeds, reduced crossing distances for pedestrians, and provision of a separated bicycle facility along the entire segment
- **Increase public space** by expanding sidewalk widths and exploring the potential of a new permanent location for the Berkeley Flea Market, which may be relocated as a result of future development at the Ashby BART station.
- **Support bus transit operations** by incorporating designs that increase safety for bus riders, facilitate bus and shuttle operations, improve passenger connections to BART, and reduce potential bus-bike conflicts.
- **Accommodate passenger and freight loading** for businesses along the corridor, including Berkeley Bowl and Ed Roberts Campus.
- **Implement inclusive engagement practices** and coordinate public outreach across ongoing projects within the study area to reach a larger and broader audience and provide multiple opportunities for meaningful interactions

Conceptual Design Options

As shown in Attachments 1 and 2, two conceptual design options (Options 1: Linear Plaza, Two Vehicle Travel Lanes and Dedicated Bus Lanes, and Option 2: Linear Plaza, Two Vehicle Travel Lanes with Bus Queue Jump Only) were developed for the Adeline Street at Ashby BART project based on prior adopted plans, new outreach and engagement efforts with institutional stakeholders, and public input. Each of these design options has an optional expanded plaza at the south end, pending the identification of funding for the podium that would need to be constructed to accommodate this expanded plaza.

Option 1 – Plaza with Adeline Bus Lanes

- Approximately 40,000 square feet of plaza space on the west side of Adeline
- Reduction in number of general purpose traffic lanes on Adeline from four (two each direction) to two (one each direction)
- Dedicated northbound and southbound bus lanes, with the southbound bus lane utilized as a parking lane on weekends for vendor and customer access to the plaza
- Southbound protected bikeway in the form of a raised path on the east side of the plaza
- Currently skewed intersection of Adeline/MLK converted to a right-angle intersection
- Option: plaza expanded westward near its south end over a podium, depending on funding availability – approximately 52,000 square feet of plaza

Option 2 – Plaza with Two-Lane Adeline

- Approximately 53,000 square feet of plaza space on the west side of Adeline
- Reduction in number of general purpose traffic lanes on Adeline from four (two each direction) to two (one each direction)
- Transit queue jump lane on Adeline southbound approaching the Ashby intersection in order to prioritize bus travel and reduce bus delay through the narrowed segment of Adeline between Ashby and MLK (traffic analysis found no delay northbound so this is only recommended southbound)
- Southbound protected bikeway in the form of a raised path on the east side of the plaza
- Currently skewed intersection of Adeline/MLK converted to a right-angle intersection
- Option: plaza expanded westward near its south end over a podium, depending on funding availability – approximately 65,000 square feet of plaza

Traffic Analysis Results

The traffic analysis completed for the project initially showed that the proposed reduction in the number of traffic lanes from four to two (from two lanes each direction to one lane each direction) would increase traffic delay in the PM peak period at the Adeline/Ashby intersection by nearly one minute southbound and nearly thirty seconds northbound, and at the Adeline/MLK intersection by less than ten seconds making the left turn from Adeline onto MLK southbound, with no change in the delay for the right turn to continue on Adeline northbound. This initial analysis assumed no change in the signal timing. By optimizing the signal timing, however, the delay in the PM peak period caused by the traffic lane reduction was lowered at the Adeline/Ashby intersection to less than ten seconds northbound, with no additional delay southbound. This signal timing optimization also eliminated the delay at the Adeline/MLK intersection for traffic making the left turn from Adeline onto MLK southbound and making the right turn to continue on Adeline northbound. The dedicated bus lanes in Option 1 and the dedicated southbound intersection queue jump lane in Option 2 would further reduce delay for transit.

BACKGROUND

Adeline Street historically carried Key System interurban streetcars that connected downtown Berkeley with Oakland, Emeryville and, by way of ferries and later the Bay Bridge, San Francisco. The project area was known historically as the Lorin District and was part of a string of streetcar suburbs. The Key System rail service on Adeline ended in 1958, at which time it was replaced by bus service. In 1970, several blocks of residential and commercial buildings, including along the west side of Adeline between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way (then called Grove Street), were demolished to build the Ashby BART station and parking lots. Adeline Street was widened in the process. In addition to the high toll on the neighborhood caused by the displacement of long-time residents and families, these changes had the effect of

making Adeline Street more challenging to cross on foot and by bike, and likely increased motor traffic speeds.

The ACSP responded to these challenges by setting goals to improve safety for people walking and biking along and across Adeline Street and by calling for specific safety treatments, as described above. The Adeline at Ashby BART project further develops these plans for safety treatments.

Public Engagement

City staff, in coordination with BART staff, engaged in an extensive stakeholder engagement process. This included meeting with the Berkeley Flea Market Board and vendors, AC Transit staff, and Ed Roberts Campus management and tenant organizations. City and BART staff conducted multiple weekend site visits at the Berkeley Flea Market to engage with vendors, including hosting an information table on September 17, 2022, at which a vendor survey was administered. In addition, City staff met with the Berkeley Flea Market Board to get their input about the project on several occasions between January and August 2022, and held an in-person vendor meeting to receive their input on September 28, 2022. Following this engagement, the City received extensive public input through a well-attended public meeting with over 120 attendees held on October 3, 2022. Option 2 was by far the preferred option among attendees. Some attendees expressed concern that traffic would divert onto MLK northbound as a result of the project. However, the proposed signal timing would keep Adeline competitive with MLK as a route such that there is not anticipated to be a time-savings advantage to diverting onto MLK, which would be an inducement for drivers *not* to divert onto MLK.

The conceptual design options for the project were presented to the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission on October 20, 2022. It was motioned and seconded (Walton/Greenberg) as follows: “The Transportation and Infrastructure Commission recommends to Council moving forward with option 2. We would like the following four items to also be considered:

1. Creating accessible pedestrian and wheelchair access from the plaza to the BART station entrance on the western edge of the Adeline plaza with 24/7 access and that does not solely rely on functional elevators;
2. Continuing efforts to realize the vision in the Adeline corridor plan for shopfronts in the new development to meet the western edge of the Adeline plaza to ensure activation of the plaza through business and community activity;
3. Continuing to investigate all possible solutions to increase safety, possibly by reducing crossing distances and eliminating slip turn lanes, at the Adeline/Ashby intersection as it will potentially be considered with Reconnecting Communities grant along Ashby; and
4. Looking for additional grant opportunities, such as Safe Routes to Transit, to improve pedestrian access to the station from the surrounding areas.”

The motion passed six to zero. Note that the Reconnecting Communities grant and Safe Routes to Transit grants referenced in the language of the Motion are a new federal funding program administered by the United States Department of Transportation and a regional funding program administered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, respectively. The City has applied for a Reconnecting Communities grant to fund a study and conceptual design to improve the safety of intersections and pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular crossings along Ashby Avenue from Telegraph Avenue to San Pablo Avenue. Awards are anticipated to be announced early in 2023.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Installation of a protected bikeway and improved pedestrian crossings are anticipated to increase walking and biking, which is consistent with the 2009 Berkeley Climate Action Plan Policy that calls for expanding and improving Berkeley's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The 2009 Berkeley Climate Action 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 in order to meet these targets.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the conceptual design will allow the City to continue to work with BART on plans to develop housing, including affordable housing, on the current site of the Ashby BART station western parking lot by identifying a potential future location to accommodate the Berkeley Flea Market that currently uses the station parking lot. This action will also keep the project on track to compete for capital grant funding for detailed design and construction of the plaza and street reconfiguration.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Council could decide not to approve the conceptual design for the project or could opt to approve the proposed design concept for only a subset of project segments.

CONTACT PERSON

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Beth Thomas, Principal Planner, Public Works (510) 981-7068

Attachments:

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: Adeline Street at Ashby BART Design Concept: Plaza with Two-Lane Adeline

2: Other Conceptual Design Option Considered: Plaza with Adeline Bus Lanes

3: Adeline Street at Ashby BART Preliminary Conceptual Designs: Summary of Community Meeting (10/3/22) and Office Hours (10/6/22)

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

ADELINE AT ASHBY BART CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

WHEREAS, the project corridor includes Adeline Street from Ashby Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Way; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Vision Zero Action Plan has documented severe and fatal crashes on Adeline Street; and the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan has identified Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Stanford Avenue as one of the top ten street segments in Berkeley in need of pedestrian safety treatments; and

WHEREAS, the City has zoned for housing on the current site of the Ashby BART station western parking lot currently used by the Berkeley Flea Market, creating the need for a new public plaza that could accommodate the Berkeley Flea Market and other public uses; and

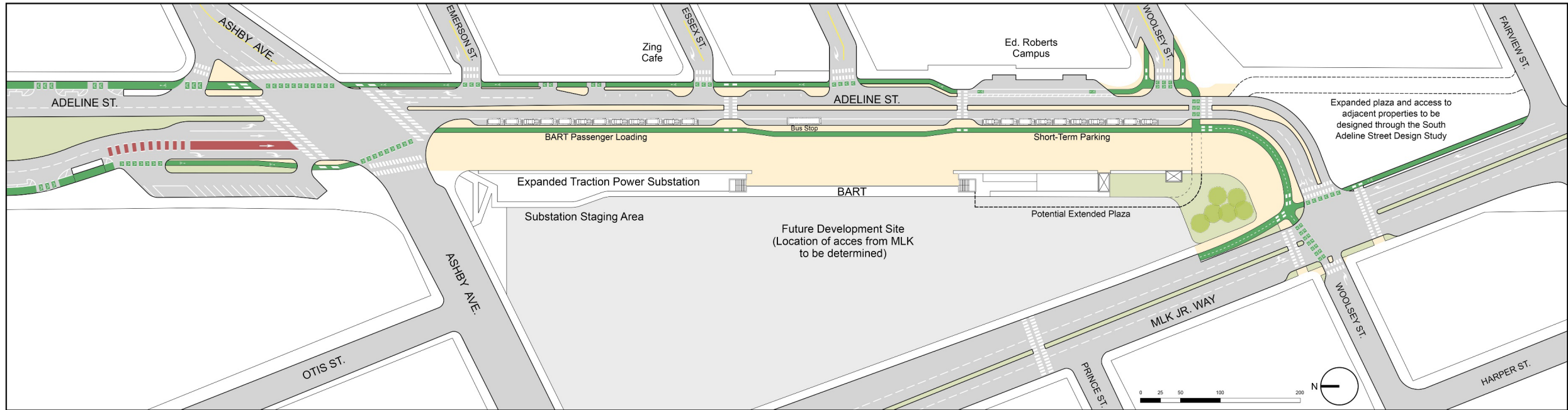
WHEREAS, with the support of a design consultant team, City staff have identified conceptual design options for the project corridor; sought public input on and analyzed those conceptual design options; and have selected a recommended conceptual design for consideration by the Berkeley City Council; and

WHEREAS, the recommended design includes a public plaza and physically protected bikeway on the west side of Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, in addition to pedestrian safety features, as shown in Exhibit 1 to this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, approval of the Adeline at Ashby BART Project recommended conceptual design will keep the project on schedule to compete for capital grants for detailed design and construction by 2025.

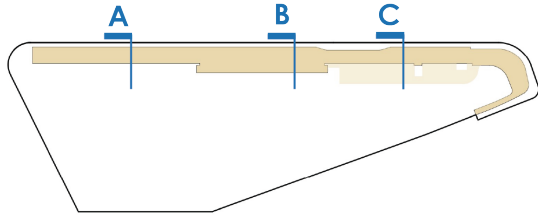
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to direct staff to proceed with the preliminary engineering and detailed engineering design of the Adeline at Ashby BART Project, based on the recommended conceptual design with Two-Lane Adeline option as the conceptual design for a street reconfiguration and new plaza along Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, pending identification of funding.

Adeline Street at Ashby BART Design Concept: Plaza with Two-Lane Adeline (Layout View)

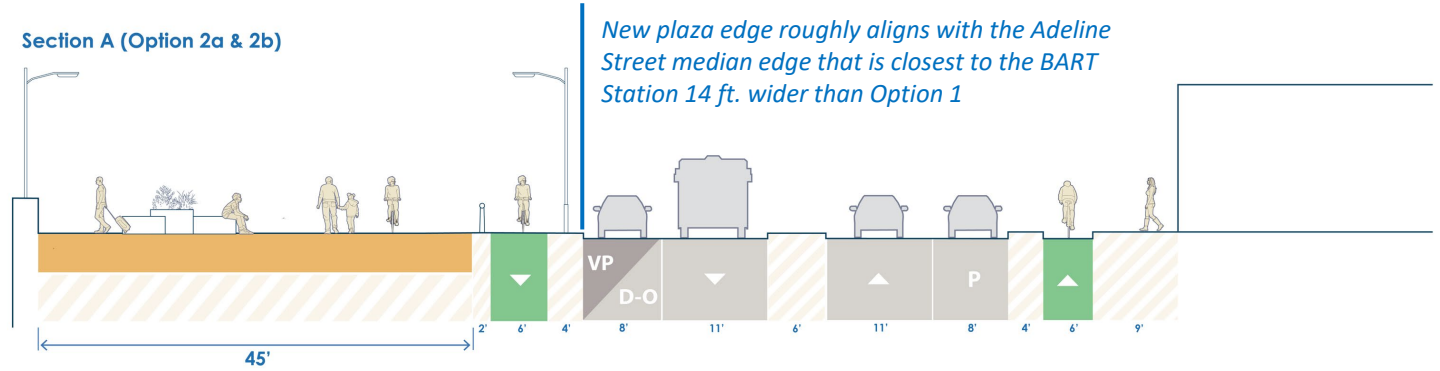


Adeline Street at Ashby BART Design Concept: Plaza with Two-Lane Adeline (Cross-Section View)

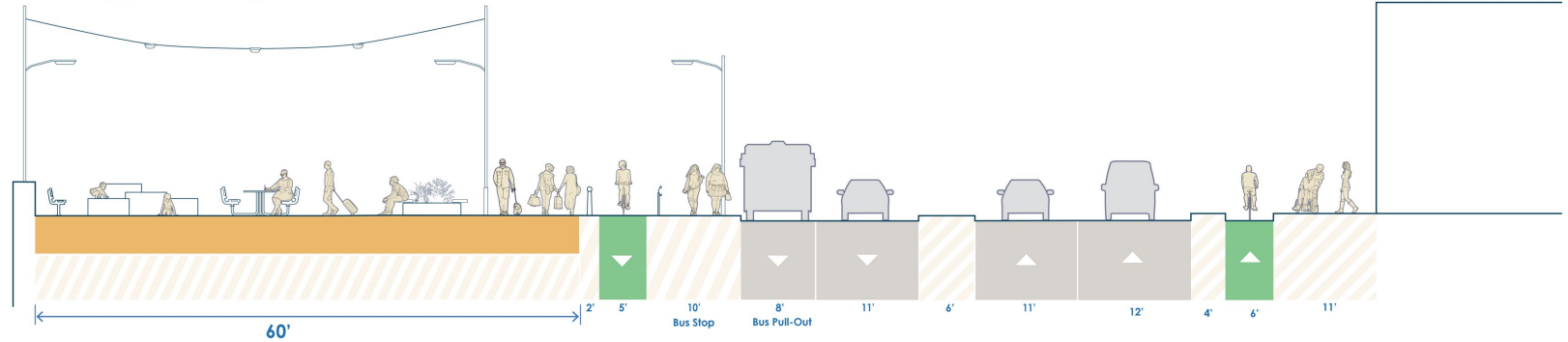
-  Plaza
-  Bike Zone
-  Weekend Vendor Parking/
Weekday Bus Lane
-  Buffer/Plaza/Sidewalk



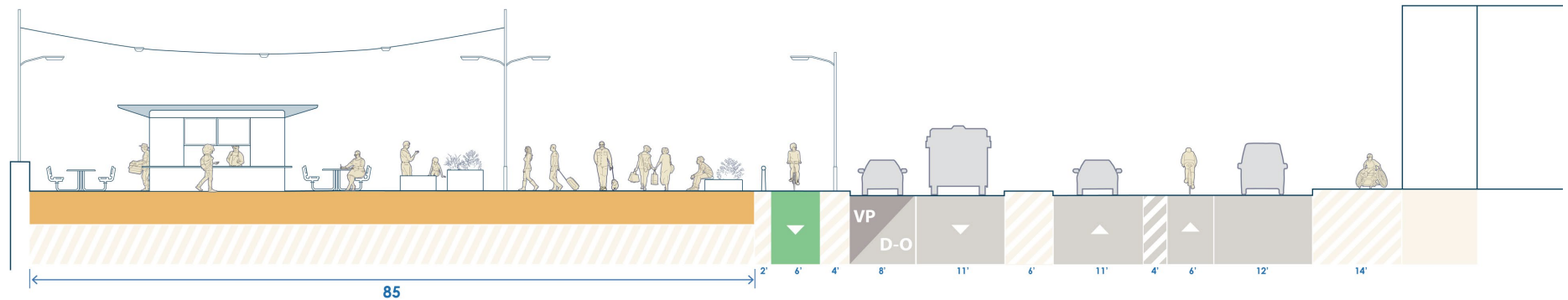
Section A (Option 2a & 2b)



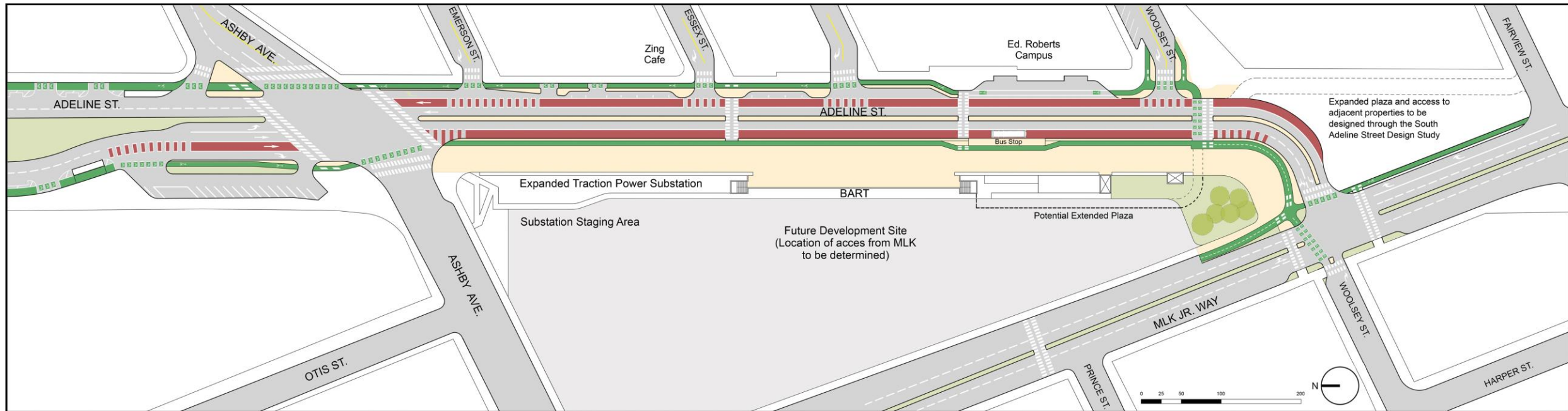
Section B (Option 2a & 2b)



Section C (Option 2b)



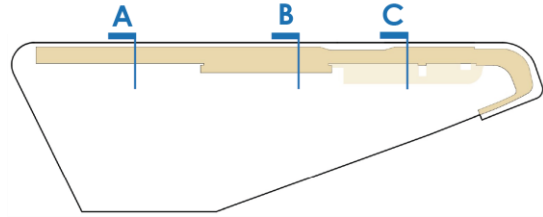
Other Conceptual Design Option Considered: Plaza with Adeline Bus Lanes (Layout View)



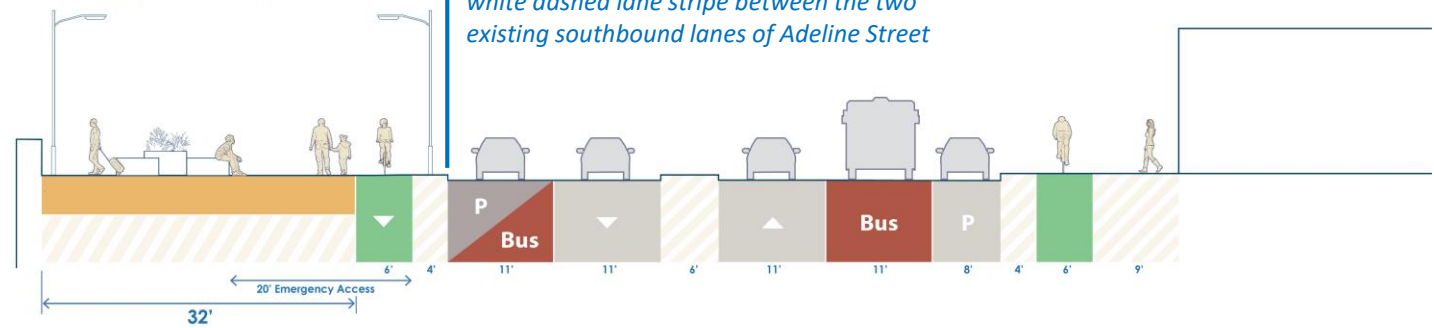
- Legend**
- Protected Bikeway
 - Bus-Only Lane

Other Conceptual Design Option Considered: Plaza with Adeline Bus Lanes (Cross-section View)

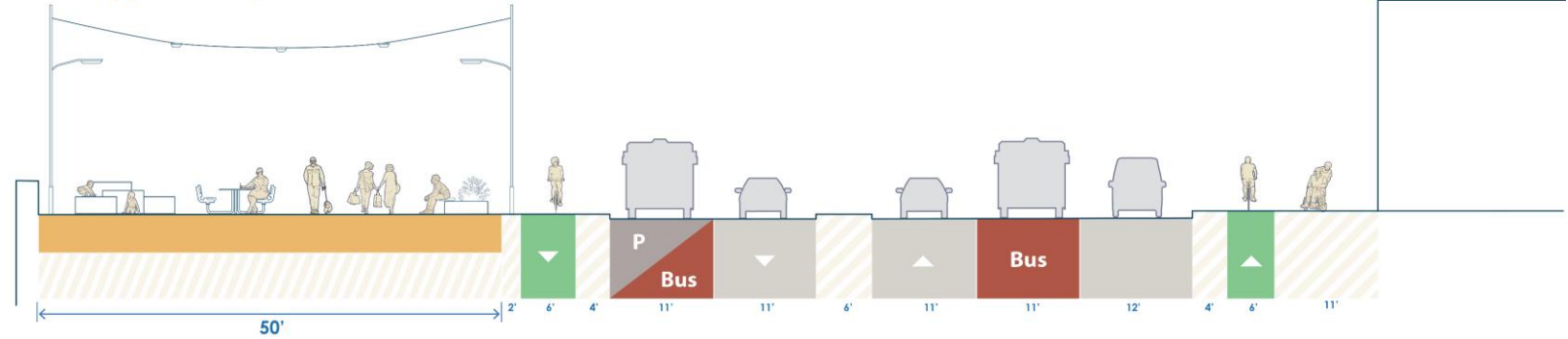
- Plaza
- Bike Zone
- Weekend Vendor Parking/
Weekday Bus Lane
- Buffer/Plaza/Sidewalk



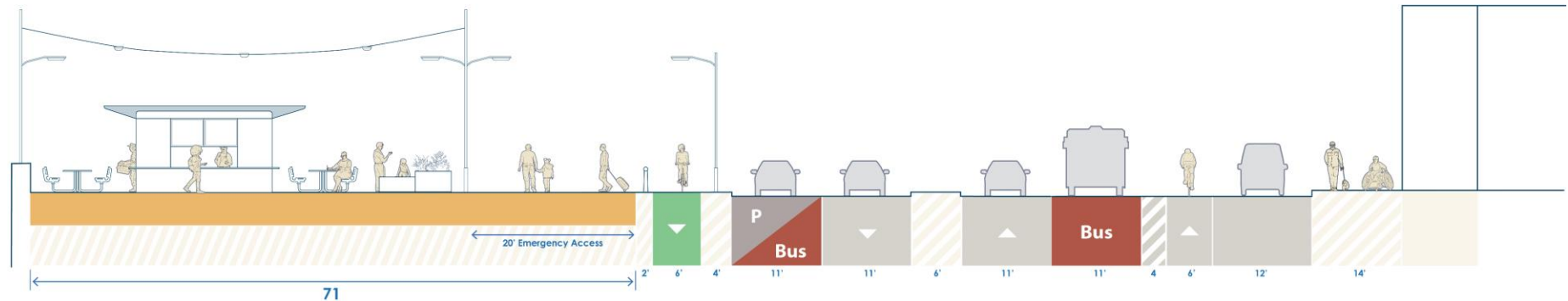
Section A (Option 1a & 1b)



Section B (Option 1a & 1b)



Section C (Option 1b)



**Adeline Street at Ashby BART Preliminary Conceptual Designs:
Summary of Community Meeting (10/3/22) and Office Hours (10/6/22)**

Dates and Times: October 3, 2022 at 6pm / October 6, 2022 at 6pm

Location: Online via Zoom video and phone platform

Agenda

1. Welcome & Meeting Goals

- City of Berkeley Councilmember Ben Bartlett and BART Board Director Lateefah Simon gave introductory remarks.

2. Presentation

- Project Context
- Where we are in the Process
- Overview of Adeline Street Redesign Options

3. Comments and Questions

Attendance

City

- District 3 Councilmember Ben Bartlett
- Alisa Shen – Principal Planner
- Beth Thomas – Principal Planner
- Robert Rivera – Senior Planner

BART

- Lateefah Simon – BART Board of Director
- Deb Castles - Acting Transit-Oriented Development Group Manager
- Rachel Factor – Principal Planner

Community Design + Architecture (Consultant)

- Phil Erickson - Principal
- Anai Perez – Urban Designer

Summary

The City of Berkeley in conjunction with BART held two community meetings, a Zoom meeting and office hours, for the Adeline Street at Ashby BART Preliminary Conceptual Design project to inform the community and obtain their feedback on the new proposals. Staff sent out postcard notifications to residents along the Adeline Street and presented an overview of two options that would be presented to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Berkeley City Council. Due to capacity restrictions

because of the Covid pandemic, both meetings were held virtually. Significant portions of the meetings allowed for public comments and questions.

The following notes summarize the community input from both meetings listed above and categorizes their feedback by main topics.

1. Accessibility issues for people with disabilities

- Involve people with disabilities and East Bay Center for the Blind in the design process.
- Consider how the issue of pedestrian crossings, parking and the use of micro mobility devices for people with disabilities will work.
- Bike lanes are also used by people with adaptive bikes and wheelchairs, consider the necessary width and speed limits for bicyclist.
- Write an accessible presentation with verbal explanation.

2. Vehicle accessibility

- Lack of left turns from Essex and other eastside streets would increase traffic on Ashby/Adeline and Ashby/Shattuck.
- New apartment building at Emerson/Adeline is going to dump a lot of traffic into Emerson St.
- Redistribution of traffic to MLK Jr. Way and other surrounding streets.
- Consider drop off and parking for seniors and people with mobility issues (Ed Roberts Campus).

3. Pedestrian safety/accessibility

- Consider pedestrian push buttons on the west side of Adeline (Ed Roberts Campus - ERC).
- Bulb out at Essex.
- Increase safety at Adeline/Ashby intersection (right turns and right slip lane).
- Wider sidewalks on the east side of Adeline to the north of ERC.
- Consider traffic signals at crosswalks.
- Increase safety on BART entrances at nights.

4. Bicyclist safety/accessibility and bicycle lane treatments

- Add protected bike lanes on the east side Adeline.
- Consider traffic issues between pedestrians, buses/cars and bicyclists.
- Possibility of having a bidirectional bike lane on one side.
- Improve safety for bicyclist crossing Adeline and Ashby intersection.

5. Parking/passenger loading zones

- Consider diagonal parking with flexible use.
- Parking and drop off on the BART side should only be short term/drop off.

- Concern about no southbound left (U-turns) restricting access to east side parking and loading zones for seniors and people with disabilities.

6. Affecting surrounding area, particularly about Martin Luther King Jr. Way

- Consider the entire block (triangle) and North Ashby area.
- Opportunity to improve safety and reduce traffic at Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
- Redirection of traffic to Martin Luther King Jr. Way will impact neighborhood residents and merchants.
- Design opportunity at corner of Adeline/Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
- “Potential future plaza” location (to the south and east of Adeline/Martin Luther King Jr. Way intersection) is called “African Plaza”.

7. New Plaza and uses

- Plaza should become a destination and not only focused on the Flea Market.
- Design space to connect new facilities and surrounding neighborhoods (new residents and BART development).
- Consider ground floor retail, permanent stalls/kiosks for microenterprises, green grocers, farmer markets, etc.
- Needs to have a children's park, covered areas and landscaped areas.

8. Open space, landscape, environment

- Neighborhood needs more open spaces and dog-friendly spaces.
- Ohlone greenway should be used as a reference (landscape and planting).
- Discuss air quality of the future development in the broader area.
- Plaza should incorporate benches, plantings, trees, water refill stations.
- More landscape, and shade from trees.

9. Berkeley Flea Market

- Comparison of vendor space at the Flea Market [existing parking lot and future plaza] seems not accurate.
- Legal guarantees that the Flea Market has a permanent place in the future plaza.

10. Option 1

- Dedicated bus lanes will create sight line problems.
- The F bus frequency has been reduced so it doesn't justify the dedicated bus lanes, not enough demand.
- Focus on improving efficiency for the 12 bus service, not the F.
- Delay/travel time difference between option 1 and 2?
- Dedicated bus lane will be used predominantly by private tech buses.

11. Option 2

- Preferred option by several speakers.
- Concerns about how a single lane will work for emergency vehicles and buses pull in and pull out.
- “Test drive” the narrowing and see how it works before its construction.
- Concern about redirection of traffic to Martin Luther King Jr. Way and other adjacent streets.

12. BART

- More information about affordable housing (TOD)
- BART Traction Power gap/ substation should be underground, need to cover up all that critical infrastructure.
- Pedestrian accessibility issues to the station.
- Concern about the gap between the new development and the plaza.

