

EBOTS

Emeryville-Berkeley-Oakland
Transit Study

EBOTS Phase 1 Outreach Summary

Introduction

Between August 2013 and November 2013, the Emeryville-Berkeley-Oakland Transit Study (EBOTS) project team conducted a variety of outreach activities to inform stakeholders and the public about the project, and to solicit input on future visions for transit in the study area. The outreach effort was part of Phase 1 of EBOTS, which sought to identify both opportunities and constraints associated with improving transit service in the study corridor.

The outreach activities conducted included three community workshops held across the study area (one in each city) and a bilingual questionnaire used to collect information regarding how individuals travel within the study area (i.e., travel method) and to gather feedback on potential transit improvements. Over 820 questionnaires were collected from the public including current transit riders, residents, employers and employees in the study area.

This report summarizes the EBOTS outreach efforts and results in five sections:

- I. Public Outreach Activities**
- II. Community Workshop Format**
- III. Key Findings from Community Workshops**
- IV. Community Questionnaire Results**
- V. Next Steps**

I. Public Outreach Activities

The public outreach strategy assisted the partner cities including Emeryville, Berkeley, and Oakland and partner agencies (AC Transit, Amtrak/ Capital Corridor, BART, Berkeley Gateway Transportation Management Association and the Emery-Go-Round) with engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders in the transit study. Specifically, the objectives of the public process were to inform and collect input from the public on transit services and improvements within the study area.

MIG, the public engagement consultant, conducted a robust outreach effort to publicize the community workshops and the questionnaire including targeted postcard and flyer distribution, e-blasts, news media articles, and phone calls to key Emeryville- Berkeley-Oakland partners such as community-based organizations, local churches and established civic groups. MIG publicized the outreach activities in both Spanish and English.

To promote the community workshops and questionnaire, MIG used the following outreach channels:

- City of Emeryville website
- Communications via Facebook and Twitter
- Regular newsletters distributed through the partner cities and partner agencies
- Targeted communications with local media outlets (e.g., BerkeleySide, Oakland Local)
- Information distribution through elected officials (e.g., City Council)
- Partnerships with community-based organizations and local businesses
- Intercept questionnaires at and near transit hubs
- Bilingual postcards to stakeholders within the study area
- Bilingual flyers posted at and near transit hubs

The bilingual outreach flyer is included in Appendix A at the end of this summary.

II. Community Workshop Format

For the first phase of EBOTS outreach, the community workshops were designed to present information on the EBOTS study and why it's being done, as well as to collect public feedback on the identification and definition of transit options. The table below lists the EBOTS community workshops including details on activities and attendance.

Event	Activities	Attendance
West Oakland Workshop November 7, 2013 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm West Oakland Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House gallery walk of presentation boards • Map-based exercise • Small group discussions with participants • Questionnaires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 participants
West Berkeley Workshop November 9, 2013 11:00 am - 1:00 pm James Kenney Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House gallery walk of presentation boards • Map-based exercise • Small group discussions with participants • Questionnaires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 participants
Emeryville Workshop November 12, 2013 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Emery Unified School District Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House gallery walk of presentation boards • Map-based exercise • Small group discussions with participants • Questionnaires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 participants

During the workshops, participants were invited to walk around the meeting venue in an Open House style gallery walk to view the presentation boards. The presentation boards provided an overview of the EBOTS project, including the vision for the study corridor, population and demographics within the study area, transit services within the study area, as well as potential transit improvements and technologies.

The workshops also featured an interactive mapping exercise in which participants were asked to place a pin on the map of a starting point and ending point of a transit trip that they already make or would like to make. The participants then used string to connect the two points.

Following the gallery walk, participants were divided into small groups facilitated by members of the EBOTS project team. Participants were asked a standard set of questions, including the following:

- What are the locations within the study area that are difficult to access using transit?
- What types of transit improvements would help you travel within the study area without a car?
- What types of transit improvements would you like to see made in the next 1 to 3 years within the study area?
- What type of long-term transit improvements do you think are needed in the next 10 years within the study area? Consider acceptable financing and taxes to pay for improvements.
- Consider bus rapid transit or streetcar on local streets. What trade-offs would be acceptable to accommodate these modes, including potentially removing travel lanes or removing on-street parking?

III. Key Findings from Community Workshops

The following themes emerged most frequently across input gathered from the small group discussions. Based on the close relationship between the questions, there is some overlap in the responses. The overlap reinforces the synergy between the needs, solutions and opportunities identified to improve transit in the study area.

Difficult Locations to Access Using Transit in the Study Area

- Berkeley Marina
- West Oakland BART station
- Berkeley Bowl West
- Fourth Street in Berkeley
- Frontage Road
- Shopping and entertainment venues in Emeryville

- Anywhere at night (limited transit service in the evening)
- Jack London Square
- Oakland Army Base
- Waterfront areas
- Grocery stores (e.g., Pak N Save)
- Mandela Parkway

Transit Improvements in the Study Area

- More evening and late night transit service
- More weekend transit service
- Better connections to West Oakland BART station
- More local, neighborhood-level circulators
- Emery-Go-Round service in West Oakland
- Next bus information at bus stops
- Demand-response transit service
- Expansion of paratransit service
- Better schedule reliability
- Improved last mile connectivity
- Improved connections to Emeryville shopping center
- Better lighting at bus stops
- Improvements to transit vehicles (e.g., wider aisles, low floors for boarding)
- More North/South transit routes
- More East/West transit routes
- Increased safety measures for transit riders
- More AC Transit connections to Emeryville
- Improved bikeability within the study corridor

Short-term Transit Improvements (1-3 years)

- Schedule reliability and predictability
- Next bus information at bus stops
- Better coordination among the local transit agencies
- Increased safety measures for transit riders
- Expansion of Emery-Go-Round service in West Oakland
- More transit connections to Emeryville
- Transit to support development in West Oakland
- More night and weekend transit service
- Ferry service to Jack London Square and San Francisco
- Improved bikeability within the study corridor (e.g., along West Grand and Market Street)
- Development of “complete networks” rather than “complete streets”
- Bikesharing programs

Long-term Transit Improvements (8-10 years)

- Streetcars to improve local circulation (e.g., San Pablo Avenue)
- Non-polluting transit vehicles
- Coordinated ferry service
- Water taxi service
- Bus Rapid Transit on San Pablo
- Bike connections from Emeryville to Bay Bridge
- Buffered bike lanes on San Pablo
- Land use planning tied closely to transit planning
- Thoughtful parking policies that support alternative transit modes
- Wi-Fi on local buses

Acceptable Transit Trade-offs

- Bus Rapid Transit on San Pablo
- Removal of on-street parking for buses and bikes (e.g., Hollis Street)
- Removal of travel lanes on certain streets (e.g., Mandela and Adeline)
- One-way streets with angled parking
- Parking removal negotiations with business owners
- Residents pay for expanded Emery-Go-Round service

IV. Community Questionnaire Results

A community questionnaire, developed in collaboration with members of the EBOTS Technical Advisory Committee, was used to collect information regarding how individuals travel within the study area and to gather public input on desired transit improvements.

Approximately 827 questionnaires were collected from members of the public including current transit riders, residents, employers and employees in the study area. The questionnaire was closed on November 22, 2013. The key findings from the questionnaires will be available in December 2013.

V. Next Steps

During the second phase of outreach in May 2014, the community workshops will focus on the evaluation of transit options and the level of community acceptance for the options.