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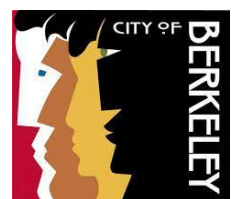
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San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

Public Review Draft – October 28, 2025



City of Berkeley

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

Plan Acknowledgment

This section will be made to include specific names, organizations, and contributors prior to final publication.

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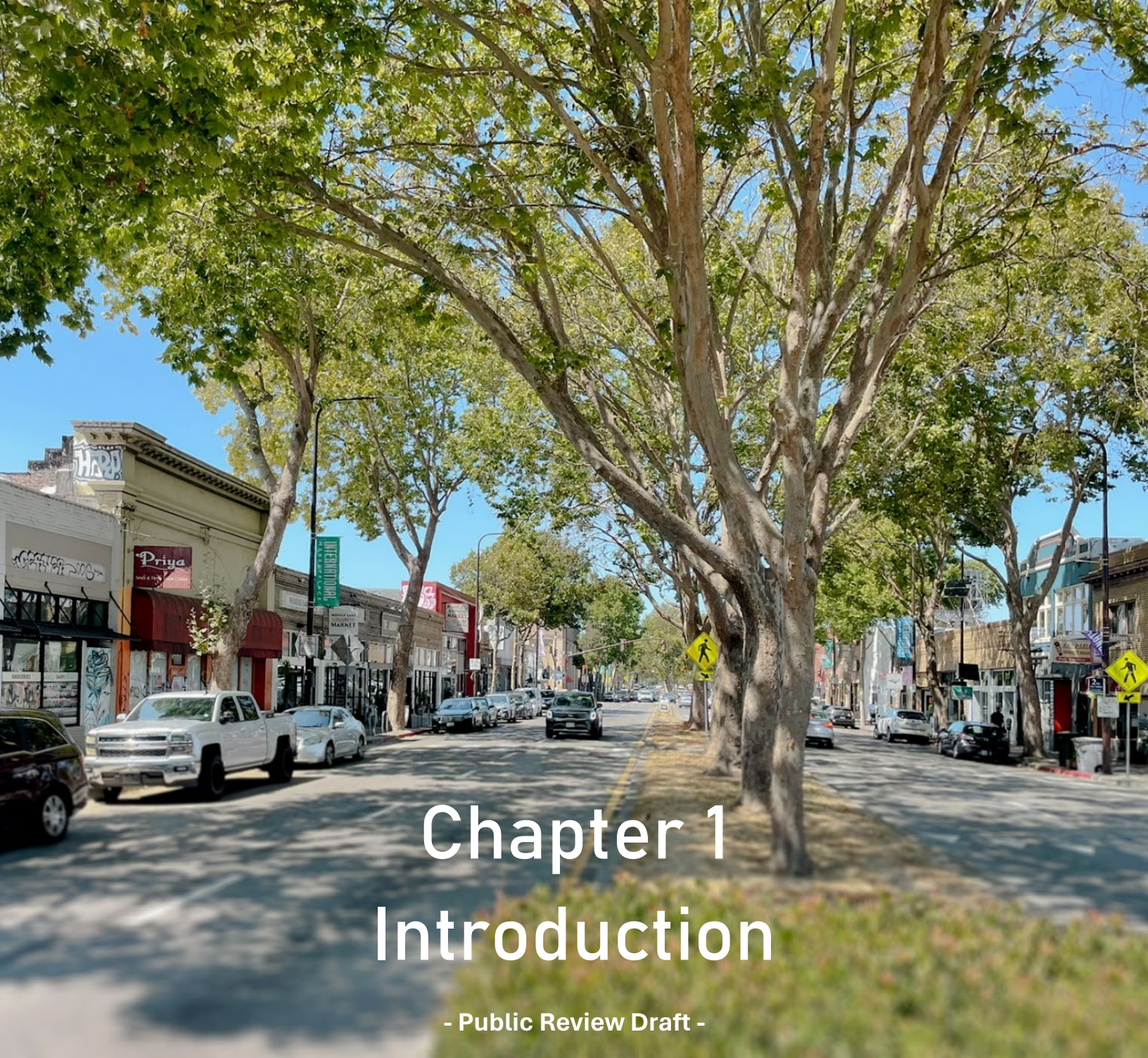
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Chapter 1 Introduction

- Public Review Draft -

San Pablo Avenue is a corridor in transition, shaped by growing demand for housing and fluctuating levels of commercial activity as new businesses open and others close. Existing zoning and State housing laws support additional housing development, but there is no cohesive vision to shape future growth toward a mixed-use district with stronger economic and social vitality.

In 2023, the City of Berkeley launched the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan process to create a framework for equitable and sustainable development, safer streets, better access to the surrounding community, and a more vibrant economy and public realm. Building on City Council direction from 2015, the Specific Plan planning process prioritized inclusive engagement, with targeted outreach to those who live and work in and around the Specific Plan Area (the Plan Area) and multiple opportunities for the public to participate and shape the plan.

Plan Purpose

The Specific Plan responds to the question: “*What will the future of San Pablo Avenue look like?*” Its purpose is to establish community-based, context-sensitive regulations and policies that articulate a shared vision for a mixed-use district along San Pablo Avenue. Through the planning process, the City, in collaboration with the consultant team and the community, identified improvements and innovative programs that expand opportunities for living, working, shopping, and community life along San Pablo Avenue.

In February 2021, the City of Berkeley received a Priority Development Area (PDA) Planning Grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to create the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan establishes a comprehensive framework of land use, public space, transportation, and economic development policies and strategies, including revised standards for allowed uses in existing and new buildings, updated development intensities, and design standards for new development. It also outlines programs and policies to support diverse housing options, strengthen new and existing businesses, enhance public amenities, and improve connections between the Specific Plan Area and surrounding neighborhoods and destinations.

Mutual knowledge exchange

The Specific Plan planning process facilitated meaningful knowledge exchange between the community and the Specific Plan team:

- Stakeholders gained an understanding of how recent changes in Citywide policies and State housing legislation have affected the housing development approvals process. The Specific Plan public engagement focused on where the community’s input can be meaningful in the context of streamlined project approvals.
- Stakeholders identified current community assets and expressed their vision for enhancing them, as well as their aspirations for other positive changes along San Pablo Avenue.
- Stakeholder input provided insight into the unique aspects of the community and their ideas for the future. This informed Specific Plan policies and standards, the land use map, implementation, strategies, and many other aspects of the Plan.

Desired outcomes of the planning process

The San Pablo Specific Plan:

- Identifies a community vision and provides a plan for achieving the vision.
- Includes a framework for transforming San Pablo Avenue into a multimodal street that functions well for all users, not just as a thoroughfare, but as a mixed-use place that provides a multitude of opportunities for living, working and taking part in community life.
- Explains, updates and creates new local planning policies, development standards and practices, and highlights their interrelationship, relevancy, and adherence with State, regional, and Citywide planning policies and processes.
- Includes implementation strategies with clear actions and responsibilities.
- Prioritizes equity, promotes inclusivity, and strives to eliminate disparities through the Plan’s policies, programs, and implementation strategies.

Specific Plan Area

Location

San Pablo Avenue is one of the primary multi-jurisdictional transportation corridors in northern Alameda County and west Contra Costa County, extending as a major street from the Carquinez Bridge to Downtown Oakland, through the cities of Hercules, Pinole, San Pablo, Richmond, El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville and Oakland. The Specific Plan Boundary (Specific Plan Area) encompasses the 2.35-mile corridor along San Pablo Avenue, from the Berkeley/Albany border in the north to the Berkeley/Oakland border in the south.



Figure 1.1 San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley and adjacent cities. Source: Google Earth

Definition of the Specific Plan Area

Study Area

The Study Area includes the neighborhoods, commercial districts, and employment areas that are proximate to and have a strong relationship with the uses along San Pablo Avenue. The Study Area extends from the I-80 freeway in the west to Sacramento Street in the east and from the Albany border in the north to Emeryville and Oakland borders in the south (see Figure 1.2). The Study Area has been studied in select analyses throughout the Specific Plan process to gain an understanding of the social and economic relationships between San Pablo Avenue and West Berkeley, to identify historic and culturally significant locations in proximity to San Pablo Avenue, and to identify parks, open spaces, and other community assets that can be used by people living and working in the Specific Plan Area.

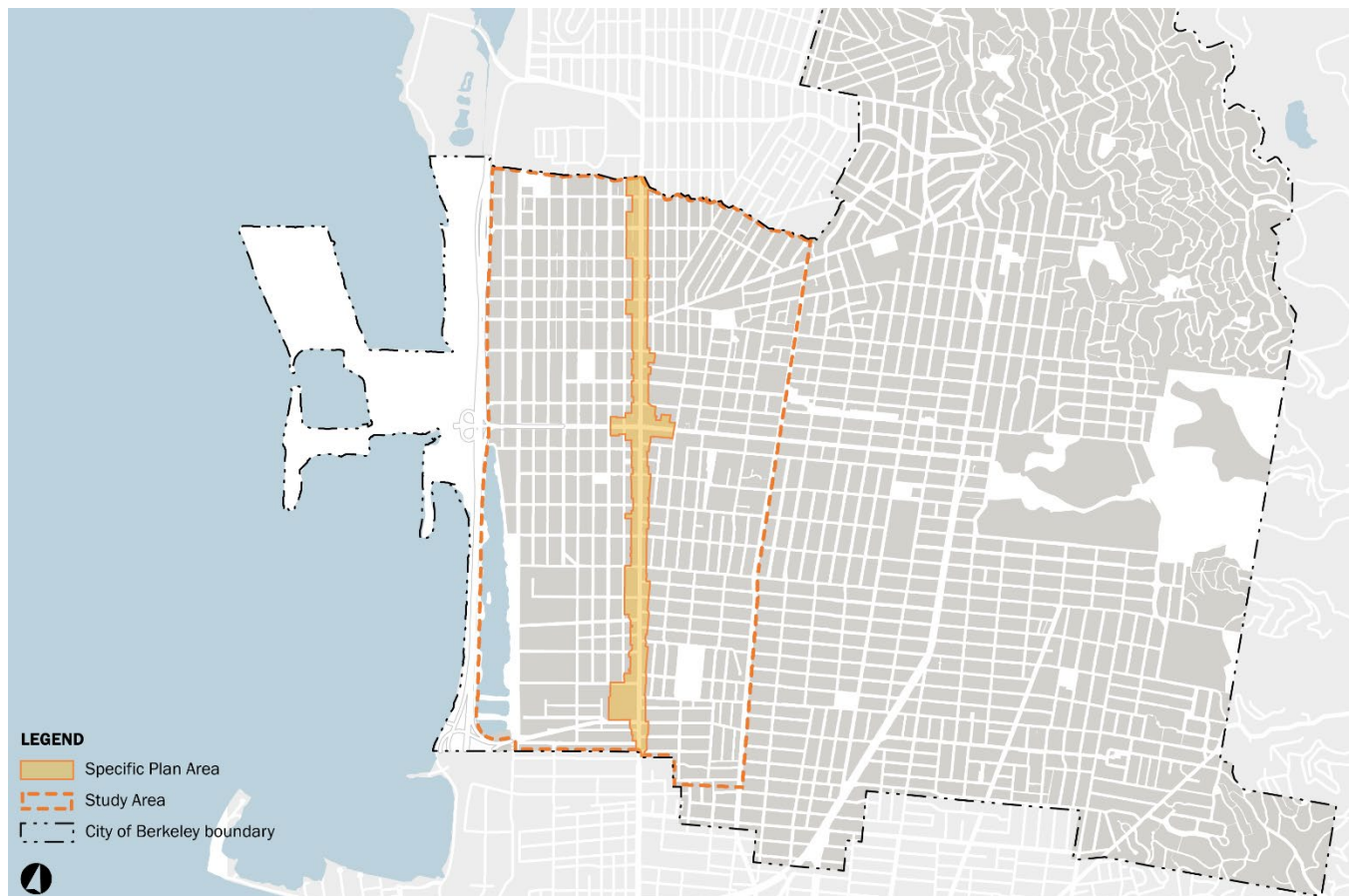


Figure 1.2 Map of Study Area in relation to the City of Berkeley. Source: City of Berkeley

Specific Plan Area

Definition of the Specific Plan Area was informed by the Plan Bay Area 2050 (2021) Priority Development Area (PDA) (see *Regulatory Context* below for more information). The Plan Area is comprised of individual parcels for which the Plan's policies, standards, and implementation actions will apply. These parcels primarily front onto San Pablo Avenue, as well as some adjacent parcels on side-streets and other adjacent areas that have the potential to support new housing and mixed-use development at a similar scale (see **Chapter 3 Land Use** for more detail). Along University Avenue, the area covers parcels between Ninth Street and Curtis Street (see Figure 1.3).

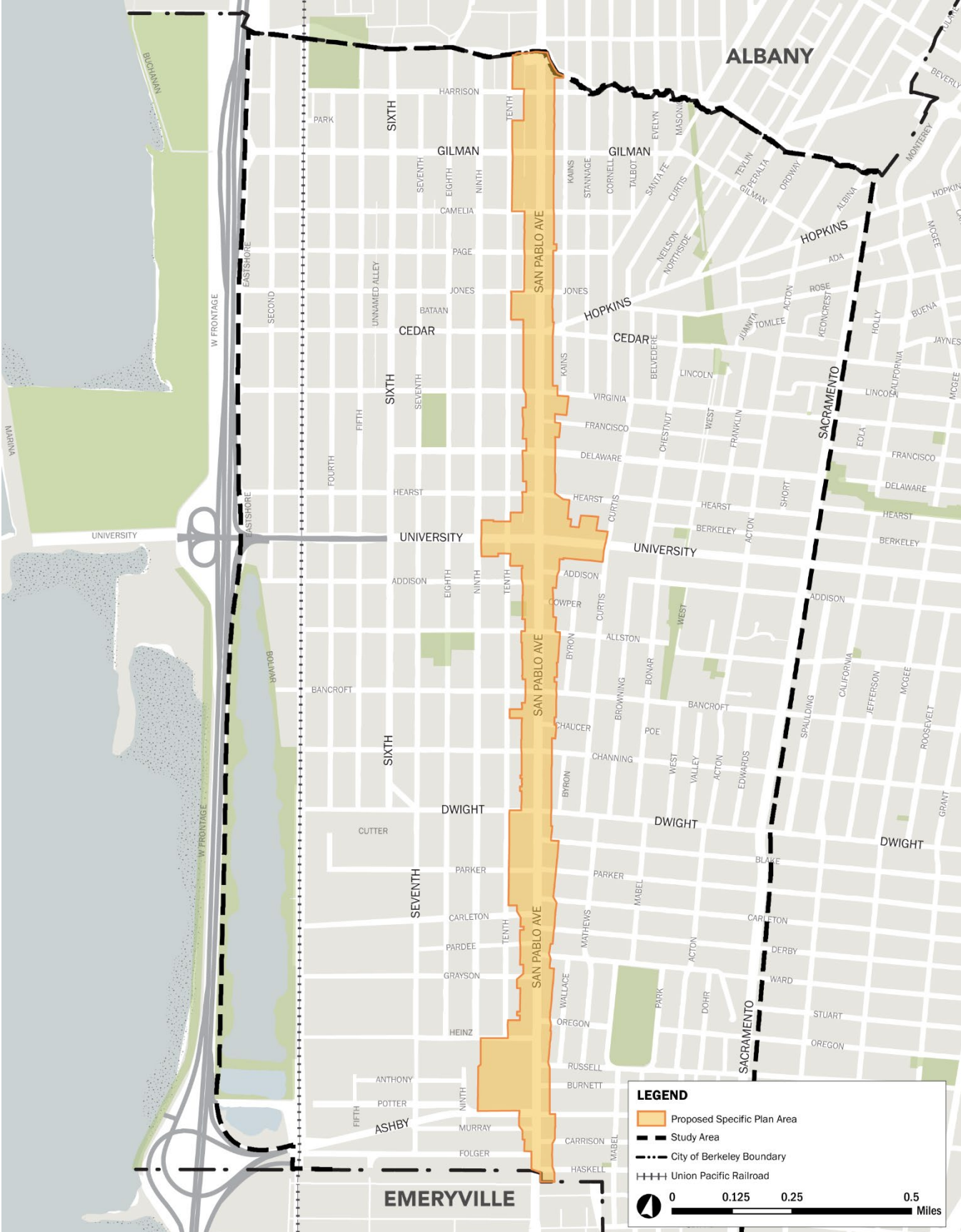


Figure 1.3 Study Area and Specific Plan Area. Source: City of Berkeley

Significance of the San Pablo Avenue Corridor

Running parallel to I-80, San Pablo Avenue connects tens of thousands of people each day to residential neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, public gathering spaces, and other key destinations in the East Bay. The character and intensity of the streetscape, development, and uses along San Pablo Avenue varies along its length; its connectivity and diversity of uses establishes it as a mixed-use corridor in the East Bay. As State Route 123, it also functions as a designated reliever route during incidents on the I-80 freeway. Due to this role, the right-of-way in Berkeley is under the jurisdiction of the State of California through Caltrans, requiring the City of Berkeley to obtain Caltrans approval before making physical changes to the street. For these reasons, San Pablo Avenue has been the subject of multiple regional planning efforts – such as the Association of Bay Area’s (ABAG) East Bay Corridor Initiative and Alameda County Transit Commission’s (Alameda CTC) San Pablo Avenue Corridor Projects. Berkeley has taken part in these efforts and has also followed the development and adoption of Specific Plans in neighboring jurisdictions with great interest.

Historical Context

Originally known as part of the Lincoln Highway in the early 1900s, San Pablo Avenue served as the primary north-south connection prior to the construction of I-80. Its original role as a key regional and national route contributed to its designation as a state highway and shaped the corridor’s pattern of region-serving, auto-oriented land uses.

San Pablo Avenue and the Study Area are also part of West Berkeley’s history of ethnic and racial segregation. On the 1937 federal Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC) redlining maps, much of West Berkeley — particularly the neighborhoods near San Pablo Avenue — were marked in red and deemed “hazardous” for investment, largely because of the presence of African American, Asian American, and immigrant communities (see Figure 1.5).¹ These classifications led to systematic disinvestment, exclusion from mortgage lending, and lasting economic and environmental inequalities. As a result, West Berkeley became both a hub of diverse working-class communities and a target of discriminatory practices limiting their access to housing elsewhere in the City.

At the same time, the area west of San Pablo Avenue developed as one of Berkeley’s primary industrial and manufacturing centers. Industries such as ironworks, chemical production, food processing, and printing thrived, drawing on the surrounding diverse workforce. Although large-scale manufacturing declined after World War II, West Berkeley’s industrial legacy remains visible in its historic building stock. Today, a new generation of small-scale manufacturers, makers, and biotechnology firms are located within the Study Area west of San Pablo Avenue, continuing the role of West Berkeley as a center of production and innovation. The Specific Plan Area’s proximity to West Berkeley has led to some complementary businesses locating on San Pablo Avenue and supports general business vitality along San Pablo Avenue.



Figure 1.4 The Key System and Berkeley sign at San Pablo Avenue and University Avenue, ca. 1925. Source: Berkeley Public Library. [Online Archive of California](#)

¹ A detailed review on the History of Redlining in the East Bay can be found here: <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/map/CA/Oakland/context#loc=12/37.8839/-122.2562>. Last accessed 10/02/2025

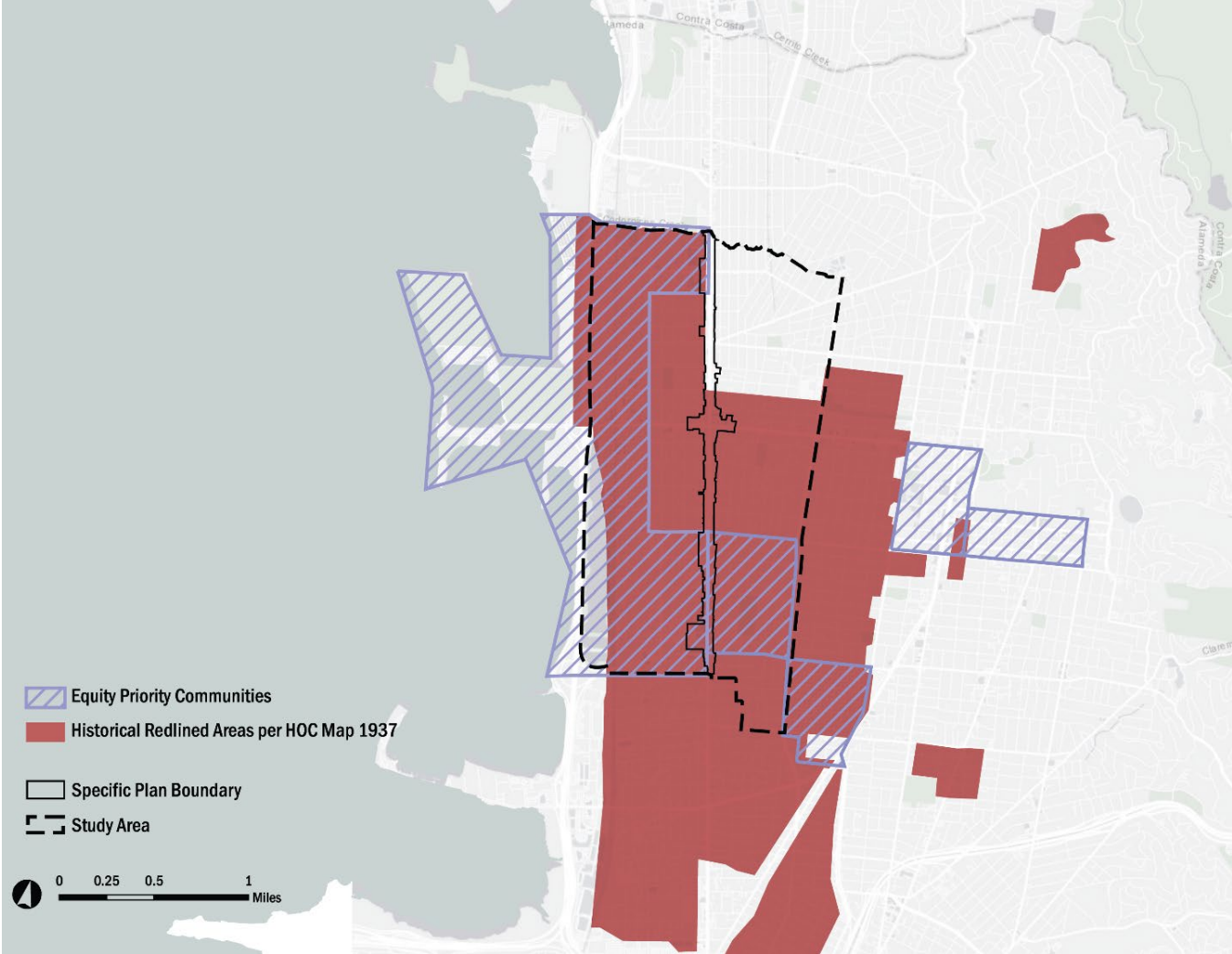


Figure 1.5 Historical Redlined Areas and Equity Priority Communities Map. Source: R.K.Nelson and E.L.Ayers, Mapping Redlining, 2023. MTC, Equity Priority Communities, 2021.

Community Demographics

The Study Area has a greater racial and ethnic diversity compared to the city as a whole and Alameda County, with a notably higher percentage of Black population. This pattern reflects the legacy of historic redlining that shaped neighborhood demographics and limited mobility for communities of color over time. Although racially restrictive covenants were ruled unenforceable by the Supreme Court in Shelley v. Kraemer (1948), the practice of redlining persisted until it was prohibited under the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Its impacts persist today, as formerly redlined areas continue to experience greater economic inequality and higher risk of displacement.

The Study Area’s population in 2020 was 26,360. The population grew 16% between 2010 to 2020, representing 22% of the city’s total population and outpacing the city’s overall population growth of 9% in the same period.²

As neighborhoods within the Study Area continue to grow, demographic shifts have varied across racial and ethnic groups. From 2000 to 2020, the White population increased by over 3,900 (+45%), while the Black population decreased by over 2,600 (-39%) (see Figure 1.6). The population increase of Hispanic/Latinx, Asians/API, and other races during that period was moderate.

² United States Census Bureau. Decennial Census. 2010, Table P7. 2020, Table P1.

As a result of being historically underserved, some census blocks within the Study Area are part of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)'s Equity Priority Communities (EPCs). The EPC designation helps provide funding and assistance to census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved populations.³

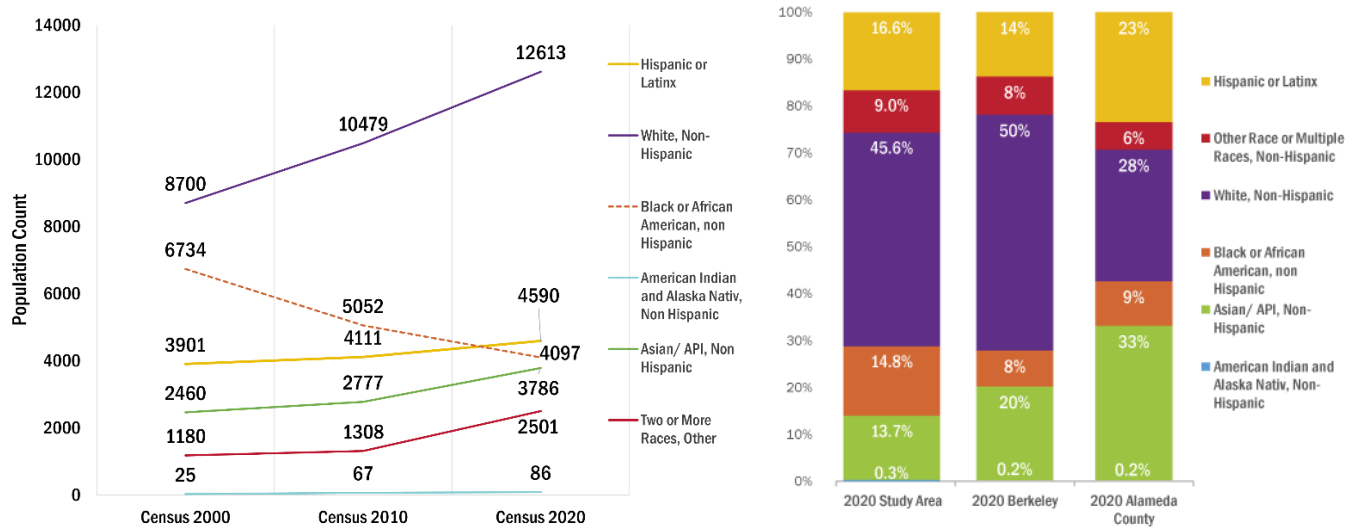


Figure 1.6 Left: Population Shift by Race and Ethnicity in Study Boundary. Source: United States Census Bureau. Decennial Census. 2010, Table P7. 2020, Table P1. Right: Comparison of Racial Composition in Study Area, Berkeley, and Alameda County. Source: United States Census Bureau. Decennial Census. 2010, Table P7. 2020, Table P1.

Economic Vitality Conditions

San Pablo Avenue is a unique commercial corridor in Berkeley, historically defined by regional and specialty businesses, along with uses connected to industry and manufacturing. Previous City plans and economic assessments have characterized the corridor in ways that remain relevant today:

- **Historic industrial identity:** Once a center for manufacturing and production, the West Berkeley neighborhoods adjacent to San Pablo Avenue still include industrially zoned areas. Automotive and repair related businesses continue to operate along the corridor, contributing significantly to the local and regional economy.⁴
- **Commerce and production:** Many businesses on the corridor produce goods on-site and sell directly to customers, occupying a niche at the intersection of commerce and light industry.⁴
- **Regional destination:** San Pablo Avenue functions primarily as a destination for specialized goods and services, such as auto repair, construction materials, home improvement, and restaurants, rather than serving as a walkable, neighborhood-serving retail district.⁵

This strong regional identity can at times be at odds with local aspirations for a more walkable, mixed-use environment that supports multi-modal transportation options, a broad range of businesses, and new infill housing.

Vacancy and Broader Economic Impacts

San Pablo Avenue experienced a significant rise in ground-floor commercial vacancies in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic. Office of Economic Development data indicates that San Pablo Avenue’s ground floor commercial vacancy rate (by square footage) doubled from 5.5% in 2017 to 10.8% in 2022. The rate peaked in 2023 at 15.5%, reflecting ongoing challenges for local businesses.

³ To learn more about the MTC/ABAG’s EPC designation and methodology, visit mtc.ca.gov.

⁴ City of Berkeley. Office of Economic Development’s 2016 Economic Development Work Session, 2016. p.9, 13.

⁵ City of Berkeley. [2022 Economic Dashboard](#). Office of Economic Development, 2022.

By 2024, the vacancy rate had declined to 7.1% along San Pablo Avenue⁶, signaling a recovery in ground floor activity. By comparison, the average citywide vacancy rate in 2024 was 7.5%.

The past few years were defined by several high-profile closures along San Pablo Avenue, many of which were establishments with broad name recognition and historic and cultural significance in Berkeley. KC's BBQ, for instance, was a Black-owned, family-run business that first opened in 1968; Kirsten Davis, a third-generation co-owner told [NBC Bay Area in April 2023](#) that "The brick and mortar are a monster for a lot of small businesses. People are trying to find funding and to hold onto and retain employees."

Despite these closures, the decline in vacancy rate and the arrival of new neighborhood-serving businesses suggest that San Pablo Avenue is entering a period of renewal. The Specific Plan aims to build on this recovery by supporting small business retention, improving storefront vitality, and reinforcing the Plan Area's role as a diverse, mixed-use district.

Planning Context

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan is a key component of Berkeley's broader long-range planning efforts. The Plan's policies and implementation strategy reflect recent changes in State housing and land use law that require a new approach to local planning. The Specific Plan is consistent with State guidance for the preparation of a specific plan, as identified in the California Government Code §65450-65457.

Regulatory Context

Citywide Policies

The **City's General Plan**, adopted in 2002, outlines Berkeley's long-range vision and priorities for growth, development, and conservation. It includes elements on Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Disaster Preparedness and Safety, Open Space and Recreation, Environmental Management, Economic Development and Employment, Urban Design and Preservation, Citizen Participation, and Implementation.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan will serve as an extension of the General Plan, providing policy and regulatory guidance tailored to the Specific Plan area. All land-use decisions are consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan

The Housing Element of the City's General Plan serves as the City's framework for housing goals, policies, and programs for meeting existing and future housing needs and increasing affordable housing opportunities to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) established by the State. In the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update, approximately 31%, or 2,023, of the housing units needed to accommodate the RHNA fall within the Specific Plan Area, indicating the Plan Area's potential to accommodate a significant share of future housing. The Housing Element also identified land use and zoning actions to help meet the RHNA, including the implementation *Program 27- Priority Development Areas (PDAs), Commercial and Transit Corridors* to develop San Pablo Avenue as a PDA.

The **West Berkeley Plan (adopted in 1993 and amended in 2011)** defines the City's key land use, environmental, economic development, transportation, housing and social services, and physical form policies for West Berkeley, which includes the Specific Plan Area, as well as parts of the broader Study Area to the west of San Pablo Avenue. The West Berkeley Plan defines West Berkeley's land use to support desired economic development, as well as identifies retail "nodes", including those that are now "designated nodes" in the C-W West Berkeley Commercial District zoning standards.

This Specific Plan supersedes the West Berkeley Plan for all properties within the Specific Plan Area while carrying forward its key goals related to land use and community character. All future development must comply with both this Specific Plan and the Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC). Additional details can be found in **Chapter 3 Land Use**.

⁶ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Economic Dashboards Update](#), 25 Feb. 2025, p. 3. Accessed 6 May 2025.

Regional Policies

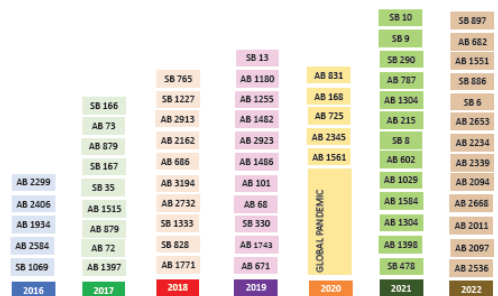
The PDA designation stems from **Plan Bay Area 2050**, which is a long-range regional plan developed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).⁷ The Plan Bay Area 2050 includes strategies to improve housing, the economy, transportation, and the environment with a focus on the region. As part of this effort, PDAs in Berkeley were identified by the City and Bay Area Metro to promote sustainable development patterns for jobs and housing in walkable and transit-oriented infill locations. The PDA designation increases the City's eligibility for funding to support improvements in and provide benefit to a PDA.

State Legislation

Many State laws and regional policies related to housing and land use have been approved since the adoption of the City's General Plan in 2002. The Berkeley Municipal Code continues to be updated to remain consistent with the laws and policies. Many recent State laws have made changes to the development review and approval process, timeline, and requirements, as well as defined limitations on the City's discretion regarding project approval, conformance with certain development standards, and the applicability of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Key California Laws that Support Housing

- Housing Accountability Act – No net loss of housing capacity
- Senate Bill (SB) 330 - Streamlining
- SB 35 - Ministerial Approvals for affordable housing projects
- Density Bonus Law – waive or reduce development standards



Example of increase in approved housing-related legislation between 2016-2022

Figure 1.7 Key California Laws that Support Housing.
Source: UPP

Relationship to other Planning Documents and Projects

Other related plans and improvements that support the goals of the Specific Plan are discussed in their respective chapters. Key connections to the Specific Plan are summarized below:

- The 2016 **San Pablo Avenue Commercial Corridor Report** highlighted the area's economic growth and diversity, identifying long-term opportunities for land use, transportation, and public realm improvements. While it did not propose immediate actions, its recommendations, such as sidewalk upgrades, public art, and branding, helped inform the goals of **Chapter 4 Economic Development**.
- Previous planning efforts have addressed streetscape issues along San Pablo Avenue. The **San Pablo Avenue Public Improvements Plan**, adopted on December 7, 2004, aimed to enhance the corridor for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit users, while also supporting revitalization of the surrounding area. While some improvements have been implemented, others remain unaddressed or are outdated. The Specific Plan includes updated streetscape standards as part of its improvement strategy, outlined in **Chapter 5 Streets - Transportation and Public Realm**.
- The **Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan** (2022) identifies San Pablo Avenue as a Primary Transit Route and a corridor for future study of transit infrastructure needs based on the AC Transit Major Corridors Study (2016). It describes the **Alameda CTC's San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project** as the lead effort for designing transit improvements along the corridor. Concurrent with the Specific Plan development, the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project is providing key improvements in the Specific Plan Area to improve safety and transit reliability along the streets' Corridor.

⁷ More information regarding Priority Development Areas (PDAs) can be found on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Website mtc.ca.gov.

- In 2023, the City began work on a Zoning Update for North Shattuck, College Avenue, and Solano Avenue commercial corridors that, like San Pablo Avenue, are designated as priority commercial and transit corridors in the 2023–2031 Housing Element. This initiative aims to establish clear and objective development standards in compliance with State law, while reassessing land uses and permitting processes to support future growth along these key corridors. The **San Pablo Avenue Objective Design Standards** (see **Appendix E**) have been developed with this broader zoning context in mind, with the goal of creating cohesive, high-level design guidance that aligns with the citywide approach.

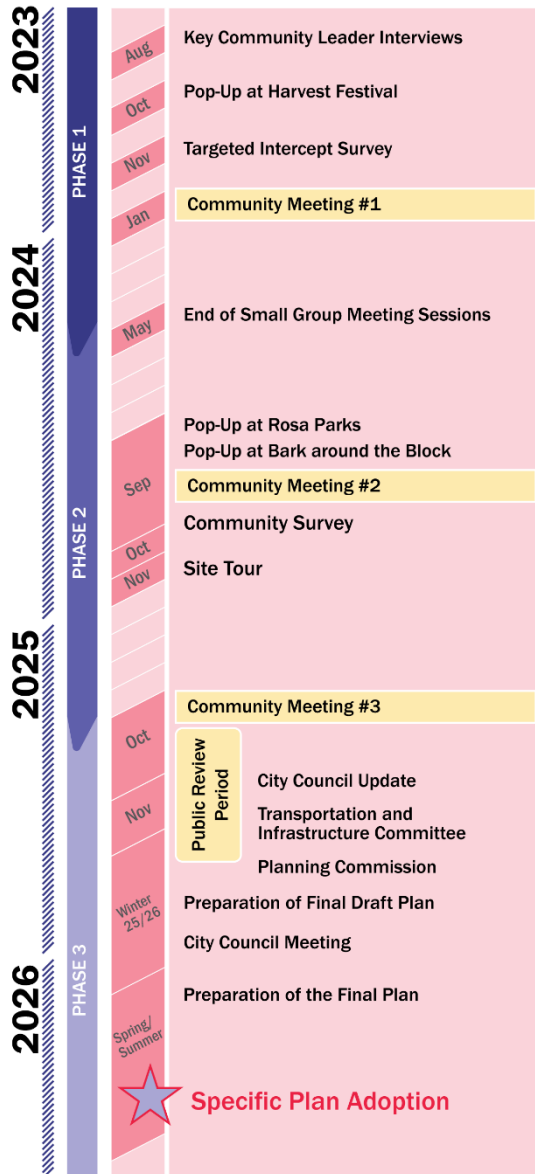


Figure 1.8 Community Engagement Timeline

Community Engagement and Plan Development Process

The Specific Plan’s community engagement process provided multiple opportunities for participants to share perspectives, ideas and feedback, representing a broad range of existing and future residents, workers, business owners, property owners, and corridor users. The process also included close collaboration with City staff and included regular discussions with the Planning Commission and City Councilmembers, as well as collaboration with staff from regional planning and transportation agencies.

Engagement Events and Methods

Phase 1

The outreach process included a series of five focus group meetings, five interviews, one community open-house, one survey and one pop-up held between 2023 and Spring 2024 (see Figure 1.7). Phase 1 of the outreach concluded in May 2024, gathering feedback on key issues. The findings from this phase were summarized in the [Community Assessment Report](#).

Phase 2

The outreach in Phase 2 focused on Policy Development and feedback to policy options created by the Specific Plan team. Phase 2 included one community workshop, a survey, two pop-ups and a site tour in 2024. Community feedback echoed the issues outlined in Phase 1 and solidified the Specific Plan’s Vision and Desired Results (see **Chapter 2**).

Phase 3

Note: The following description will be updated and expanded upon following the Specific Plan Public Review period and adoption process to reflect the input received.

The Specific Plan team held four stakeholder interviews for preliminary feedback and will hold the final Community Open House to present the Public Review Draft Specific Plan in October 2025 and to gather initial feedback from the public. Input from the Open House and additional comments received during the public comment period will be documented, summarized, and communicated to the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council, along with a description of recommended changes and refinements to the Public

Review Draft. Additional public comments received during the Commission and City Council meetings will be taken into consideration in the Council's adoption of the Plan.

What We've Heard

The community expressed strong support for developing more affordable, mixed-income housing, with a majority in favor of higher-intensity development along San Pablo Avenue. However, some participants voiced concerns that excessive building height or bulk could create a "tunnel effect" limiting sunlight and worsening the pedestrian experience.

There was broad agreement that the current sidewalks and mobility conditions are inadequate. Participants emphasized the need for safety and public realm improvements, including wider sidewalks, better pedestrian lighting, additional greenery, and public art to enhance comfort, livability and corridor identity.

Community members also supported activating ground floors with flexible commercial and creative uses. This approach is intended to reduce vacancies, prevent inactive storefronts, and strengthen the overall pedestrian experience in the Plan Area.

Marcel Pardo Ariza: Municipal Artist-in-Residence

As part of the 2023-2024 Print Public Municipal Artist-in-Residence at Kala Art Institute, artist Marcel Pardo Ariza worked with Robert Rivera and the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan process. In response to the San Pablo Avenue Corridor Study and in dialogue with local community members, Marcel Pardo Ariza highlighted and celebrated seven local businesses along San Pablo Avenue: CASA LATINA, Belmo Cafe, Middle East Market, Heyma Yemeni Coffee, Rainbow Donuts, Everett & Jones, and Mi Ranchito Bayside Market. Through this exploration, Ariza emphasized the critical role these businesses play in the fabric and legacy of the community, underscoring the urgent need for City support in a landscape where vacant retail spaces proliferate across the Bay Area.

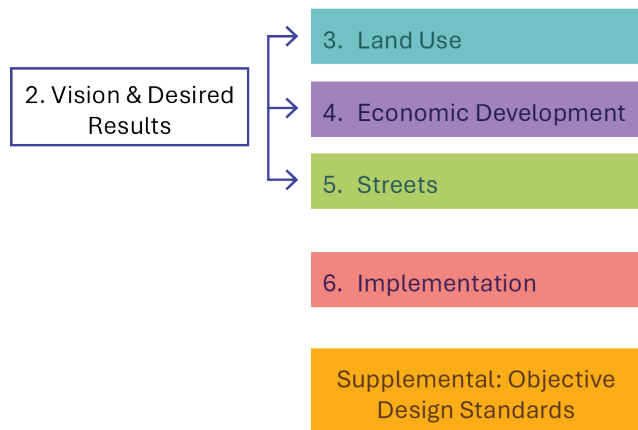
As part of the Municipal Artist-in-Residence, Marcel Pardo Ariza and Cheryl Derricotte presented their exhibition *Roadwork* at Kala Gallery from October 24, 2024, to February 14, 2025.



Figure 1.9 Images of Marcel's work for the Roadwork Exhibition. Source: Marcel Pardo Ariza

Specific Plan Organization

The Plan is organized into five (5) chapters following this introduction.



Chapters 3 through 5 form the core of the Specific Plan, outlining the proposed policies, programs, and standards that advance the vision and goals established in **Chapter 2**. While each chapter focuses on a primary topic, they are not mutually exclusive, and therefore, many policies are interrelated and advance the overall vision and goals across multiple topic areas. For example, policies in the Land Use and Street chapters also support economic development by shaping where commercial and retail activity is prioritized as well as the pedestrian experience throughout the Plan Area.

The Plan concludes with an Implementation **Chapter 6**, which summarizes key priorities and actions needed to carry out the Plan across each topic area. In addition, the Plan is also accompanied by **Objective Design Standards (ODS)** in **Appendix E**.

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Key Existing Conditions
- Appendix B: Opportunity Sites
- Appendix C: Buildout Summary Memorandum
- Appendix D: Street Improvements
- Appendix E: Objective Design Standards

How to use this Document

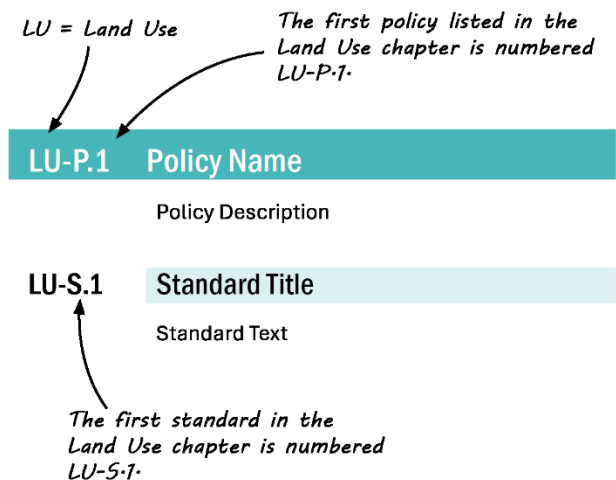
This Plan includes land use, economic development, public space, and transportation policies and standards to support the Vision and Goals outlined in **Chapter 2**. To ensure clarity and ease of use:

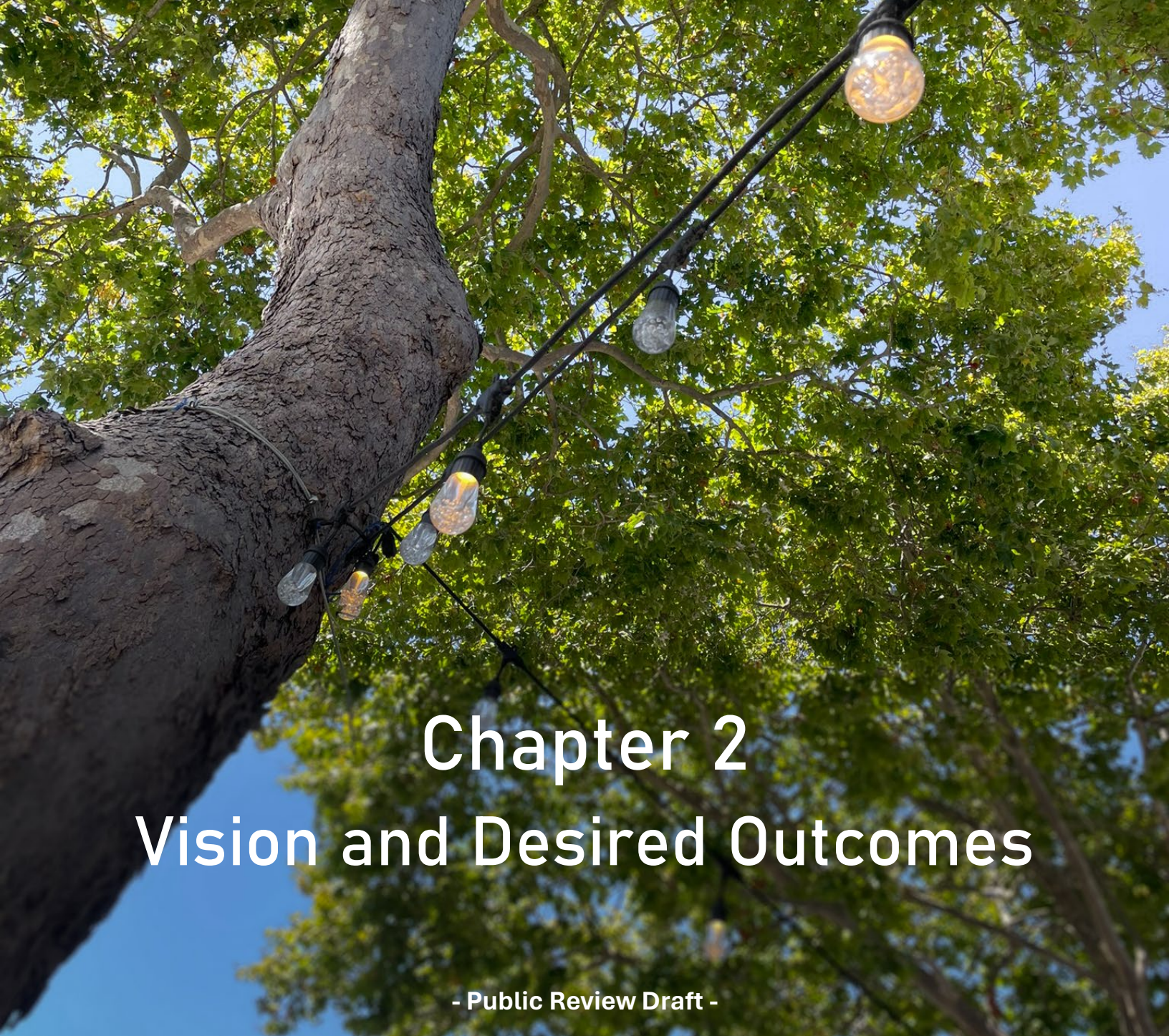
Policies are the core statements of intent that guide decision-making. They articulate the City’s goals for future development, community benefits, public investment, and implementation initiatives. Policies are organized in the *Land-Use, Economic Development, and Streets – Mobility and Public Realm* chapters. Each policy is numbered using the first letters of their respective chapter, followed by a “P” and a sequential number. For example, the first policy listed in the **Chapter 3: Land Use** is numbered LU-P.1. All policies appear in the chapter’s designated color.

Standards are measurable requirements that implement the Specific Plan’s Policies. They include zoning regulations and development requirements. Standards follow the same numbering system as the policies, using “S” instead of “P”. For example, the first standard in the **Chapter 3: Land Use** is numbered LU-S.1. All Standards appear in the chapter’s designated color.

In many chapters, specific standards are provided directly under the policy they intend to implement. These standards indicate their direct relationship to the corresponding policy.

The final chapter includes the Implementation Table, which outlines implementation actions, responsibilities, timelines, and funding mechanisms to carry out the Specific Plan’s goals.





Chapter 2

Vision and Desired Outcomes

- Public Review Draft -

Vision

The community envisions the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area as a mixed-use district that is integrated with the neighborhoods and employment areas that surround it. The Specific Plan Area will serve Berkeley’s broad range of community members and continue to support citywide and regional needs as it has historically.

“[We need a] Lively corridor where people from all walks of life can enjoy, mingle, and support local businesses. Good mix of housing, restaurants, stores (and grocery stores).” – Open House Comment

With a history of demographic diversity and cultural exchange, community members are deeply protective of the area’s heritage. They continue to advocate for measures to strengthen its distinctive character while accommodating Berkeley’s housing needs. Central to this vision is redefining San Pablo Avenue not simply as a car-centric corridor, but as a place that connects east to west Berkeley and serves as an extension of surrounding neighborhoods.

Desired Outcomes

Increased Diversity and Supply of Housing

“It is essential to ensure that the plan addresses the needs of the historically underserved communities around San Pablo Avenue.” – Community advocate from Beautiful San Pablo

The Plan will encourage more housing along San Pablo Avenue, offering more variety of unit types and building designs that reflect community diversity and meet the needs of residents ranging from young singles to families, seniors, and others. New and refined design standards, land use, and other policies for new development, paired with incentives for community-oriented spaces, will foster social interaction, support local businesses, and strengthen connections between new residents and the broader community.

Increased Business Activity to Support a Thriving Community

“It is our urban center or spine. Be more for the people that live here. [We are] Missing boutiques, groceries, and practical things.” – Open House Comment

The Plan envisions San Pablo Avenue as a vibrant and economically resilient corridor with welcoming storefronts, active ground floors, and businesses that contribute to an engaging public realm. Support for small and locally owned businesses will help activate ground-floor spaces and foster a diverse mix of creative, community-oriented uses. Partnerships between businesses, the City, and neighborhood groups will facilitate community and cultural events that strengthen the corridor identity and establish San Pablo Avenue as a distinct, mixed-use district. Community and social events, organized by partnerships between businesses, the City, and neighborhood groups, will help establish a community identity for the mixed-use district.

Enhanced Interaction Between Public and Private Spaces

The Plan envisions streets where public and private spaces combine to support daily life and community vitality. Wider sidewalks, small plazas, and other gathering spaces will provide welcoming places or “third spaces” for recreation, social interaction, and community events. Investments in street furniture, lighting, and landscaping will enhance safety, comfort, and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities, while preserving and expanding the tree canopy to create a greener, more inviting streetscape.

Enhanced Local and Citywide Access

“SPA is stressful. Just realized it acts as a border, and I hate crossing over it. Increase space for people, less space for cars (i.e. parklets, bulb outs, turn median into park.)” – Open House Comment

The Plan aims to build upon ongoing City and regional efforts to transform San Pablo Avenue into a safe, inclusive, and welcoming street that prioritizes access and mobility for people of all ages and abilities. By improving crossings, lighting, and streetscape design, and by supporting reliable transit and active transportation options, the Plan’s street network will better connect residents to neighborhoods, parks, jobs, and the waterfront. This integrated approach reduces reliance on cars while preserving essential vehicle access and circulation.

How does the vision translate into desired outcomes? The table below outlines the key outcomes that the Specific Plan aims to achieve for each theme of the community’s vision. It also provides guidance on where to find more detailed information within the document. The chapters are abbreviated as follows: LU = Land Use, ED = Economic Development, PR = Streets and Public Realm, T = Streets and Transportation, and ODS = Objective Design Standards.



Increased Diversity and Supply of Housing

Revised Housing Development Regulations	LU, ODS
Increased Housing Affordability	LU
Support a Range of Housing for Diverse Resident Needs	LU
Encourage Engaging Buildings and Site Frontages	LU, ODS



Increased Business Activity to Support a Thriving Community

Increased Local Business Vitality and Growth	LU, ED
Reduced Vacancy of Ground Floor Space	LU, ED, PR, ODS
Identifiable Commercial Areas with Stronger Business Presence	LU, ED, ODS



Enhanced Interaction Between Public and Private Spaces

Increased Amount and Quality of Sidewalk Space	LU, T, PR
Improved Streetscape	PR
More Public Open Space and Community Gathering Spaces	LU, PR, ODS
More Public Art in Public Space and on Buildings	PR, ODS
Increased Cultural Programming and other Community Activity in Public Space	LU, ED, PR



Enhanced Local and Citywide Access

Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Access	T, PR, ODS
Improved Transit Access and Frequency/Availability	T, PR
Reduced Number and Severity of Collisions	T
Improved Management of On-Street Parking and Loading	T



Chapter 3 Land Use

- Public Review Draft -

The land uses along San Pablo Avenue have been shifting away from the historically regional-serving, auto-oriented land use pattern of primarily commercial and light industrial businesses. The Plan Area is now seeing the addition of higher density residential and more local-serving commercial uses, a transition that is beginning to transform the Plan Area into a more vibrant, mixed-use district.

This chapter establishes a land use and development framework to help achieve the community’s vision, focusing on policies and development standards that will achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the diversity of housing types and supply of housing, including affordable options;
- Support commercial vitality and reduce ground-floor vacancies;
- Promote active, pedestrian-oriented development and public realm improvements; and
- Coordinate land use with transportation and infrastructure investments.

Together with the Specific Plan’s **Chapter 4 Economic Development** strategies, **Chapter 5 Streets - Transportation and Public Realm** policies and standards, the **Appendix E Objective Design Standards**, and **Chapter 6 Implementation** actions, the Land Use policies and standards provide a unified framework to guide the continued transformation of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area into a mixed-use district that supports Berkeley’s housing, equity, and economic goals while strengthening its role as a central place for community life.

This Specific Plan supersedes the 1993 West Berkeley Plan for all properties within the Specific Plan Area while carrying forward its key goals related to land use and community character. All future development must comply with both this Specific Plan and the Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC). Title 23 of the BMC contains the zoning provisions that implement the Specific Plan, and any topics not addressed here are governed by the BMC and applicable building codes.

Summary of Community Vision

As detailed in **Chapter 2 Vision and Desired Outcomes**, the community envisions the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area as a mixed-use district that is integrated with the neighborhoods and employment areas that surround it. The Specific Plan Area will serve Berkeley’s broad range of community members and continue to support citywide and regional needs as it has historically.

Existing Local and State Land Use Policies and Standards

The Specific Plan land use framework is guided by both recent State housing laws and the City’s 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (HEU). State laws – including the Housing Accountability Act (HAA), Density Bonus Law, Senate Bills (SB) 35 and 330, and more recently Assembly Bill (AB) 130 and SB 131 – have made changes to the development review process, timelines, and requirements, and have defined limitations on the City’s discretion regarding project approval, conformance with certain development standards, and the applicability of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These State laws have modified the City’s review process and have resulted in more streamlined review.

At a local level, the City’s Housing Element Update (HEU) establishes goals, policies, and programs to address housing affordability, preservation, production, and equity. Of particular relevance, **Program 27 – Priority Development Areas, Commercial and Transit Corridors**, directed the initiation of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to increase densities, evaluate design standards and public improvements, and incentivize affordable housing. The Specific Plan therefore functions as the primary tool to implement Program 27 while aligning with State housing requirements and advancing the City’s adopted housing strategies. A full description of applicable State and local policies is provided in **Appendix A: Key Existing Conditions**.

Land Use Plan

Existing Land Use and Zoning

The Plan Area contains a mix of residential, commercial, and light manufacturing uses. Residential uses include multi-family, mixed-use, live-work, along with a limited number of single-family homes. There are a variety of existing commercial uses, however the main uses include service-oriented¹, vehicle service and sales, restaurant, manufacturing, and retail establishments. Common business types include automobile repair and home-improvement supply businesses. Many of these businesses are locally-owned and operate with brick-and-mortar storefronts, contributing to the corridor's unique and varied economic profile. As of 2020, there were approximately 2,588 existing housing units in the Specific Plan Area. The majority of those, about 2,018, are in multi-family buildings with 5 or more units (see Figure 3.1). The Plan Area also includes approximately 1.49 million square feet of commercial space.

Plan Area Existing Housing Units

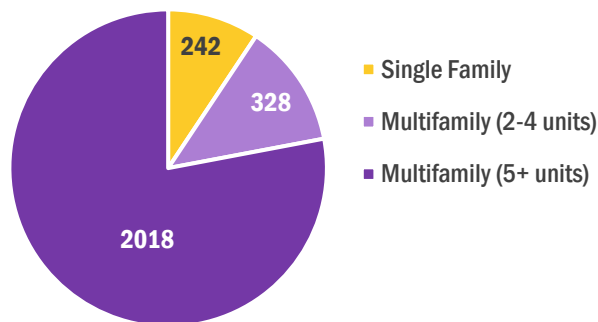


Figure 3.1. Distribution of Existing Housing Units in the Plan Area by Type. Source: City of Berkeley, 2023.

Land uses are regulated by the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. As shown in Figure 3.2, the General Plan land use designation along the entire San Pablo Avenue frontage is Avenue Commercial. As shown in Figure 3.3, the zoning district for properties fronting on San Pablo Avenue is predominantly West Berkeley Commercial (C-W). The portion of University Avenue within the Plan Area includes parcels zoned C-W and C-U (University Avenue Commercial). Other zoning districts within the Plan Area include Mixed Use-Light Industrial (MU-LI), Mixed Use-Residential (MU-R), Restricted Two-Family Residential (R-2), Restricted Multiple-Family Residential (R-2A), and Multi-Family Residential (R-4).

The 1993 West Berkeley Plan and the City's Zoning Ordinance also include Commercial Designated Nodes at the following major intersections along San Pablo Avenue: Gilman Street, Cedar Street, University Avenue, Dwight Way, and Ashby Avenue (see Figure 3.3). The purpose of the nodes is to intensify retail, commercial, and mixed-use activity to support a commercial and pedestrian-oriented environment by requiring new development to include certain ground-floor commercial uses.

A full description of existing land use is provided in **Appendix A: Key Existing Conditions**.

¹ Services include personal services such as laundromats and cleaners, as well as professional services such as retail finance services. For additional information, see the Key Existing Conditions in **Appendix A**.

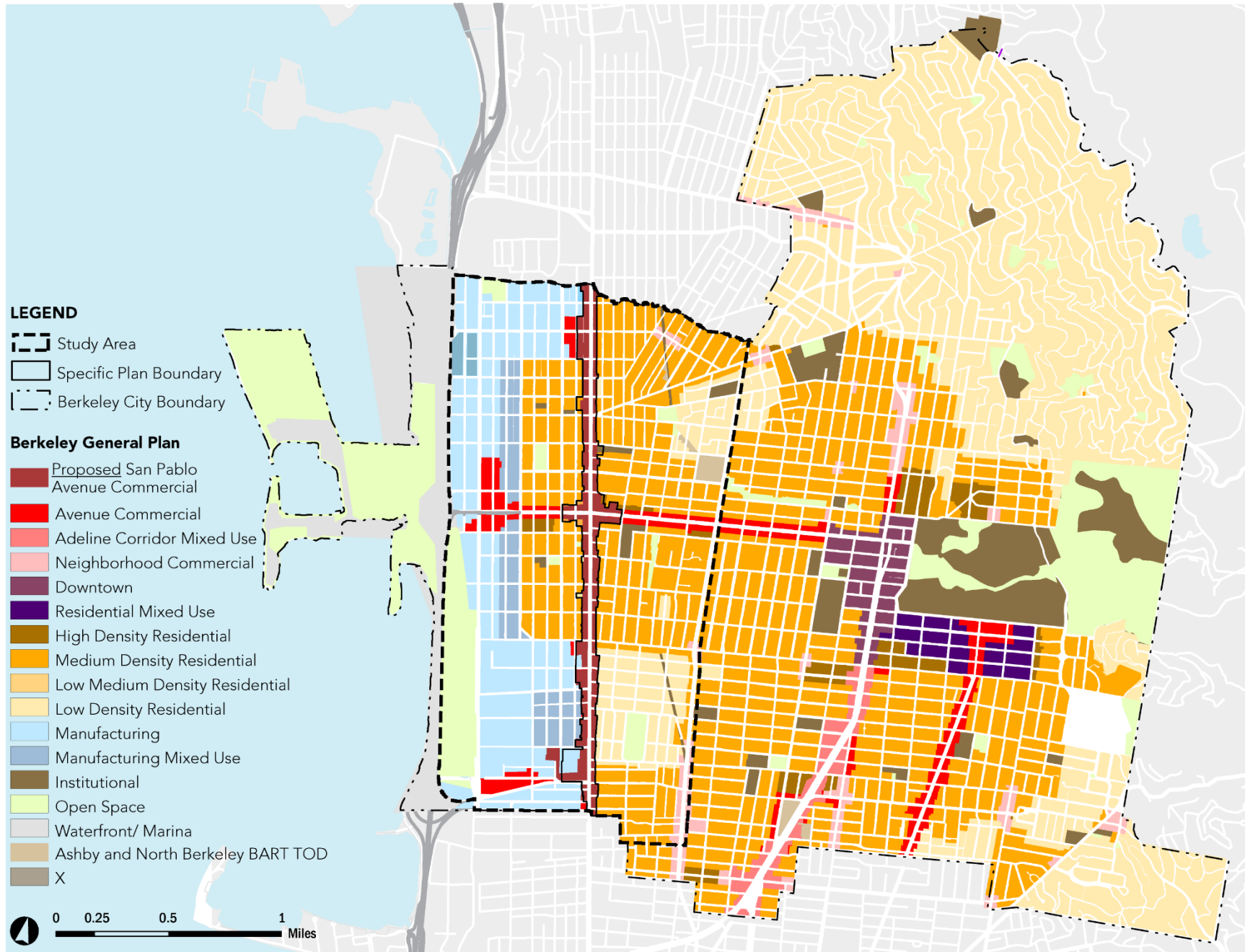


Figure 3.2 Existing Berkeley General Plan. Source: City of Berkeley, 2023 and CD+A, 2025.

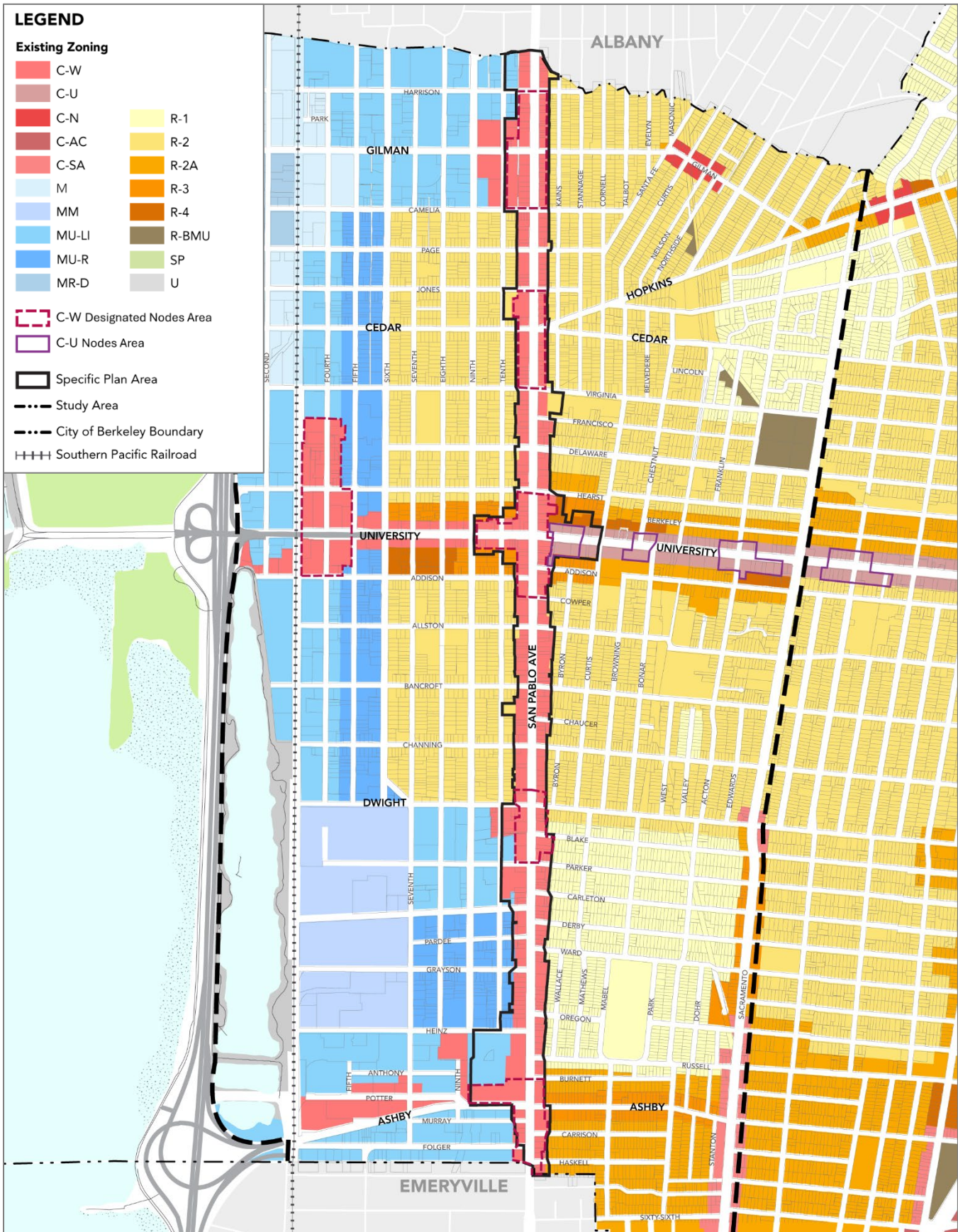


Figure 3.3. Existing Zoning Map with designated nodes in the Specific Plan and Study Areas. Source: City of Berkeley, 2023 and Community Design + Architecture, 2025.

C-W Zoning Evaluation

The current C-W Zoning District applies uniform height limits across the entire Plan Area and does not vary them within Nodes or other specific locations. It establishes different height limits for single-use and mixed-use residential buildings. Single-use projects, whether residential or commercial are limited to three stories (40 feet), while mixed-use projects may reach four stories (50 feet). The additional height allowance for a mixed-use project was originally intended to encourage the development of ground-floor commercial spaces.

However, feedback from real estate developers during the Specific Plan’s community engagement process revealed that in many cases there is insufficient demand for ground floor commercial space. Nevertheless, many projects continue to include ground-floor commercial space because the additional residential floor area granted to mixed-use projects typically outweighs the cost of constructing the commercial space, even if it remains vacant. This has contributed to an oversupply of ground-floor commercial space, diluting retail concentration and undermining the intended role of designated Nodes as focal points for commercial activity.

In response, the Specific Plan process re-evaluated how height incentives and ground floor requirements could be structured along San Pablo Avenue to better align with market conditions and achieve the Plan’s goals of vibrant, active Nodes.

During the Specific Plan’s community engagement process, many community members expressed support for increased density along San Pablo to allow for greater housing capacity and economic activity. Overall, participants favored allowing building height of 8 to 12 stories, with the taller buildings being primarily concentrated at the Ashby, University, and Gilman Nodes.

Proposed Land Use and Zoning Policies and Standards

This section details the land use and zoning policies and standards for the Plan Area. The policies and standards implement refinements based on current community needs, development patterns, and updated State and local legislation.

The land use and zoning policies and standards work in tandem with existing City of Berkeley policies, programs and standards, as well as with the Specific Plan’s transportation, public realm, and economic development components. Together, these elements work to achieve the Specific Plan’s desired outcomes, which include:

- Revised housing development regulations
- Increased local business vitality and growth
- Expansion and improvement of the public realm
- Reduced vacancy of ground floor spaces
- Establishment of identifiable commercial areas with a stronger business presence

To achieve these outcomes, the land use policies and standards emphasize:

- Concentrating retail uses and ground floor activation within designated Nodes.
- Establishing a hierarchy of development intensity across the Plan Area, with greater height and density focused at the Ashby, University, and Gilman Nodes.
- Providing incentives for development to enhance and expand the public realm

Zoning, Nodes, and Development Policies (P) and Standards (S)

LU-P.1 Establish the Commercial San Pablo (C-SP) Zoning District

The Specific Plan establishes the Commercial San Pablo (C-SP) Zoning District to replace the existing Commercial West Berkeley (C-W) and Commercial University (C-U) Zoning District within the Specific Plan area (see Figure 3.3).

The General Plan text and map will be amended to reflect the zoning change and other Specific Plan policies. The C-SP Zoning District will increase residential and mixed-use development intensity within the Specific Plan Area by allowing greater height, density and Floor Area Ratios (FAR).

LU-P.2 Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses

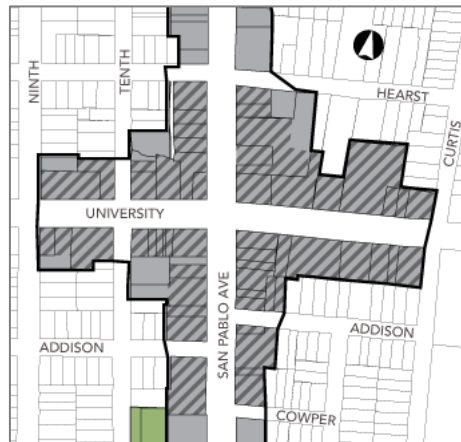
The Specific Plan defines the following two-tiered Node structure to strategically concentrate higher-intensity mixed-use development and commercial uses at key intersections. The Specific Plan includes tier-specific development standards to incentivize commercial clusters:

- **Tier 1 Nodes:** These are the highest intensity areas in the Plan Area, allowing for increased height and FAR to support housing and commercial services near major intersections. Tier 1 Nodes include: University, Ashby, and Gilman.
- **Tier 2 Nodes:** These are the moderate intensity areas in the Plan Area, allowing for moderate increases in height and FAR compared to standards outside of the Nodes. The Tier 2 Nodes include: Cedar and Dwight.

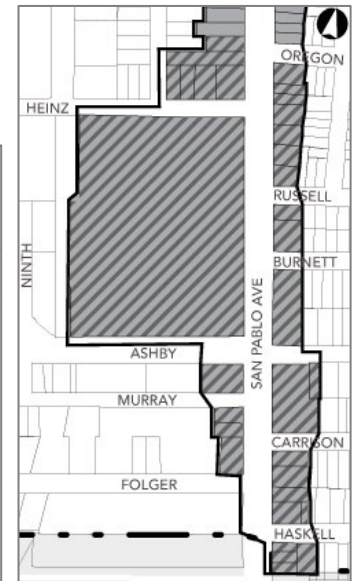
In order to preserve and encourage active street frontages with commercial, retail, and community-service uses within all Nodes, residential ground-floor uses are generally not permitted with limited exceptions to the residential ground-floor restriction (see LU-P.10). Recognizing current market challenges – including elevated vacancy and less demand for retail spaces – the Specific Plan includes adaptive land use policies that expand permitted uses and promote short-term activation, while ensuring flexibility for changing uses and future adaptation (see LU-P.8 and LU-P.10). Together, these policies are all intended to balance near-term flexibility with long-term commercial viability, anticipating that stronger market conditions will emerge over the Plan’s horizon as development and population increase within the Plan Area.



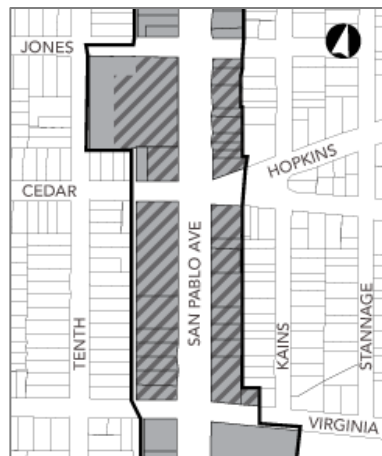
Tier 1: Gilman Node



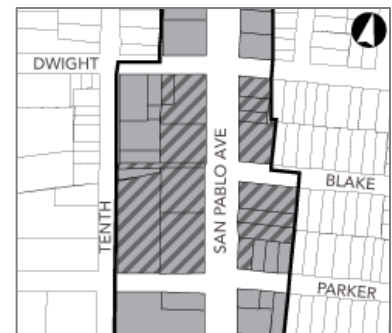
Tier 1: University Node



Tier 1: Ashby Node



Tier 2: Cedar Node



Tier 2: Dwight Node

Figure 3.4 Proposed Nodes

LU-P.3 MU-LI Housing Overlay District to Allow Affordable and Family Friendly Housing

The Specific Plan creates a Housing Overlay District that permits 100% affordable housing and multi-family developments that include family-sized housing units in parts of the Plan Area where residential uses are not currently permitted. Projects that meet the affordability or family-sized unit size requirements may apply the development standards of the C-SP Zoning District.

The following provisions are to be included in the housing overlay zoning standards:

Applicability:

- Applies only to 6 existing MU-LI parcels within the Plan Area.
- Available for projects that either:
 - Provide 100% affordable housing, or
 - Dedicate 50% of the project's gross floor area to family-sized units.

Development standards: Qualifying projects may use the C-SP development standards.

Affordable Housing Requirements:

- Projects must ensure that 100% of units (excluding any manager unit) are restricted to households earning less than 60% of Area Median Income (AMI) for rental and 80% of AMI for ownership.
- Projects can be for-sale or rental.
- Units must be deed restricted as affordable housing under a Regulatory Agreement similar to those used for projects approved under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

Family-Sized Housing Requirements:

- Family-sized units are defined as units with two or three bedrooms.
- Projects using the family housing option must provide 50% of gross residential floor area as family-sized units.
- Projects can be for-sale or rental.

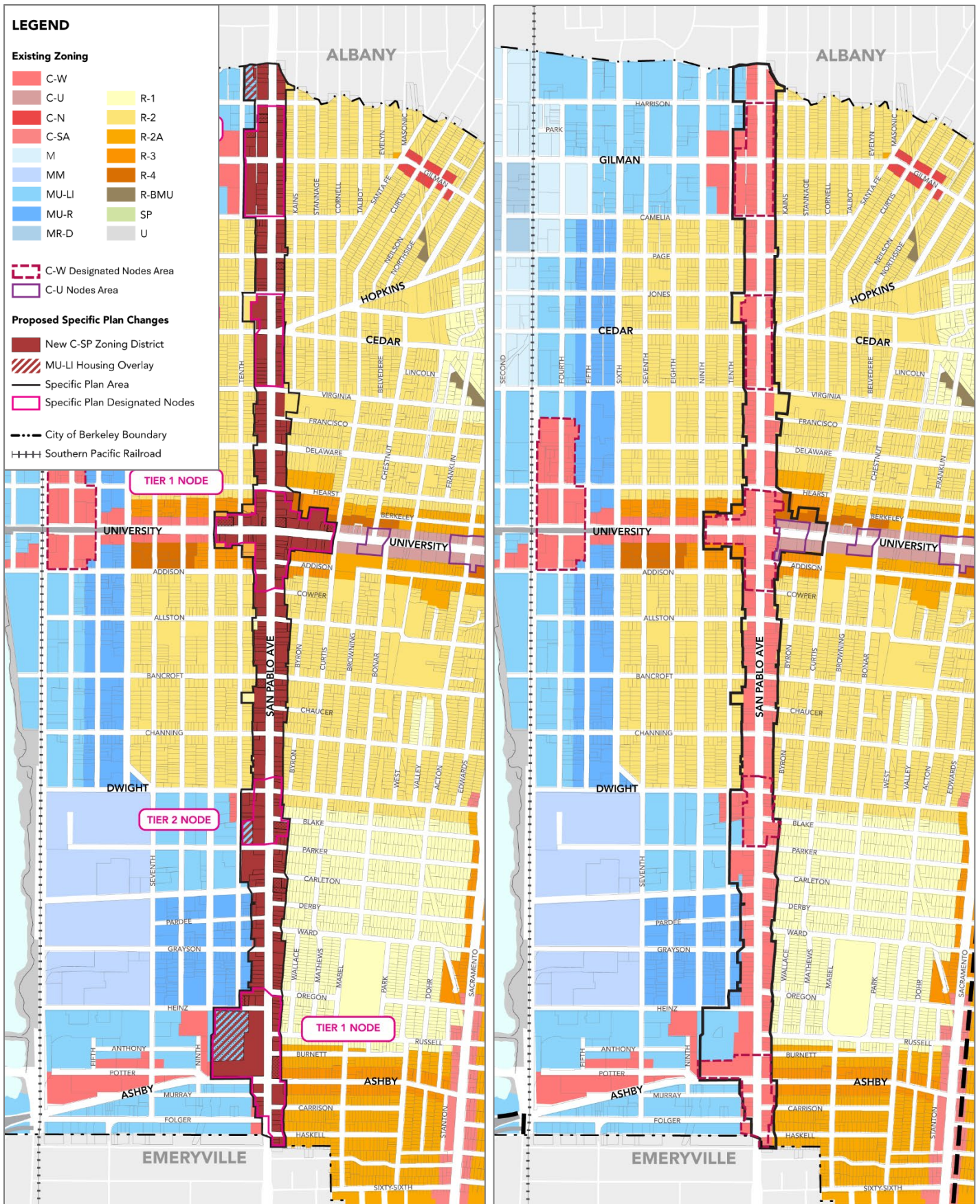
The housing overlay will make MU-LI sites viable for housing while advancing two of the community's priorities: increasing affordable housing production and expanding the supply of family-sized units.

In 2025, land values in the MU-LI zone were approximately half the value of comparable residentially-zoned sites. This is primarily due to the current prohibition on residential uses within the MU-LI district, as well as the lower rents commanded by industrial uses. By restricting the overlay to projects that are either 100% affordable or that provide 50% of their gross floor area as family-sized units, this policy intends to improve the ability of affordable housing developers to compete for these sites and ensure that new housing better serves families in Berkeley.

While these parcels are located in "moderate resource" census tracts and may be less competitive for some state affordable housing funding, the overlay creates a clear zoning pathway that will enable housing development as additional funding becomes available. It also addresses a gap in State housing laws, which generally do not permit residential development in industrial zones, by creating a local mechanism for housing on select MU-LI parcels consistent with the City's Housing Element commitments.

LU-P.4 Amend the General Plan and Zoning Map

Amend the General Plan and Zoning Map to incorporate the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, the C-SP zoning district, Nodes, and the MU-LI Housing Overlay District to support higher-density development in the Plan Area. General Plan amendments include changes in land use designation and text for overlapping Area Plans such as the West Berkeley Plan and University Avenue Specific Plan.



LU-P.5 Planning and Commercial Use Permit Streamlining

Conduct a one-time, citywide review of the City's efforts to streamline planning approval and building permit processes, including commercial permitting, new development, land use changes/use permits, commercial tenant improvements, event permits, short-term use permits, and other permitting processes.

LU-P.6 Public Space Development Incentives

Encourage the creation of high-quality, publicly accessible space within private development projects to enhance the pedestrian environment, support placemaking, and deliver community benefits along San Pablo Avenue, including the following Standards:

LU-S.1 Sidewalk Expansion Incentive

Encourage sidewalk widening of the **Frontage Zone** (*PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards*) to improve the pedestrian environment and support street activation.

Standard: Projects must meet the following standards to qualify for the Incentive.

- Applies only to developments fronting on San Pablo Avenue, Gilman Street, Cedar and Hopkins Streets, University Avenue, Dwight Way, and Ashby Avenue with non-residential ground floor uses.
- Provide a sidewalk expansion (Policy PR-S.1) via a first-floor setback and public access easement. Note that floors above may extend to the property line with no setback.
- Also see **Chapter 5 Streets**, *Sidewalk Space* Section which includes policies and standards for sidewalk design and use.

Incentive: Qualifying projects would receive the following incentive.

- 1 square foot of expanded sidewalk counts as 1.5 square feet of required open space. Eligible credits and incentives, including this provision, may reduce the project's required Private Open Space by no more than 70%.

LU-S.2 Privately-Owned Public Open Space within Nodes

Encourage the creation of high-quality privately-owned and publicly-accessible open space (POPOS) within Nodes to enhance placemaking and provide community open space. Also see Policy *PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Spaces*.

Standard: POPOS must meet the following objective design standards:

- **Size:** A minimum of 5% of site area, or 400 square feet, whichever is greater.
- **Location:** Must be at ground level or on a podium, visible, located adjacent to or clearly visible from the public right-of-way and directly connected to a sidewalk on San Pablo Avenue.
 - Portions of the building at or above the second story may project over a POPOS by up to 6 feet.
 - Where a POPOS has a clear vertical volume of 3 stories or more, the building may fully bridge or cover the POPOS with upper stories (i.e., the POPOS may be entirely roofed/overhung by the building mass).
- **Dimension:** Must have a minimum dimension of 20 feet in any direction to ensure usability.
- **Access:** Public access must be provided daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., or at least during daylight hours. It may open earlier or later to support adjacent and nearby businesses or on-site commercial activity, such as a coffee cart.
- **An Information panel** must be provided that states the public's right to use the space, access hours, and identifies the party responsible for maintenance. Incorporate visible wayfinding signage where appropriate.
- **Maintenance:** The City shall prepare an ordinance defining clear regulations for POPOS, along with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the property owner/manager and the City of Berkeley to establish maintenance responsibilities.

- Design:
 - A maximum of 40% of open space may be covered. Shade structures such as awnings, trellises and umbrellas that provide protection are encouraged
 - Railing, fencing, or landscaping material, when used to define the edge of POPOS, shall be a maximum of 36 inches in height and decorative, transparent, and/or perforated with a minimum of 75% transparency.
 - POPOS should be programmed to support social activity and at least three amenities shall be provided from the following list:
 - A minimum of 20% of open space shall be landscaped. Landscaping may include in-ground planting areas, raised planters, pots, or integrated Green Infrastructure elements.
 - Provide one tree per 400 square feet of open space.
 - Pedestrian amenities, such as seating options (e.g., seat walls, planter ledges, benches, picnic tables, and seating steps) or drinking fountains;
 - Pedestrian-scale lighting.
 - Public art.
 - Recreational features.

Incentive: Qualifying POPOS will receive the following incentives.

- Count each square foot of POPOS towards 2 square feet of required private open space. Eligible credits and incentives, including this provision, may reduce the project's required Private Open Space by no more than 70%.
- Receive fee waivers for any associated park or public works review of facilities.
- Qualify to receive public open space community benefit funds² to subsidize amenities and programming of the spaces.

LU-S.3 Side-Street Plaza Implementation Incentive

The City shall explore establishing a development incentive for Side-Street Plazas at select intersections along San Pablo Avenue, as described in the *PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas* policy. Residential or mixed-use projects at select intersections may receive an incentive if they contribute to designing, building, and/or maintaining a Side-Street Plaza.

Incentive: Projects that contribute to the design, construction or maintenance of a qualifying Side-Street Plaza would receive the following incentives.

- Count it against any setback, lot coverage, or frontage requirements,
- Count each 1 square foot of Side-Street Plaza towards two 2 square feet of required private open space. Eligible credits and incentives, including this provision, may reduce the project's required Private Open Space by no more than 70%.
- Receive fee waivers for any associated park or public works review of facilities,
- Qualify to receive public open space community benefit funds to subsidize amenities and programming of the spaces, and/or
- Receive waivers of other discretionary City requirements.

LU-S.4 Development Standards

The development standards in Table 3.1 define what types of development would be permitted while ensuring new buildings contribute to an active, walkable, and inclusive Specific Plan Area. The standards support a variety of building types and intensities, consistent with the Specific Plan's Land Use and Zoning Policies and Standards, while focusing the greatest development capacity such as height, floor area ratio (FAR), and number of stories in the Tier 1

² See potential in lieu fee in LU- S.5 Medium Development and Mid-Rise Public Open Space Requirement.

and Tier 2 Nodes. These location-specific development standards reflect community priorities to concentrate growth near transit and key commercial intersections, while supporting context-sensitive infill in other areas of the Plan Area. These baseline regulations are complemented by the Specific Plan's Ground Floor Use Standards and Objective Design Standards (see **Appendix E**). The development standards may also be modified by future State legislation and regulations. Together these tools are intended to foster predictable, equitable, and high-quality development outcomes throughout the Specific Plan Area.

Table 3.1 Development Standards

Zone/ Category	Max. FAR	Max. Height	Max Stories	Min. Density	Private (Usable) Open Space [1]	Lot Line Setbacks [5]		Max Lot Coverage
Existing C-W								
Single-Use	3.0	40'	3	-	40 sq. ft.	Abutting/ Confronting a Non-residential District:	No min	100%
Mixed-Use	3.0	50'	4 [2]	-	40 sq. ft.	Abutting/ Confronting a Lot in a Residential District:	<p>Front: Same as required in adjacent Residential District</p> <p>Rear: 10 feet or 10% of the lot depth, whichever is less</p> <p>Interior side: 5 ft.</p> <p>Street side: Same as required in adjacent Residential District</p>	
Proposed C-SP								
Outside Nodes								
Single-Use	3.0	40'	3	135 du/ac (residential only)	40 sq. ft.	Abutting/ Confronting a Non-residential District:	<p>Non-Residential Build-To Line (BTL) [4]: The required BTL shall be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The front property line, or • the edge of a recorded sidewalk easement or POPOS that functions as the public space. <p>Residential Front/Street Side Setback: Where ground floor residential units front a public street or publicly accessible street/pathway the first two floors or first floor with a minimum 12 feet clear height from sidewalk grade shall be set back a minimum of 4 feet and maximum of 6 feet (for ADA unit minimum is 6 feet and maximum is 8 feet).</p>	100%

Zone/ Category	Max. FAR	Max. Height	Max Stories	Min. Density	Private (Usable) Open Space [1]	Lot Line Setbacks [5]		Max Lot Coverage
Residential Mixed-Use As defined by SPASP	3.0	55'	5 [3]	135 du/ac	40 sq. ft.	Abutting/ Confronting a Lot in a Residential District:	<p>Non-Residential Build-To Line (BTL) [4]: The required BTL shall be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The front property line, or • the edge of a recorded sidewalk easement or POPOS that functions as the public space. <p>Residential Front/Street Side Setback: Where ground floor residential units front a public street or publicly-accessible street/pathway the first two floors or first floor with a minimum 12 feet clear height from sidewalk grade shall be set back a minimum of 4 feet and maximum of 6 feet (for ADA unit minimum is 6 feet and maximum is 8 feet).</p> <p>Rear: 10 feet or 10% of the lot depth, whichever is less</p> <p>Interior side: 5 ft.</p> <p>Street side: Same as required in adjacent Residential District</p>	
Nodes								
Residential Mixed-Use						Abutting/ Confronting a Non-residential District:	<p>Non-Residential Build-To Line (BTL) [4]: The required BTL shall be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The front property line, or <p>the edge of a recorded sidewalk easement or POPOS that functions as the public space.</p>	100%
Tier 1 Nodes (Ashby, University, Gilman)	4.75	85'	8 [3]	150 du/ac	40 sq. ft.	Abutting/ Confronting a Lot in a Residential District:	<p>Non-Residential Build-To Line (BTL) [4]: The required BTL shall be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The front property line, or 	

Zone/ Category	Max. FAR	Max. Height	Max Stories	Min. Density	Private (Usable) Open Space [1]	Lot Line Setbacks [5]	Max Lot Coverage
Tier 2 Nodes (Dwight, Cedar)	3.75	65'	6 [3]	135 du/ac	40 sq. ft.	the edge of a recorded sidewalk easement or POPOS that functions as the public space. Rear: 10 feet or 10% of the lot depth, whichever is less Interior side: 5 ft. Street side: Same as required in adjacent Residential District	
Commercial / Light-industrial	3.0	40'	3	-	None		

Notes:

1. per dwelling unit or live/work unit; no minimum per group living accommodation resident.
2. The fourth floor must be used for residential or live/work purposes.
3. The fourth and floors above must be used for residential or live/work purposes.
4. A minimum of 75% of the building frontage shall be built to the Built-To Line (BTL). Up to 25% of the building façade may be located behind the maximum setback to allow for massing breaks, forecourts, plazas, etc. Publicly accessible plazas/open spaces may be subtracted from the overall facade length to calculate the minimum percentage of building facade to be located within the setback range. Building façade setbacks are calculated separately for building frontage onto publicly accessible plazas/open spaces.
5. See also Sidewalk and Public Realm Improvement Standards in Chapter 5 – Streets – Transportation and Public Realm.
6. For the Specific Plan Area, Private Open Space is the equivalent term of “Usable Open Space” as defined in the Zoning Code. This term is used, because the Plan allows for publicly accessible open space on private properties that is “usable” in broader meaning. There are two categories of Private Open Space (**see Appendix E: Objective Design Standards** for a full definition.)
 - **Common Private Open Space.** Usable Open Space provided for the shared use of residents and authorized guests of the residential project (see ODS.57-58).
 - **Personal Private Open Space.** Usable Open Space provided for the exclusive use of an individual dwelling unit’s occupants (see ODS.59)

LU-S.5 Medium / Mid-Rise Development Public Open Space Requirement

Require that Medium/Mid-Rise developments within the Nodes provide privately owned and publicly accessible open space (POPOS) on-site.

Standard

- **Applicability:** Developments within Nodes with a site larger than 14,000 square feet, or exceed 65,000 square feet of gross floor area, or are at least 7 stories in height.
- **Minimum Open Space Area:** A minimum 5% of site area, or 800 square feet, whichever is greater.
- **Dimension:** Must have a minimum dimension of 20 feet in any direction to ensure usability
- **Access:** Public access must be provided daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., or at least during daylight hours. It may open earlier or later to support adjacent and nearby businesses or on-site commercial activity, such as a coffee cart.
- **An Information panel** must be provided that states the public's right to use the space, access hours, and identifies the party responsible for maintenance. Incorporate visible wayfinding signage where appropriate.
- **Location:** Must be at ground level or on a podium visible and accessible from San Pablo Avenue or an intersecting street.
 - Portions of the building at or above the second story may project over a POPOS by up to 6 feet.
- Where a POPOS has a clear vertical volume of 3 stories or more, the building may fully bridge or cover the POPOS with upper stories (i.e., the POPOS may be entirely roofed/overhung by the building.
- **Maintenance:** A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the property owner/manager and the City of Berkeley shall establish ongoing maintenance responsibilities.
- **Alternatives to On-Site Provision:**
 - In-lieu fee payment to a San Pablo Avenue Open Space Fund; or
 - Combination of on-site POPOS, minimum of 400 square feet, and proportional in-lieu fee payment to achieve equivalent public benefit.
- **Credits:** On-site POPOS may count toward private open space requirements for residential projects if they meet specified design standards with 1 square foot of POPOS off-setting 2 square feet for private open space.

LU-S.6 New Development Amenities

Require 50% of new development residential amenities to be on the ground floor (and to be sidewalk facing and visible, including but not limited to gyms, coworking, and meeting spaces). Private Open Space is excluded from this requirement.

LU-S.7 Streetscape Standards

Require that new developments implement streetscape standards (see *Streetscape* in **Chapter 5**) on their San Pablo Avenue frontage; this is an existing requirement that will be maintained by the Specific Plan.

LU-S.8 Mid-Block Passages

Require public mid-block connections for development sites that span the full depth of a block and include more than 170 linear feet of site frontage along San Pablo Avenue or University Avenue. Mid-block connections may be

differentiated between **private publicly-accessible streets** designed to accommodate low-volume vehicular connection and **Mid-Block Passages**, designed for pedestrian and bicycle use only.

Mid-Block Passage Standard: As described in *PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces*, are considered a type of POPOS and may qualify for incentives outlined below.

- **Size, dimension and design** shall comply the ODS.61 in **Appendix E**.
- **Location:** Must be at ground level and accessible from San Pablo Avenue or University Avenue.
- **Information panel** that states the public’s right to use the space, access hours, and identifies the party responsible for maintenance. Incorporate visible wayfinding signage where appropriate.
- **Maintenance and Operation:** property owner is responsible of maintenance and operations in the Mid-Block Passage, including and not exclusively, lighting, stormdrainage, landscaping, and paving.

Incentive: Qualifying Mid-Block Passages will receive the following incentives.

- Count each square foot of Mid-Block Passage toward 1.5 square feet of required private open space. Eligible credits and incentives, including this provision, may satisfy no more than 70% of the project’s required Open Space.

Private publicly accessible streets shall be designed to accommodate bicycles and vehicles in accordance with the Berkeley Municipal Code and applicable Emergency and Fire Access requirements, including minimum and maximum width, turning radii, and clearance dimensions necessary to accommodate service and emergency vehicles.

When two adjacent sites are developed concurrently, developers are encouraged to coordinate site planning efforts to identify and implement opportunities for mid-block connections or shared access improvements that enhance pedestrian and multimodal circulation.

Allowed Uses

LU-P.7 Encourage a Mix of Community-Serving Uses

The Specific Plan aims to provide for a broad mix of land uses that will contribute to a vibrant, economically resilient, and pedestrian-oriented Plan Area that both serves the community and supports small business developments, while preserving existing legacy businesses and cultural institutions. The following uses are encouraged within the Plan Area:

Residential Uses - Housing is allowed anywhere in the Plan Area, either as standalone residential or as part of a mixed-use project depending on location. Ground-floor residential is allowed outside of the Nodes and permitted in select Nodes along side-streets (see *Ground Floor Typologies and Figure ODS.1 in Appendix E: Objective Design Standards*).

Retail & Commercial – General retail and commercial, including restaurants and café uses, are allowed throughout the Plan Area, with emphasis on clustering at Nodes. Pop-ups and temporary retail are also permitted with streamlined approvals to reduce vacancies, enhance commercial vibrancy, and support small business.

Public & Quasi-Public – Community and civic uses such as community centers, libraries, educational uses and cultural institutions are allowed throughout the Plan Area, including within the Nodes.

Office Uses & Workspaces – Professional and medical offices, and co-working spaces, are permitted in the Plan Area, including on the ground floor within Tier 2 Nodes subject to design standards (see Figure 3.4). Artist workspaces, maker workshops, and compatible light-industrial uses are also permitted.

Arts & Entertainment - Arts, entertainment, gallery, and studio spaces are allowed and strongly encouraged in the Plan Area.

LU-P.8 Expand the list of Allowed Uses and Allowed Temporary Uses

Allowed Uses: Expand the list to include maker-spaces, galleries, office uses, and temporary pop-ups. By-right Uses (or permitted with Zoning Certificate):

- Support an expanded list of allowed uses by right, compared to C-W zone, to encourage community gathering space, and allow a broader range of community-oriented commercial and light-industrial activities.
- Allow office uses, public markets, co-working spaces, galleries, maker spaces, live-work, and other third spaces with a Zoning Certificate, while excluding heavy-industrial uses incompatible with mixed-use development.
- Maintain the current zoning approach for Research and Development (R&D) uses. Under 20,000 square feet they may proceed with a Zoning Certificate, while uses over 20,000 square feet or larger require an Administrative Use Permit.

Temporary Uses: Expand temporary uses to allow for a variety of businesses to reduce vacancies and support small business creation.

Affordable Housing:

- Allow 100% affordable housing conversion of existing non-residential buildings, consistent with State Law.
- Allow 100% affordable housing or multi-family residential projects that include family-sized housing on MU-LI zoned parcels (See LU-P.3)

LU-P.9 Define Residential Mixed-Use with On-Site and In-Lieu Options

To provide for flexibility in ground floor use and support the concentration of active commercial space in Nodes, the Specific Plan would allow residential ground floors in-lieu of commercial space in mixed-use developments outside of the Nodes. Under the Specific Plan, Residential Mixed-Use refers to projects with both residential and non-residential uses. Residential Mixed-Use is permitted throughout the Specific Plan Area. To be designated as Residential Mixed-Use project under this Specific Plan a development project must comply with one of the following conditions:

- **On-Site Mixed-Use:** The project must include at least 5% of the total gross floor area as non-residential use, located on the ground floor along the primary street frontage.
- **In-Lieu Mixed-Use:** For sites outside of Nodes, projects may substitute residential use in place of the required non-residential component if:
 - The developer pays a Commercial In-Lieu fee, calculated based on the square footage of omitted required non-residential space (5% of total gross floor area);
 - The fee is deposited into the San Pablo Avenue Small Business Support Fund (See ED-P.1).
 - A portion of the fees may also be used to fund the start up of the Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Specific Plan Area (see ED-P.5). Should funds be used to fund the Liaison position, following 2 years of such funding, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Liaison efforts should be prepared and a decision should be made if funding should be adjusted or discontinued.

Projects that meet either requirement shall be classified as Residential Mixed-Use for the purpose of applying development standards. Projects will be required to apply applicable Objective Design Standards (ODS) based on their ground-floor use: on-site mixed-use projects would apply commercial or non-residential ground floor ODS, and in-lieu mixed-use projects would apply residential ground floor ODS.

Ground Floor Uses

Ground floor use requirements play a critical role in shaping the pedestrian experience, supporting local businesses, and ensuring a vibrant street life. To support the Specific Plan’s goals of a more active, pedestrian-oriented, and economically resilient area, the Specific Plan introduces a revised typology of ground floor types. These categories are designed to respond to different context conditions – such as Node tier – while providing flexibility to adapt to changing demand over time.

LU-P.10 Establish Ground Floor Typologies to Promote Pedestrian-Scaled and Flexible Ground Floors

Establish four ground floor typologies—Storefront, Other Non-Residential, Active Residential, and Live-work—with tailored design standards to support an adaptable and walkable public realm. Prioritize transparency, architectural articulation, and seamless adaptability between commercial uses (*Ground Floor Typologies* in **Appendix E: Objective Design Standards** for applicable standards). Additional ground floor typologies may be added to the objective development standards to achieve the Plan’s vision.

Ground Floor Typologies

- **Storefront Ground Floor:** Designed to allow for more visibility from the sidewalk to support pedestrian-oriented commercial activity, such as restaurants, retail, and certain office types. These standards are designed to ensure compatibility with a wide range of uses to facilitate an easy change of use from retail to restaurant, gym, or similar active commercial or service use. Storefront Ground Floor Design is required within the Nodes (exceptions apply see **Appendix E: Objective Design Standards** Figure ODS.1).
- **Other Non-residential Ground Floor:** Designed to allow for all non-residential uses and provides more flexible Objective Design Standards.
- **Active Residential Ground Floor:** Designed to allow residential units at the ground floor, subject to Objective Design Standards that require a transition or connection from the public sidewalk to a residential unit, including entry patios, stoops, shallow landscaped setbacks, etc.
- **Live-work:** Design to allow spaces for both living and working at the ground floor level, subject to Objective Design Standards.

San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program

State Density Bonus law allows developers to increase the allowable residential density of a project in exchange for providing affordable housing within their developments. The law also allows developers to waive, reduce or modify development standards, such as setbacks, design standards, and open space requirements, to accommodate the additional units.

Throughout the Specific Plan’s community engagement process, local residents emphasized housing goals that extend beyond simply increasing unit production. Key priorities included improving housing affordability, ensuring high-quality housing design that fosters social connection, and increased public open space and community gathering areas.

Establishing a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program would provide an alternative to the State Density Bonus within the Plan Area and allow the City to achieve affordable housing production while maintaining greater control over the form and character of development in the Specific Plan Area. Under this program, a project could choose either the State Density Bonus or the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus, but not both. Selecting the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus would mean that the project chooses to opt-out of the State Density Bonus, including the rights to some waivers and concessions. This would ensure that the City can offer a clear, locally administered path to additional density while retaining the ability to define which waivers and concessions apply.

The San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus would generate dedicated funding for the City’s existing Affordable Housing Trust Fund, a proven program with a backlog of projects in need of additional funding. By offering a local alternative to the State Density Bonus, the City would still receive an affordable housing benefit, but would maintain control over which waivers and concessions would apply to eligible projects, ensuring that important urban design standards and public realm priorities from this Specific Plan—such as active ground-floor frontages and open space requirements—are protected.

It is worth noting that Berkeley’s Inclusionary Housing policies would continue to apply to all market-rate development, ensuring that every project contributes to affordable housing—either through on-site units or in-lieu fees. Because of these requirements, Berkeley does not rely solely on the State Density Bonus program to create affordable housing. Instead, the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus would provide an additional pathway for developers to achieve equivalent density while giving the City stronger tools to align new development with community objectives, particularly in housing affordability, urban design, and public realm improvements.

LU-P.11 Establish a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program

Establish a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program by developing an affordable-housing benefit for new residential projects that is exclusively met through paying an in-lieu fee to the City’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The following components shall be included in the program:

Program Exclusivity

- A project may utilize only the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program and would be required to waive the ability to use the State Density Bonus for the project.
- Developers must declare their selected program at the time of application, and the selected program’s provisions would govern density, incentives, waivers, and concessions.

Affordable Housing Contribution

- In-lieu fee shall be placed in the City of Berkeley’s Housing Trust Fund equivalent to the City’s inclusionary housing in-lieu fee (currently \$62.83 per square foot of residential floor area).
- Funds shall be prioritized for projects within the Plan Area to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing.
- Fund management and allocation will be determined in accordance with the City of Berkeley Housing Trust Fund and Small Sites Program Guidelines, as amended.

Incentives

- Bonus density, waivers, and concessions under this program shall mirror the structure of the State Density Bonus, with the exception that the City may identify certain standards (e.g., ground-floor design, step-backs, or public realm improvements) that are not eligible for waiver under the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program, such as:
 - Ground floor frontage use requirements, including their corresponding ODS.
 - Medium Development and Mid-Rise Public Open Space Requirement
 - Streetscape Standards
 - Maximum Building Length (ODS)
 - Reduced Massing for Large/High-Rise Buildings (ODS)
 - Vertical Rhythm/Façade Articulation (ODS)
 - Minor Modulation/Massing Breaks (ODS)
 - Ornamental Façade (ODS)
 - Façade Articulation (ODS)

- Blank Walls (ODS)
- Treatment of All Facades (ODS)
- Through-Block and Access and Connectivity (ODS)
- Parking ODS Standards

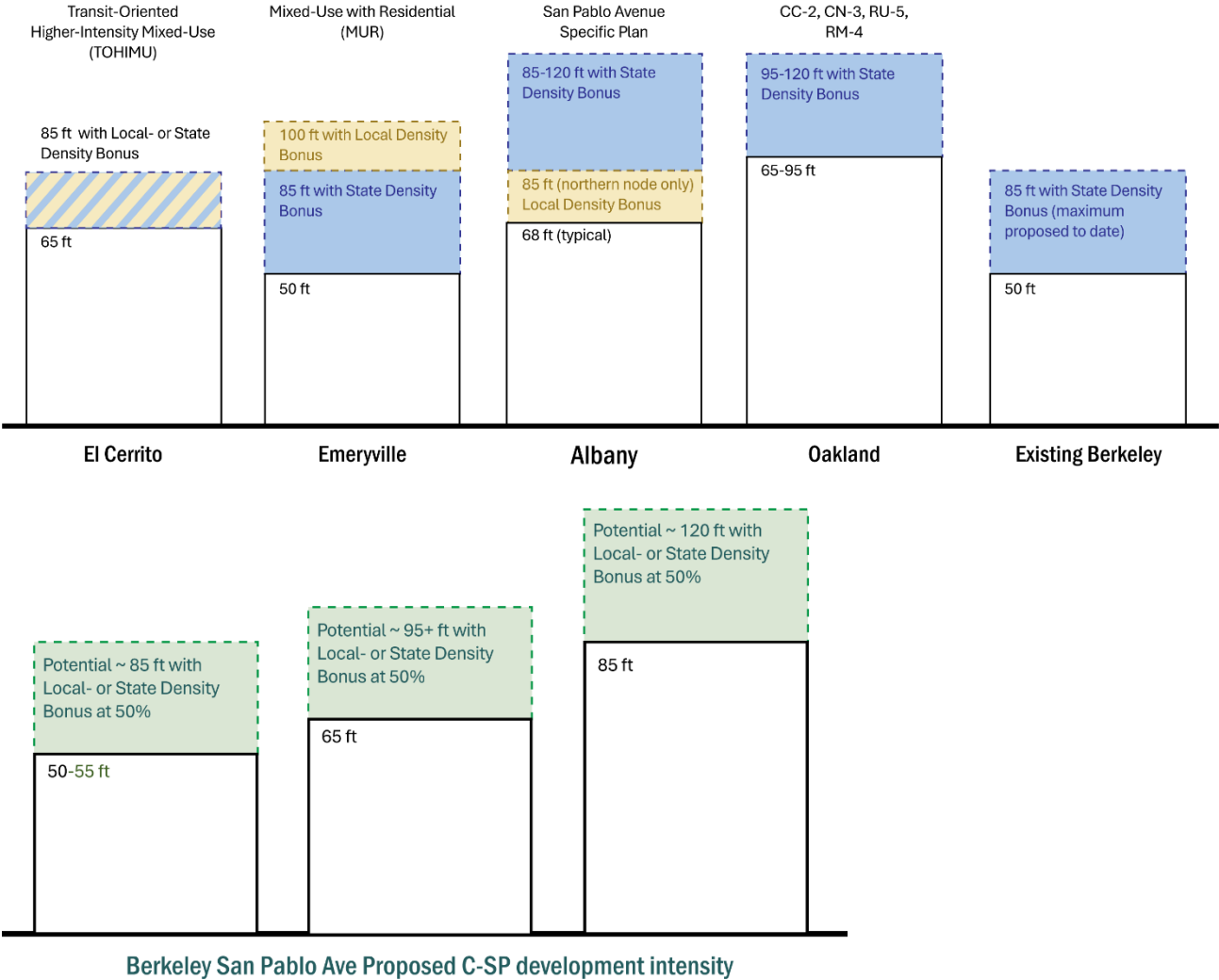


Figure 3.5: Specific Plan proposed density bonus and comparison with Berkeley and other cities. Source: CD+A, 2025

Other Policies and Programs

These are some policies and programs that are related to other citywide policies and programs, where implementation would need coordination with citywide efforts.

LU-P.12 Artists Housing and Cultural Districts

State law allows for locally-required affordable housing to be set aside for artists. This would apply to new affordable housing developments within one-half mile of State-designated cultural district or a similar local designated district. The Plan Area is not currently within one-half mile of such a district. However, if the City of Berkeley designates a cultural district that is within that proximity, consideration should be given to create an affordable artist housing overlay to a portion of the Plan Area. This should be coordinated with the City Civic Arts Commission/Housing Advisory Commission. This approach would support a variety of housing supply while strengthening cultural representation and identity within the Plan Area.

Boundary Adjustments and Rezonings

The Specific Plan includes the establishment of the C-SP zone and the C-SP Tier 1 and Tier 2 Nodes. To ensure consistency with the City's Zoning Ordinance, the following rezoning actions will be proposed as part of the Specific Plan approval/adoption process:

- Rezone existing C-W zoned parcels within the Specific Plan Area to C-SP.
- Rezone existing C-U parcels within the Specific Plan Area to C-SP
- Rezone 12 parcels to eliminate existing split-zoned properties. These changes are limited to parcels fronting on either San Pablo Avenue or University Avenue, and would result in the subject parcel being zoned C-SP. In cases where the split zoned portion of a parcel fronts on a side-street, the split zone is maintained.
- Establish C-SP Nodes and remove the C-W Designated Nodes and the C-U Node that is located within the Specific Plan Area

Opportunity Sites and Potential Buildout

The most substantial redevelopment opportunities in the Plan Area consist of the 51 Housing Opportunity Sites identified in the City's Housing Element Update (HEU), along with an additional 15 sites identified through the Specific Plan process.

In the HEU, Opportunity Sites are one of three categories in the State-required Housing Sites Inventory, which demonstrates that the City has adequate land to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The three site types are:

- Likely Sites – parcels with approved housing projects (at the time of the HEU).
- Pipeline Sites – parcels with housing applications in process (at the time of the HEU).
- Opportunity Sites – parcels without active redevelopment applications that are either vacant or underutilized and have near-term potential for residential or mixed-use development.

The classification of Opportunity Sites is important for State housing law because it establishes a jurisdiction's ability to meet RHNA targets without relying on market speculation. Opportunity Sites are typically those where zoning, parcel size, infrastructure capacity, and market conditions make residential development feasible within the HEU's planning period.

The full Housing Element Site's Inventory is available in the adopted HEU on the City's website.

During the Specific Plan process, an additional 15 parcels were identified that meet the HEU Opportunity Site criteria but were not included in the original inventory. These include parcels that:

- Have become eligible as Opportunity Sites since adoption of the HEU,
- Share ownership with a HEU-listed Opportunity Site, and/or
- Have site-specific characteristics warranting inclusion despite being omitted from the original list.

Several of these additional sites are located at key intersections within the Plan Area Nodes, where increased residential density can also reinforce vitality and improve access to services.

The HEU sites and additional 15 sites identified the Plan are provided in **Appendix B: Opportunity Sites**.

Development Potential and Buildout

The Specific Plan estimates the amount of new development that could occur in the Plan Area during the Specific Plan’s planning period. The estimates for this are based on three categories of development potential:

1. HEU Likely and Pipeline Sites – already developed or assumed to develop under existing C-W zoning and development standards.
2. HEU Opportunity Sites – assumed to develop under proposed Specific Plan zoning and development standards.
3. New SPASP Opportunity Sites – also assumed to develop under proposed Specific Plan zoning and development standards.

In addition to housing, the buildout analysis estimates changes in commercial square footage as parcels redevelop. The results are summarized in Table 3.2.

As shown, under maximum buildout assumptions, the Plan Area could accommodate approximately 6,700 new multi-family housing units. This level of housing growth would support an estimated 16,875 new residents, based on the HEU’s average household size for multi-family residential.

This potential residential growth represents a significant share of Berkeley’s overall housing strategy. In the context of the Housing Element, the Plan Area would account for a substantial portion of new housing capacity in transit-rich locations. The Plan Area’s growth also leverages existing infrastructure and facilitates the creation of a more walkable, mixed-use district.

It’s important to note that approximately 3,500 of these housing units are already anticipated in the HEU, meaning the Specific Plan would increase the maximum potential buildout by roughly 3,200 units. The estimate represents maximum development capacity; actual development will depend on market conditions, property owner decisions, and other factors, and not all sites are expected to redevelop within the Specific Plan’s time horizon.

The zoning changes associated with increasing the opportunity for residential development may affect the amount of commercial square footage within the Plan Area. Although a net decrease in commercial square footage is estimated, it is difficult to quantify the extent of this change under existing zoning given the shifting demand for commercial uses and the high rate of ground floor vacancy. It is expected that the increase in residential development would incrementally reduce opportunities for new commercial uses and eliminate some existing commercial uses. This net reduction may appear counter to economic development goals, but the intent of the policies is to facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties over time (i.e., properties consisting of low-intensity uses with limited pedestrian engagement) replacing such uses with higher-quality, more flexible commercial spaces integrated into

Table 3.2 Estimated Maximum Buildout

Type	Unit / Sq. Ft.
Residential (Multi-Family)	Units
HEU Likely and Pipeline Sites	1,500
HEU Opportunity Sites	2,900
New SPASP Opportunity Sites	2,300
Total New Dwelling Units (rounded)	6,700
Commercial	Sq. Ft.
New Commercial	92,000
Lost due to New Housing	413,000
Net Change	-321,000
Existing	1,491,000
Total After Buildout (rounded)	1,170,000

mixed-use buildings, particularly within the established Nodes. This will improve commercial and other business viability, support more a diverse mix of uses and reduce long-term vacancy without compromising an engaging public realm.

A full description of the SPASP Buildout is provided in **Appendix C: Buildout Summary Memorandum**.



Chapter 4 Economic Development

- Public Review Draft -

San Pablo Avenue has long served as a vital commercial corridor in West Berkeley – home to many small, locally owned businesses, light industrial uses, service providers, and community institutions that reflect the neighborhood’s cultural and economic diversity. Today, the corridor faces both opportunities and challenges: shifting retail dynamics, market conditions, and storefront vacancies are transforming the business landscape.

“It is our urban center or spine. Be more for the people that live here. [We are] missing boutiques, groceries, and practical things.”

– Community Member

Throughout the Specific Plan process, the community voiced that San Pablo Avenue should be a lively and inclusive corridor that represents and serves the people who live nearby and supports new residents as homes are built in the Plan Area. Community members, local business owners, and stakeholders voiced concerns about the risk of commercial displacement, the loss of their historically diverse cultural identities, and the lack of support for existing businesses. Participants at community engagement events emphasized the need to retain and grow small businesses, fill empty storefronts with active

and relevant uses, and improve San Pablo Avenue’s overall appeal and visibility. Many shared a vision of San Pablo Avenue as a culturally vibrant, economically inclusive mixed-use district where it is possible to live, work, and shop locally.

An assessment conducted as part of this Specific Plan indicates that approximately 90% of the brick-and-mortar businesses are locally owned. Those establishments continue to provide a diverse mix of commercial activities (see Figure 4.1).

This chapter establishes policies that respond to these concerns and aspirations. It presents strategies to retain and grow local businesses, activate vacant or underutilized spaces, and foster a thriving commercial environment that reflects the diversity of the Plan Area. The policies advance the community’s vision for a more vibrant business environment and supportive public realm, including the following objectives:

- Increase business activity by supporting existing businesses and making it easier for new local businesses to locate and thrive within the Plan Area
- Support commercial vitality and reduce ground-floor vacancies by providing financial assistance for local businesses improvements and by encouraging the concentration of new commercial development within focused Nodes.
- Strengthen connection between public and private spaces by establishing partnerships for indoor and outdoor events and identifying collaborative opportunities to fund and maintain streetscape and public realm improvements

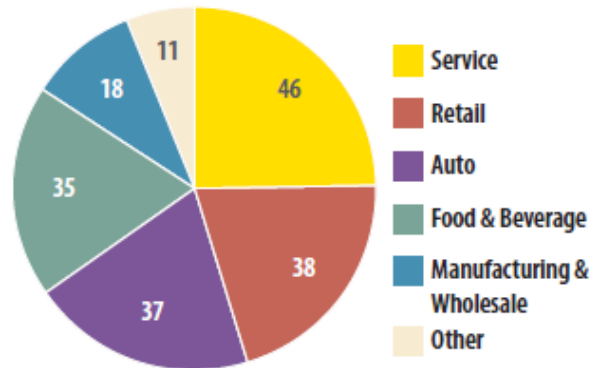


Figure 4.1 Locally owned Businesses on San Pablo Avenue. Source: Financial Department Active Business License Data, In-person observation. August 2023.

While this chapter is focused on strategies for business support and commercial vitality, many of the Specific Plan’s economic goals are also advanced through policies in other chapters – particularly **Chapter 3 Land Use** and **Chapter 5 Streets**. These chapters address how and where ground-floor retail is encouraged, how storefronts are designed to engage pedestrians, and how San Pablo Avenue’s physical environment supports a vibrant mixed-use district. Land Use policies shape the distribution of commercial activity by establishing new strategies to focus retail and services at key Nodes and allow for flexible uses to meet local needs. **Chapter 5 Streets’** public realm policies aim to improve the pedestrian experience through wider sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, and other amenities to make the corridor more inviting for customers, businesses, and workers.

Together, these policies and programs create a framework to implement the vision of San Pablo Avenue as a mixed-use district that welcomes everyone—residents, workers, artists, entrepreneurs, and visitors—with local businesses that are diverse, stable, and essential to community life.

Relevant Policies

LU-P.2 *Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

LU-P.5 *Planning and Commercial Permit Streamlining* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

LU-P.7 *Encourage a Mix of Community-Serving Uses* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

LU-P.8 *Expand the list of Allowed Uses and Allowed Temporary Uses* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

LU-P.9 *Define Residential Mixed-Use with On-Site and In-Lieu Options* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

LU-P.10 *Establish Ground Floor Typologies to Promote Pedestrian-Scaled and Flexible Ground Floors* (see Chapter 3 Land Use)

PR-P.2 *Sidewalk Easements* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

PR-P.3 *Improve Street Lighting for the Safety and Comfort of all Users* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

PR-P.12 *Facilitate Wayfinding and Placemaking Programs* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

PR-P.14 *Side-Street Plazas* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

PR-P.15 *Support Use and Creation of Parklets* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

PR-P.18 *Privately Owned Public Open Spaces* (see Chapter 5 Streets)

Interview with Business Owners

As part of Marcel’s Municipal Artist-in-Residence program, he conducted interviews with business owners along San Pablo Avenue. Here are two of those conversations:

Shirley Everett-Dicko, Everett & Jones

Hi, Shirley! I’m so excited to be here at Everett and Jones Barbecue. It’s such an iconic place, especially with all the changes happening in the neighborhood. Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your role here?

Shirley Everett-Dicko: Absolutely! My name is Shirley Everett-Dicko, and I’m one of the original owners of this location, which opened in 1974. My mom, Dorothy Turner, along with my seven sisters and brother, helped start it. This was our second location—the first was in Oakland.

Can you share a little about your mom’s journey into the barbecue business?

My mom’s story began on Seventh Street in West Oakland, once known as the “Harlem of the West.” In the 1960s, she worked at Jenkins Barbecue, run by Reverend Jenkins, our church pastor. Later, she became the first manager at Flint’s Barbecue. With help from Harry Mott, she opened Everett and Jones in 1973.

And how did you all choose the name “Everett and Jones”?

Everett is my dad’s name, and Jones was my sister’s married name. It’s always been a family affair!

Tell us about your famous barbecue sauce.

That’s Mom’s recipe! We started bottling it in 1983 after a customer suggested it, and it’s been a hit ever since.

I’ve heard this place also has ties to the Black Panther movement.

Yes! The East Bay Dragons Motorcycle Club—one of the oldest Black motorcycle clubs in the U.S.—used to provide security for the Black Panther Party. Our first location was next to their clubhouse, so we’ve always shared that community connection.

How have you seen the San Pablo corridor change over the years?

It’s changed a lot. There used to be several barbecue restaurants and plenty of foot traffic from university students. Now there are fewer spots, but we’re still holding our ground!

For someone visiting for the first time, what should they order?

Definitely the ribs and links combo—with potato salad and our homemade sauce. It’s the best way to experience our barbecue.

Anything else you’d like people to know?

Just that Everett and Jones has always been a gathering place. We’re proud to keep our family legacy and community spirit alive.



Figure 4.2 Shirley Everett-Dicko and her family at Everett & Jones (1955 San Pablo Ave, Berkeley, CA 94702) Photo by

Jaime Alejo, Mi Ranchito Market

Hi, Jaime! We're here at Mi Ranchito Market. Could you tell us a bit about yourself and your role here?

Jaime Alejo: Of course! I'm Jaime Alejo, the store manager. I've been here for many years and love being part of this family dream that started over twenty-four years ago. My dad wanted to build something for our family, and now my four siblings and I work together to keep it going.

How did it all begin?

It all started with my dad's dream to create a place where the community could feel at home. In the beginning, we were a small store, but over time we've grown. Despite challenges and changes in the neighborhood, we're still here—always dreaming big and providing good service.

How has the community around the market changed?

It's changed a lot. Most of our customers used to be Latino, and now there's a mix of cultures from everywhere. Sadly, many Latinos have had to leave because of the high cost of living. Most of our current customers are students or new residents. Gentrification has really impacted our community.

How have you adapted to these changes?

The key has been to stay flexible and welcoming. We try to keep a family-friendly environment where everyone feels at home. Many customers tell us they find comfort here, and we love helping them discover products that remind them of their homeland.

What kind of products do you offer?

We carry a wide range of Mexican products—fresh foods, household items, meats, and even some Brazilian and Peruvian goods. Our fresh meat section is one of our biggest draws.

What would you say to someone who's never visited Mi Ranchito?

Come anytime! We're open from eight to eight, and there's always something new to discover. Whether you're looking for a specific ingredient or just want to chat, you'll feel welcome here.

What changes would you like to see in Berkeley to support small businesses?

I hope the city provides more support and subsidies for small businesses. Gentrification has raised costs, making it hard to compete.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Even though times are tough, we're still here thanks to our community's support. Every customer matters, and we hope to keep being a place where everyone feels at home.



Figure 4.3 Jaime Alejo and his brother at Mi Ranchito Bay Side Market. Photo by Marcel Pardo Ariza, 2025

Economic Development Policies and Programs

Small Business Support

Throughout the Specific Plan engagement process, community members expressed the importance of retaining existing businesses and called for greater City support to improve conditions for new small businesses.

A key concern raised by business owners, developers, commercial real estate agents, and Office of Economic Development staff is the high cost of tenant improvements (TI) required to make existing ground floor retail spaces move-in ready. For both new and existing spaces, the need for infrastructure such as grease ducts, commercial kitchen ventilation systems, and ADA-compliant restrooms poses significant barriers for small business owners, even when lease terms are favorable. In many cases, new commercial spaces enter the market as “cold shell,” meaning they lack not only the necessary infrastructure but also basic finishes such as concrete slab floors, wall finishes or ceilings. While this provides flexibility for tenants to customize their spaces, it also results in higher TI costs and ultimately, higher rents, which often negate the value of any owner-contribution toward buildout.

To address this issue in future mixed-use development, ODS.23 to 26 introduce new standards for ground floor interior buildout. In combination with other proposed policies and standards, such as establishing a Plan Area-focused business and commercial space loan and grant program, these measures are intended to reduce the TI cost, shorten start-up periods, and help decrease commercial vacancies.

ED-P.1 Specific Plan Focused - Small Business Support Fund

Establish a Specific Plan focused Small Business Support Fund to augment the City’s existing [Revolving Loan Fund](#) program. The Fund would provide targeted financial and technical assistance to small businesses, particularly those that are locally owned¹, culturally significant, at risk of displacement, or owned by people of color, women, and other underserved applicants. The purpose of the Small Business Support Fund is to strengthen commercial activity along San Pablo Avenue by supporting both new and existing businesses. Eligible uses may include financing for tenant improvements, relocation costs, façade improvements, and outdoor improvements such as sidewalk café seating and landscaping.

The Small Business Support Fund will make it more feasible for locally owned businesses to occupy and activate ground-floor spaces along San Pablo Avenue. By offering low-interest, flexible repayment loans, this policy is intended to help small businesses finance tenant improvements, reinvest in their existing locations, or relocate within the Plan Area. The fund will prioritize tenant-ready businesses with demonstrated financial need and clear community value, ensuring that new commercial activity advances the broader vision for San Pablo Avenue as a vibrant, inclusive mixed-use district.

Over time, the Fund will also replenish itself through loan repayments, creating a sustained source of support for commercial activation and small business resilience within the Plan Area. The City shall integrate this new Fund into the management of its existing [Revolving Loan Fund](#) program or economic development funding mechanisms to ensure long-term administration stability, accountability, and alignment with broader City goals.

The Fund will be primarily financed through a commercial In-lieu fee that allows developers to substitute the required non-residential ground-floor space with residential use (see LU-P.9). The City may allocate a portion of the funds to support additional Small Business Support Programs in the Plan Area. Additional funding sources may include grants, partnerships, or targeted reinvestment of repayments to expand support for small business programs in the Plan Area.

¹ Locally owned shall be defined as having business owners that are local to Alameda County, and the business should not already have more than one location.

The following components should be included in the program:

Eligible uses of funds (in order of priority)

- **Node Priority:** Eligible uses of funds located within one of the five designated Nodes may receive the highest priority to support commercial activity at these locations, in alignment with *LU-P.2 Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses*.
 - **Developer/Building Owner Incentives:** Developers and building owners may be eligible for funding to support façade improvements and upgrades to retail spaces within designated Nodes, provided the improvements target small businesses occupying those spaces.
- **Tenant Improvements:** Loans may cover costs associated with code-required or functional interior and exterior façade or sidewalk frontage upgrades necessary for commercial occupancy. For example, an existing sidewalk may need reconstruction to meet ADA cross slope requirements for café seating. This may include kitchen grease ducts and ventilation systems, HVAC installation and upgrades, ADA-compliant restrooms and accessibility features, plumbing and electrical work, and fire/life safety improvements.
- **Business Relocation:** Assistance in relocation within the Plan Area due to redevelopment, displacements, or lease non-renewal. Eligible expenses may include move-in and tenant improvement costs in the new business location.
- **Succession Planning:** Support small and legacy businesses that have operated in the Plan Area for at least 10 years. Eligible businesses should be independently or locally owned, serve as cultural anchors, or be publicly facing and community-oriented.
- **Marketing and Branding (Limited Use):** A portion of loan proceeds may be allowed for branding, signage, website development, or participation in corridor-wide promotions.

Loan structure

- Interest-free, low-interest fixed-term loans issued through the City’s revolving loan program.
- Repayment terms tailored to small business cash flow, with potential deferral options during buildout and startup phases.
- Loans will be provided on a first-come first-served basis.

Borrower Eligibility and Disbursement Structure

- When the loan is distributed to a building owner or developer, they must agree to lease the space to qualifying local businesses for at least 10-years. During this period, the local business tenant may be replaced by another local business, if needed.
 - Developers or building owners who received funding may be required to repay the loan in full if the space is leased to a non-qualifying business.
- Business owners must be local to Alameda County, and should not already have more than one location.
- Businesses must demonstrate financial viability through a business plan and cash flow projections
- Businesses must have site control (e.g., executed lease or letter of intent)
- Loans will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis within funding cycles, with priority for businesses that are culturally significant, at risk of displacement, as well as people of color, women, and other underserved applicants.
- All recipients will be connected to technical assistance programs through the City’s Office of Economic Development.

Administration and Oversight

- Administered by the Office of Economic Development and the non-profit administrator of the existing Revolving Loan Fund.
- Funding should be for at least \$25,000 and provided in cash rather than as reimbursement.
- Establish partnerships with Community Business Organizations (CBOs) and business networks to ensure that small businesses are aware of the fund and how to apply. Potential partners include:
 - Bay Area Manufacturing Initiative

- West Berkeley Design Loop
- The Bay Area Organization of Black-Owned Businesses
- West Berkeley Artisans and Industrial Companies
- Regular performance tracking and annual reporting to City Council on fund deployment, repayment, and Plan Area impacts.
- The program, include eligible use of funds, loan structure, and borrower eligibility shall be reviewed every five years and included in the annual report to City Council.

ED-P.2 Establish Public-Private Partnerships

The City will pursue partnerships with community organizations, local institutions, merchant groups, property owners, and other stakeholders to plan, fund, and implement a range of indoor and outdoor community spaces and events that activate San Pablo Avenue, and its adjacent neighborhoods.

These partnerships should focus on creating vibrant, welcoming spaces and cultural, artistic, and family-friendly activities. Strategies may include:

- Promotion of new businesses and events in the Plan Area
- Pop-up activations in vacant storefronts
- Transformation of underused parking lots into spaces for food trucks, outdoor markets, or community gatherings
- Side-street closures for block parties, neighborhood festivals or seasonal celebrations

Existing organizations such as the West Berkeley Design Loop and the University Avenue Association already coordinate events and business promotion in the Plan Area. The City should strengthen and expand these efforts by supporting their capacity to organize corridor-wide initiatives, co-advertise, and partner with new and existing businesses.

To support event planning, the City will clearly communicate how permit processes work, provide technical assistance to organizers, and help facilitate applications with the appropriate departments for activities such as encroachment permits, temporary street closures, or outdoor vendor activations. The City will also leverage networks such as the Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) to connect associations and event organizers with City staff and resources. These meetings are critical opportunities to share information on local trends and conditions affecting small businesses, district events, policy issues, and other relevant topics.

By investing in sustained partnerships with existing and new associations and neighborhood groups, and by providing assistance to navigate permitting and coordination, the City can help build a robust calendar of events that draws visitors, supports small businesses, and strengthens the identity of San Pablo Avenue as a lively and inclusive commercial corridor.

Initially, this effort could be coordinated by a potential OED Liaison. Over time, business organizations or a potential business improvement district could assume the lead role in coordination with the City. (See *ED-P.4 Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)* and *ED-P.5 Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area*).

Business Organizations

ED-P.3 Support and Expand Existing Business Clusters

Support the formation and capacity-building of business “cluster” organizations that promote and organize the range of businesses in the Plan Area and adjacent areas, with the goal of enhancing local identity, improving business coordination, and laying groundwork for future collective action. These organizations – such as merchant associations, property-owner groups, or promotional collaboratives should be flexible in their geographic scope and

business membership, modeled after existing efforts like the West Berkeley Design Loop and the Berkeley International Marketplace.

Berkeley International Marketplace

In 2006, local business owners, in partnership with the City’s Office of Economic Development, established the “[Berkeley International Marketplace](#)” to celebrate the cultural diversity of businesses near the University Avenue intersection. While the initiative faded over time, remnants of its identity remain visible through banners on nearby light poles, and many existing businesses continue to reflect the area’s international character. In 2025, local businesses began working together to revitalize the neighborhood designation², expanding outreach and featuring more businesses along both San Pablo Avenue and University Avenue on their website.



Figure 4.4 Participating business pictures on their website. Source: [Berkeley International Marketplace, Homepage](#), Accessed October 20, 2025.

The intent is to facilitate coordination among businesses based on geographic location (Plan Area-wide, designated Nodes), business type, or ownership structure, in order to enhance visibility, branding, and mutual support. Implementation of this policy would further support inclusive and flexible organizational models that reflect the Plan Area’s diverse mix of retail, service, light industrial, and cultural uses, extending beyond traditional Business Improvement Districts (BID). This policy framework includes:

City Support and Technical Assistance

- The Office of Economic Development (OED) should offer technical assistance to emerging clusters in the form of:
 - Organizational development guidance
 - Access to City branding and marketing tools (e.g., #DiscoveredinBerkeley local marketing campaign, and connections to the the City’s Convention and Visitors Bureau known as visitberkeley). This could include assistance in design and installation of signs, banners, or similar elements to define business cluster locations or the location of member businesses that are more dispersed in the Plan Area and in adjacent areas, see Policy *PR-P.12 Facilitate Wayfinding and Placemaking Programs*.
 - Facilitation of peer learning with other local clusters or organizations
 - Grant opportunities for operational support or shared marketing campaigns
- The City should continue to provide strategic support to assist with expansion of cluster organization expansion and implementation of new projects, as well as marketing, branding and events.
- The City should continue to use the Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) meetings as a platform to connect representatives from commercial groups with the City Manager, other City staff and resources.

Pathway to Long-Term Structures

- Recognize cluster organizations as potential precursors to formalized business associations such as BIDs, if warranted and supported by members.
- Evaluate alternatives to BIDs where relevant, including merchant associations or targeted City partnerships on streetscape improvements and shared amenities.

² Nathan Dalton. “Is This West Berkeley Intersection About to Be Revived?” *Berkeleyside*, May 14, 2025.

Coordination with related policies:

- Ensure coordination with implementation of Policy *ED-P.6. Prioritize Initial Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes* to ensure improvements are aligned with cluster organization initiatives.
- Ensure coordination with Policy *ED-P.1. Small Business Support Fund* to ensure that the use of funds and business eligibility are aligned with small business needs.

Business Improvement District(s) Study

Throughout the planning process, the community expressed frustration with the lack of comfort and poor maintenance of public spaces along San Pablo Avenue. Property and business owners in the Plan Area and West Berkeley have expressed these concerns and shown interest in working together to enhance the streetscape, especially in retail-focused areas that benefit most from pedestrian activity. Members of the West Berkeley Design Loop and others in the business community have also indicated potential interest in forming a business improvement district to expand on business support efforts such as co-marketing, event programming, and enhanced maintenance and safety similar to those of the Downtown Berkeley Association.

ED-P.4 Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)

The City should collaborate with local businesses and property owners to fund and initiate a study of the feasibility and scope of establishing one or more BIDs within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area. The study should assess potential boundary options ranging from corridor-wide coverage to targeted districts centered around high-priority Nodes and may also explore extensions into adjacent areas of West Berkeley where commercial synergies and business interest are strongest.

What is a BID? A Business Improvement District is an independent non-profit organization funded primarily through property-owners and/or business owners within a defined geographic area who agree to assess (or tax) themselves to support specific improvements and/or services beyond those typically provided by the City. A BID provides a dedicated management structure, with a governing board, annual work plan, and budget, ensuring accountability and transparency. This structure gives local businesses a unified voice and increases capacity to collaborate with the City and other community organizations. Existing BIDs in Berkeley include Downtown Berkeley, Telegraph, North Shattuck, Solano, and Elmwood.

The study should analyze the feasibility of different boundaries and implementation approaches. Options to consider include:

- Establishing a pilot BID focused on one or two high-potential Nodes (such as Cedar and Dwight), particularly where new public investments or community business interest is already concentrated.
- Exploring hybrid models that begin with merchant associations or business clusters and evolve toward more formal entities.
- Examining the possibility of organizing a cross-jurisdictional or thematic district that includes parts of West Berkeley, such as the West Berkeley Design Loop.

An equity-centered outreach process should be a core component of the feasibility study. This includes engagement with a broad range of Plan Area users, including existing businesses and property owners, Black-owned businesses and cultural institutions, community-based organizations, nonprofits, arts groups, and unhoused residents who use the Plan Area's public spaces. The City should partner with CBOs and business networks to facilitate this outreach (see ED-P.2). The study should also define equity principles and desired outcomes to guide the creation and operation of any future entity, ensuring alignment with community goals.

The City should coordinate this effort with existing or proposed district initiatives in nearby areas such as Gilman District and explore opportunities for shared services or partnerships. Lessons from other Berkeley BIDs and national models—particularly those with cultural district components—should inform the structure, governance, and service priorities of a potential San Pablo Avenue district.

ED-P.5 Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area

To facilitate the implementation of the policies in this chapter, the City shall establish a San Pablo Avenue Economic Development Liaison role. The Liaison role will act as a central coordinator between businesses, property owners, developers, the City’s OED, Planning and Development, and other City departments and community organizations.

The Liaison role may be structured in several ways: through a contract with a local economic development partner, as a part-time City staff role, or as shared responsibility integrated into an existing full-time City staff role, such as one connected to adjacent business organization initiatives. Following an initial evaluation to assess the role’s impact, the City may consider allocating funding to expand the position into a dedicated part or full-time role or to integrate it more formally into an existing staff position. The City could consider the Commercial in-lieu fee as a potential funding source for this role (see LU-P.9).

Key responsibilities include:

- Lead implementation of Public-Private Partnerships in alignment with ED-P.2.
- Lead implementation of ED-P.4 to initiate a BID feasibility study, as well as support the implementation of other policies in this chapter.
- Conduct outreach and engagement, as described in ED-P.4, with businesses within the Plan Area to assess interest in forming business cluster organizations or a BID.
- Facilitate discussions among businesses and property owners.
- Provide technical assistance in navigating legal and financial requirements related to BID formation.
- Coordinate early marketing or events to build momentum and community identity.
- Work with the businesses, cultural institutions and artist groups in the community to identify potential Commercial and Cultural Districts along San Pablo Avenue, such as a maker/light industrial district, international district, or State-designated cultural district. Report on the feasibility of integrating Commercial and Cultural Districts into marketing efforts and BID feasibility study.
- Track corridor economic performance indicators (vacancy rates, tenant turnover, etc.) and assist in providing updates to OED management and the City Council.

Investment

ED-P.6: Prioritize Initial Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes

The City should focus initial public investment – such as pedestrian-scale lighting, transit-supportive infrastructure, and amenities for gathering within the Nodes, beginning with the Tier 1 University Avenue Node. Improvements should be prioritized in areas with high pedestrian demand, commercial vacancies, and community support in order to strengthen safety, catalyze economic development and build momentum for the Plan Area.

When funding is secured (e.g., through grants for streetscape or lighting, Alameda CTC improvement funding, or other public sources), priority should be the Nodes, and when the Nodes are completed, the City should conduct a follow-up study to determine the next priority locations for public investment.

Concentrating resources within the Nodes will deliver visible, coordinated improvements that can attract new businesses, enhance safety, and build community identity by targeting grant and capital funding to these locations, the City can leverage ongoing transportation projects, and align public and private investment.

Supporting Policies and Programs

The policies within this Specific Plan, including those in the Land Use and Streets chapters, are designed to work together to strengthen the Plan Area as a whole, including the local economy along San Pablo Avenue.

Land Use policies that increase housing capacity will bring more residents within walking distance of local businesses, thereby expanding the customer base and supporting neighborhood-serving retail and services. Concentrating activity in designated Nodes and promoting a broader mix of uses will enhance the vitality of these areas, helping them evolve into distinct commercial destinations. Building design standards require storefront ground floor frontage within Nodes, allowing the extent of retail and restaurant uses to adapt over time as the population in the Specific Plan Area grows.

Transportation policies are designed to make San Pablo Avenue more attractive, accessible and comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. Enhancing multimodal connections both within Berkeley and to the broader East Bay region will increase foot traffic, improve accessibility for surrounding neighborhoods, and expand regional connectivity to the Plan Area. These improvements will draw more potential customers and support the diverse mix of local and specialized businesses along San Pablo Avenue.

Public realm policies and standards to create consistent lighting and street furnishings, street trees and public realm expansions, will improve comfort and encourage longer, more frequent visits that support commercial activity.

Together, these measures are designed to enhance the livability of the San Pablo Avenue Plan Area while driving long-term economic growth.

In addition, the City continues to provide programs and services that assist local businesses and foster economic and community development. Several of these ongoing efforts present opportunities for the Specific Plan Area, and include the following:

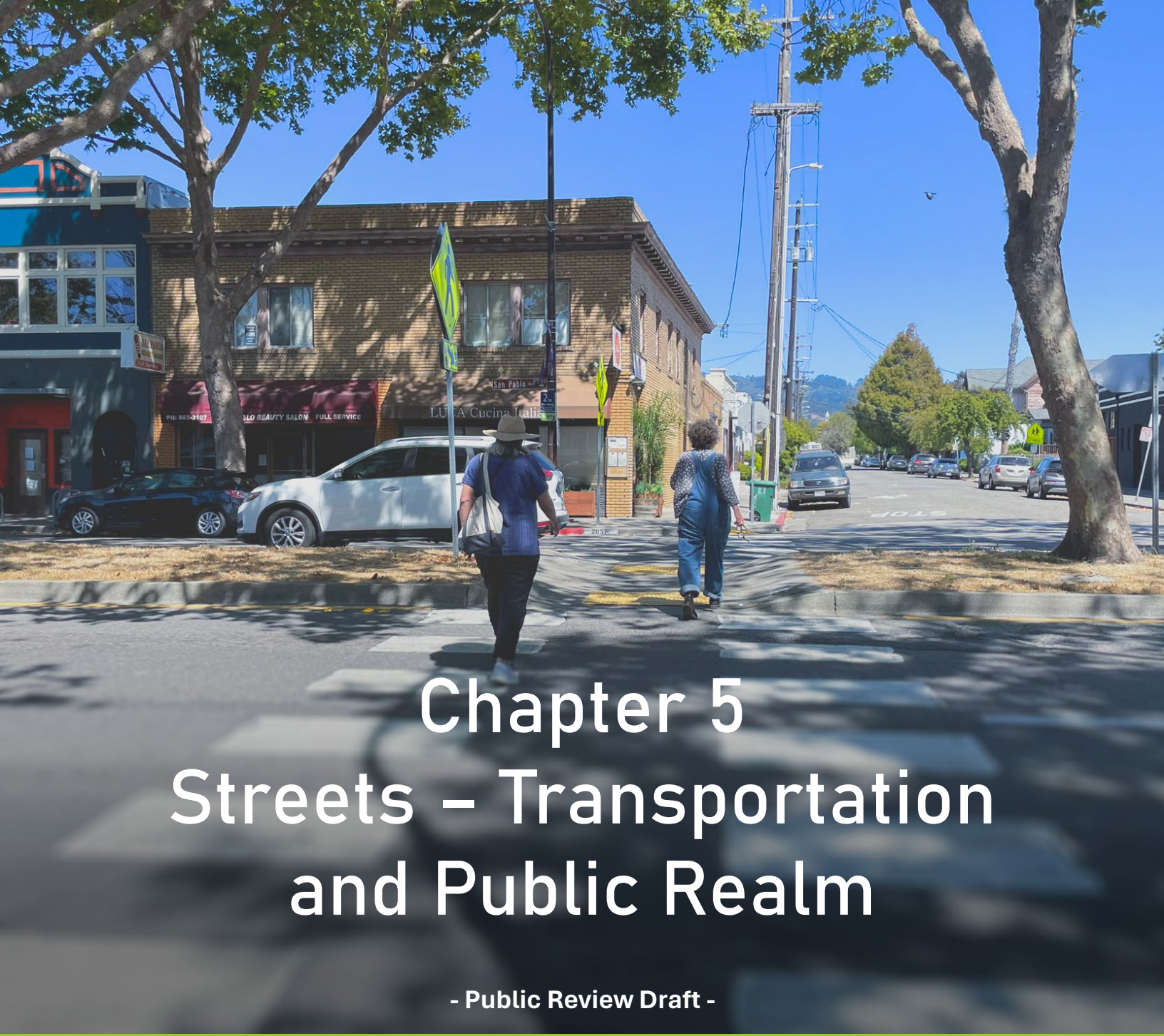
Revolving Loan Fund

The City of Berkeley's [Revolving Loan Fund](#) program can provide access to capital for businesses and entrepreneurs who seek to grow and retain jobs, but do not qualify for a traditional bank loan. The loan can be used to fund business expansion, fixed assets, equipment, working capital, and real estate. The fund has opportunities to integrate San Pablo Avenue specific programs, see *ED-P.1 San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Focused Small Business Support Fund*.

Keep Innovation in Berkeley Efforts

In 2024, the Office of Economic Development (OED) published a set of recommendations aimed to Keep Innovation in Berkeley by encouraging growth and retention of the local Research & Development (R&D) industry³. As part of this effort, the City revised zoning regulations in the C-W district, which includes areas within the Specific Plan Area, to permit R&D uses under 20,000 square feet with a Zoning Certificate (ZC), and those over 20,000 square feet with an Administrative Use Permit (AUP). These changes do not apply to ground-floor spaces within designated C-W Nodes. The updated zoning intends to strength Berkeley's innovation economy by accommodating R&D businesses, generating local employment opportunities, and reinforcing broader economic development goals.

³ [Staff presentation](#) to City Council, December 3, 2024.



Chapter 5 Streets – Transportation and Public Realm

- Public Review Draft -

Originally part of the Lincoln Highway, San Pablo Avenue has long served as a major regional and national transportation route and remains designated as a state highway. This legacy established a corridor pattern focused on regional mobility and vehicle access, influencing the form of adjacent development. This function has historically prioritized automobiles and resulted in a street environment that favors vehicles but offers limited comfort and safety for multimodal travel, along with fewer high-quality public spaces. **Chapter 1 Introduction** provides more detail about the historical context of San Pablo Avenue.

Some stretches along San Pablo Avenue feature a consistent tree canopy and active storefronts that create a more pedestrian-friendly setting, but these remain exceptions. New mixed-use developments and streetscape improvements are gradually transforming San Pablo Avenue into a more balanced and multimodal corridor. These ongoing efforts aim to enhance comfort, safety, and accessibility for people walking, biking, and using transit, while creating a more attractive and functional public realm that reflects the changing needs of the corridor.

Community feedback gathered through the outreach process reinforces this shift in priorities. Participants expressed strong support for improving the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit environment along and across San Pablo Avenue. Survey responses identified walking as the second most common mode of travel to and from destinations along San Pablo Avenue. At the community open houses, focus group meetings, and other engagement events, community members emphasized the need for safe streets and streetscape improvements. Many also voiced concerns about existing traffic speeds and noise, highlighting the ongoing tension between these conditions and the community’s vision for a vibrant mixed-use place where people live, work, shop, and socialize.

This chapter defines policies, programs and standards that aim to balance the transportation, land use, and public realm functions of San Pablo Avenue and the evolving mixed-use district along it. The focus is to transform San Pablo Avenue into a multimodal street that not only facilitates safe and efficient travel for all users but also enhances the availability and quality of public space.

Existing Conditions

This section provides an overview of existing transportation conditions, including transit access, and multimodal mobility, safety and comfort and summarizes existing public realm conditions. A detailed assessment is available in **Appendix A: Key Existing Conditions**.

Public Realm

The public realm experience varies along San Pablo Avenue –some areas support street life, while others feel inactive at the pedestrian scale. There are engaging places with a combination of active street life and vibrant businesses, such as the blocks south of University Avenue and Dwight Way (see Figure 5.1). At these locations, one can find outdoor seating, decorative plantings and other amenities that invite potential customers and create a more comfortable environment for people walking along the street. On stretches where business activity is slow, sidewalks are more likely to be in poor condition, landscaping is less likely to be maintained, and the street edge is framed by vacant or vandalized building frontages, or tall fencing. These segments experience less foot traffic and fewer parked cars, as the public realm offers little reason for people to linger as they pass through.

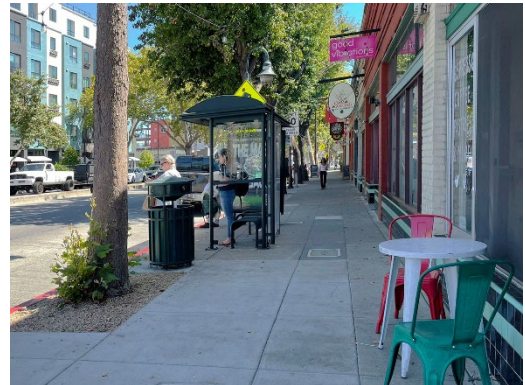


Figure 5.1: Sidewalk with bus stop and café seating on the west side of Dwight Way intersection.

San Pablo Avenue is also physically wide, with a typical right-of-way measuring 73 feet from curb to curb (see Figure 5.2 *Section graphic*). This includes four travel lanes (two in each direction), street parking, and a landscaped median. There are no designated bicycle facilities or markings along San Pablo Avenue, so cyclists ride in the roadway, on the sidewalk, or more commonly, use nearby streets which include parallel bicycle routes. While this configuration supports vehicle traffic movement and access, it creates a sense of separation between the two sides of the street and confines pedestrian space to the standard 13-foot sidewalks on either side. Sidewalks are narrow compared to the preferred width guidance set in the 2020 Pedestrian Plan¹ and offer limited protection from adjacent vehicle traffic. During community engagement activities, participants frequently expressed concern about narrowness, their exposure to vehicle traffic, and associated noise levels.

¹ City of Berkeley. [Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements](#). Adopted 2020, p. 8

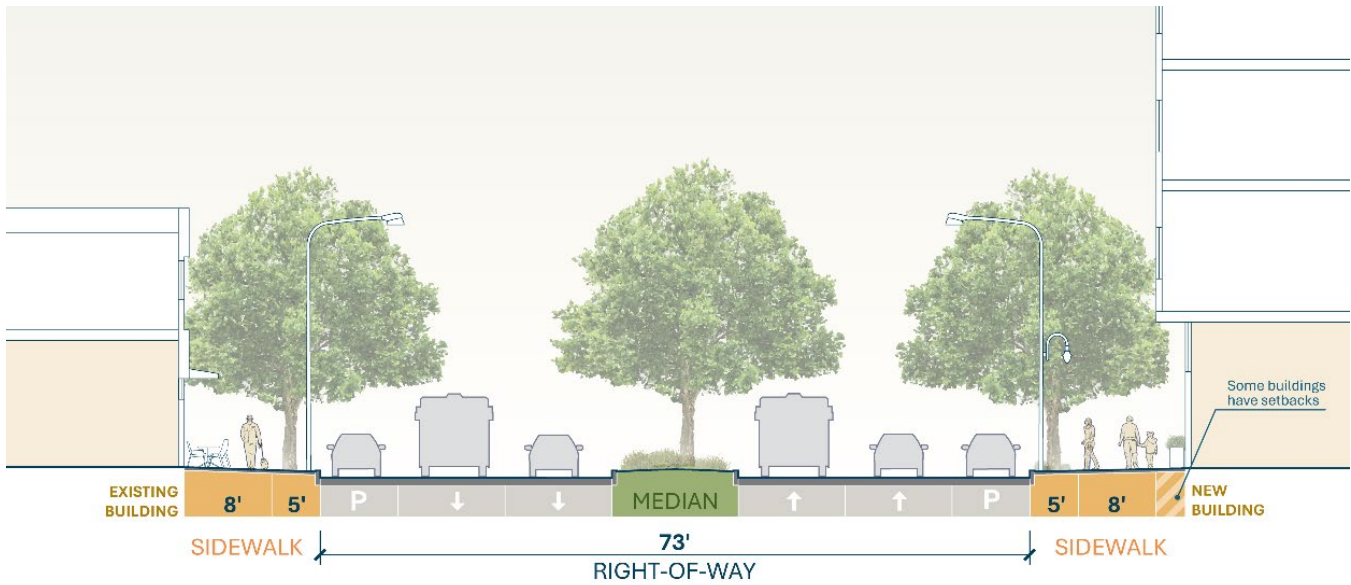


Figure 5.2 Section graphic of the typical right-of-way configuration

Transportation

Multimodal Mobility, Safety and Comfort

According to the Vision Zero Policy and Plan (see page 13) San Pablo Avenue is classified as a High-Injury Street, one of the City’s streets with the highest number of severe injury and fatality traffic crashes. Risk and discomfort associated with crossing the street is driven by the absence of dedicated bicycle crossing infrastructure, limited pedestrian visibility, and high vehicle speeds and related traffic noise. These conditions create an environment that is less safe for non-motorized users.

As mentioned previously, many cyclists avoid riding directly on San Pablo Avenue and instead rely on parallel bicycle routes. However, crossing San Pablo Avenue remains difficult. The 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan (see page 3-9) identified all intersections at key east-west bicycle routes designated as class III bicycle boulevards—specifically Virginia Street, Channing Way, and the Russell Street and Heinz Avenue connection— as high-stress locations for cyclists and present significant barriers to safe and comfortable bicycle travel.

Several safety improvement projects are underway to address some of these conditions. For project details, see **Appendix D: Street Improvements**. The Specific Plan establishes policies and standards for further improving mobility, safety, and comfort for all users. **Appendix D** also outlines recommended projects that may be implemented with future development.

Transit Network

Transit service within the Plan Area is provided by the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit), which operates local bus routes, a limited stop bus line along San Pablo Avenue, and transbay service connecting the area to the Salesforce Transit Center in San Francisco. AC Transit routes 72, 72L, 72M, 52, 51B, 36, 12, J, G, FS, and San Pablo All Nighters (800 & 802) connect the Plan Area to North Berkeley, Downtown Berkeley, or Ashby BART Stations, and San Francisco.

Objectives

San Pablo Avenue does not need to look the same from end to end; in fact, the distinct character of different places along San Pablo Avenue is one of its valued assets. However, many of these areas can benefit from stronger visual and physical connections. By establishing guidance for shared elements like trees, lighting, and street furnishings, the Plan seeks to create a sense of continuity while allowing for places along San Pablo Avenue to develop their own unique identity.



Transportation

Improve San Pablo Avenue’s function as a multimodal street that safely and efficiently serves pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers, deliveries, freight, emergency response and evacuation, and maintenance access. Enhance access to transit and reduce traffic collisions. Improve the balance between regional mobility and local access. Better manage on-street parking and loading to support diverse uses along San Pablo Avenue.



Figure 5.3 Daytime traffic on San Pablo Avenue close to Blake Street Intersection



Public Realm

Transform San Pablo Avenue into a more welcoming and vibrant public realm, public spaces that enhance the distinct character of places along the street and neighborhoods they connect to. Expand and improve sidewalks and streetscape elements and encourage public art, and cultural activities to support a more active street life. Expand and improve sidewalks and streetscape elements and encourage public art, and cultural activities to support a more active street life.



Figure 5.4 San Pablo Avenue Sidewalk south of Dwight Way

Transportation Policies, Standards and Projects

The Specific Plan Area needs improved local and citywide multimodal access to support anticipated growth in population, employment, and business activity in the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods in West and South Berkeley. Meeting the transportation needs of this growth will require reducing dependence on personal vehicles and expanding access to safer and more equitable travel options. This approach aligns with regional and City goals for climate action, economic vitality and equity. The following section outlines strategies to support this transition, including safer street crossings for all users, enhanced transit access and reliability, parking and curb management to support businesses, and measures to reduce collisions while improving overall mobility.

Existing Policies and Standards

City of Berkeley

Vision Zero Policy and Plan

In 2020, the City of Berkeley adopted its **Vision Zero Action Plan** with the goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2028. The plan focuses on engineering and design strategies that improve safety for everyone travelling in Berkeley. Between 2011 and 2020, multiple collisions along San Pablo Avenue resulted in severe injuries to people walking, biking, and driving, including one fatality. According to the City’s 2022 Annual Report², 42 percent of Berkeley’s severe and fatal traffic collisions during that same timeframe occurred within Metropolitan Transportation Commission designated Equity Priority Communities³, which includes most of the Specific Plan Area.

To help meet Vision Zero goals, several safety improvements are already planned or in progress, and many are part of Alameda CTC’s San Pablo Corridor Safety Enhancements Project. This Specific Plan also includes transportation safety related policies, improvements, and an implementation strategy that support Vision Zero goals.

Berkeley Bicycle Plan

The Berkeley Bicycle Plan⁴ was adopted by the City Council on May 2, 2017. In 2025, the City began the process of updating the Bicycle Plan. The Plan seeks to encourage more residents and visitors to use bicycles as a day-to-day mode of transportation. San Pablo Avenue, as one of the City’s and AC Transit’s Primary Transit Routes, was identified for further study to evaluate options for improved bicycle access. San Pablo Avenue is designated as a Tier 1 Priority Project in the Bicycle Plan due to a combination of safety concerns and equity-related needs and includes San Pablo Avenue as a Primary Transit Route to be studied for separated bike lanes. The Bicycle Plan Update further states “separated bikeways that might impact transit operations, emergency response traffic, commercial/business district parking, or roadway capacity will review and address impacts through a Complete Streets Corridor Study, which includes a public engagement process and coordination with the Police and Fire Departments and all affected state, county, and local transit agencies.”⁵

Since the adoption of the 2017 plan, the City has partnered with Alameda CTC through its San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancements Project and Parallel Bike Improvements Project to implement crossing upgrades at several designated bicycle boulevards and to establish new and improve existing parallel bicycle boulevard routes. Additional information about planned safety and mobility improvements along San Pablo Avenue is provided in the following section, which discusses the Alameda CTC San Pablo Corridor Projects.

² City of Berkeley. [Vision Zero Annual Report 2021–2022](#). June 2022. Accessed 6 May 2025.

³ See Chapter 1 Introduction for definition of Equity Priority Communities.

⁴ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Bicycle Plan](#). May 2017. Accessed 16 June 2025.

⁵ City of Berkeley. Berkeley Bicycle Plan update, Public Review Draft, July 2025. Accessed 4 September 2025.

Berkeley Pedestrian Plan

The **2020 Pedestrian Plan**⁶ outlines strategies to improve pedestrian travel along Berkeley’s high-injury streets and enhance overall pedestrian safety consistent with the Vision Zero Action Plan. The plan identifies San Pablo Avenue—from University Avenue to Dwight Way—as a priority corridor, ranking it among the top 10 locations for capital projects focused on pedestrian safety.

The Plan’s proposed improvements at key intersections along San Pablo Avenue align closely with the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancements Project and include curb extensions, raised medians, high-visibility crosswalk markings, and pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs)/rapid-reflective flashing beacons (RRFBs).

Additional recommendations go beyond the current scope of the Safety Enhancements Project. These include evaluating the feasibility of lowering speed limits to 25 mph and introducing separate pedestrian signal phases that do not conflict with turning vehicles.

Transportation Demand Management Policies

The City of Berkeley Municipal Code establishes a **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program**⁷ that supports the goals of the City’s Transportation Element and Climate Action Plan by reducing automobile travel, encouraging transit ridership, and promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety. This program requires new residential developments of ten or more units to:

- Provide unbundled parking that is sold or leased separately from units to incentivize reduced automobile ownership
- Offer monthly transit passes at no cost to residents to encourage transit use
- Provide real-time transportation information on displays in common areas to facilitate transit use

Before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued, site inspection is required to confirm that all required physical improvements have been installed. Following occupancy, property owners are responsible for ongoing compliance and reporting to ensure that required TDM measures remain in place and effectively achieve the objectives of the program.

Additionally, the City of Berkeley requires employers with ten or more employees to provide a **Commuter Benefit Program**⁸ that encourages the use of transit, vanpools, or bicycles by providing pre-tax payroll deductions, direct payment of expenses, or a company-funded shuttle service.

goBerkeley On-Street Parking Meter Policy

In 2022, the City of Berkeley launched the goBerkeley SmartSpace pilot, funded by MTC and FHWA, to explore ways to reduce the need for residents to move their vehicles every two hours due to on-street parking restrictions in neighborhoods near the Elmwood and Southside/Telegraph commercial districts. As a result of the pilot, the City adopted an **on-street parking meter pricing policy**⁹ for single-space meters and pay stations within the goBerkeley meter zones that allows for parking fee adjustments based on published parking occupancy data. The goal is to maintain 65–85% occupancy, or roughly 1–2 open spaces per block, to minimize circling and improve parking availability.

On-Street Accessible Parking and Passenger Loading Requirements

Accessible parking in the public right-of-way is required and must comply with the U.S. Access Board’s **Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)**, federally adopted in 2024.¹⁰ Where on-street parking is metered or designated by signage or pavement markings, the required number of accessible spaces and their design must follow

⁶ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley 2020 Pedestrian Plan](#). 2020. Accessed 17 June 2025.

⁷ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Municipal Code § 23.334 - Transportation Demand Management](#). Accessed 16 June 16 2025.

⁸ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Municipal Code § 9.88 – Commuter Benefit Program](#). Accessed 2 July 2025.

⁹ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Municipal Code § 14.52.120 – Parking Meter and Pay Station Fees](#). Accessed 23 June 2025.

¹⁰ U.S. Access Board. [Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines \(PROWAG\), 36 CFR Part 1190, Final Rule published in the Federal Register, 88 FR 54336](#). August 2023. Effective 7 September 2024. Accessed 23 June 2025.

PROWAG standards for dimensions, clearances, and connection to the pedestrian access route. If individual spaces are not marked, each 20 feet of designated curb space is counted as one parking space.

The following exceptions apply to implementation of on-street accessible parking:

- Spaces reserved exclusively for residential, commercial, or law enforcement use are exempt and not counted toward required totals.
- If on-street spaces are altered, requirements apply only to the modified spaces until the minimum required number is reached.

Accessible passenger loading zones in the public right-of-way are also required. At least one accessible loading zone must be provided per 100 feet (or fraction thereof) of designated loading area, excluding transit stops.

Off-Street Parking Maximums in Transit-Rich Areas

In 2021, the City of Berkeley adopted parking reforms that established **off-street parking maximums** for new residential developments well-served by transit, limiting vehicle parking to a maximum of 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit.¹¹ This policy is intended to support TDM measures by discouraging car dependency and encouraging transit-oriented, sustainable growth in areas with good transit service. The cap applies within a quarter mile of rail stations and bus transit corridors with peak period frequency of 15 minutes or better, which includes the entirety of the Plan Area.

Bicycle Parking Policies

Bicycle parking facilities that are secure, accessible, and weather-protected support TDM measures by encouraging bicycle use. Bicycle parking is also included in the *Pre-Occupancy TDM Program and Bicycle Parking Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting Statement*, which new developments are required to complete.

Building on the goals of the 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan, the City of Berkeley Municipal Code requires **long- and short-term bicycle parking** for new commercial construction, development that expands floor area, and new residential projects, including residential portions of mixed-use developments.¹² Bicycle parking spaces are required on a per square-foot basis for commercial development and per bedroom basis for residential development.

Detailed siting and design standards for bicycle parking are outlined in the **Bicycle Facility Design Toolbox**, provided as Appendix F of the 2017 Bicycle Plan.¹³ This guidance accounts for a range of bicycle types and sizes and recommends long-term parking strategies based on lot coverage. Projects on parcels with high lot coverage (over 85%) are encouraged to provide indoor long-term bike parking, such as a secure room or cage. Sites with lower lot coverage may use outdoor solutions like bike lockers or covered, secure enclosures.

Bike corrals are a form of on-street bicycle parking that provide high-capacity, short-term parking by consolidating racks within the paved right-of-way, typically in areas with high demand and limited sidewalk space. In Berkeley, corrals may replace a vehicle parking space or be installed adjacent to a red curb. Merchants or property owners may request a bike corral in front of their business.¹⁴ Requests are reviewed based on safety, demand, and feasibility, and installations must follow design standards outlined in the City's Bicycle Facility Design Toolbox. The City may also create bike corrals in locations with high bike parking demand and limited sidewalk space, such as in multimodal Mobility Hubs.

Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan

The **Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan (2023)** provides policies and guidelines for implementing the City's Transit-First Policy (Berkeley General Plan Policy T-4) and for future planning for the City's existing transit priority corridors. It is a standalone document but planned to be implemented into a future update of the Berkeley Strategic Transportation (BeST) Plan.

¹¹ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Municipal Code § 23.322.070 – Off-Street Parking Maximums for Residential Development](#). Accessed 16 June 2025.

¹² City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Municipal Code § 23.322.090 – Bicycle Parking](#). Accessed 2 July 2025.

¹³ City of Berkeley. [Berkeley Bicycle Facility Design Toolbox](#). May 2017. Accessed 16 June 2025.

¹⁴ City of Berkeley. [Bicycle Parking Program](#). 2025. Accessed 26 June 2025.

The plan designates San Pablo Avenue as a Primary Transit Route and a priority corridor for further study of transit infrastructure needs, building on the findings of AC Transit’s Major Corridors Study (2016). Together with Telegraph and University Avenues, San Pablo Avenue is identified as a potential Bus Rapid Transit corridor in AC Transit’s Long-Term Improvements Plan (targeted for implementation by 2040). Further, the plan highlights Alameda CTC’s San Pablo Corridor Project as the lead effort for shaping future transit improvements and recommends ongoing coordination with Alameda CTC, Caltrans, and neighboring cities to develop a long-term implementation strategy.

Council Referral for BRT in Berkeley

In September 2023, the Berkeley City Council directed the City Manager to explore a feasibility analysis of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) options along AC Transit’s 51B route, including University Avenue. University Avenue bus service provides a key east-west connection between San Pablo Avenue and Downtown Berkeley and is designated a Primary Transit Route in AC Transit’s Major Corridors Study.

Future BRT service on University Avenue could enhance transit access between the Plan Area and major destinations such as Downtown Berkeley, UC Berkeley, BART, and the Berkeley Amtrak Capitol Corridor Station. Completed improvements in the Southside area include bus-only lanes on Durant Avenue and Bancroft Way that are used by the 51B and 6 routes. The referral proposes future budget allocations for corridor studies and ADA improvements.

San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan

The San Pablo Avenue Public Improvements Plan, adopted on December 7, 2004, was developed to support pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit users, while also revitalizing the area along and surrounding San Pablo Avenue. While many improvements have been completed, the plan itself is now outdated. The Improvement Plan’s recommendations served as a foundation for the Specific Plan’s public realm framework, informing its policies, programs and design standards.

Caltrans

As described in **Chapter 1 Introduction**, San Pablo Avenue is a California state highway (State Route 123). Any improvements within the street right-of-way must be approved by Caltrans, while the City of Berkeley is responsible for maintaining sidewalks, roadway surface and medians, street trees, landscaping, and electrical work. Any modifications to the roadway itself, such as lane configurations, signal equipment and timing, speed limits, curb changes, or median design, must comply with Caltrans design standards and receive their approval.

Because San Pablo Avenue functions as a freeway reliever route for I-80, it is prioritized for regional vehicle movement. This limits the feasibility of changes that could reduce vehicular capacity.

AC Transit

AC Transit provides bus service across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, operating 12 routes that serve the Study Area and connect directly to San Pablo Avenue.

Realign Plan

In response to evolving travel patterns, AC Transit developed the Realign Plan, a redesigned bus network, which launched in August 2025. Under the new network, bus service frequency along San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley is expected to remain the same consistent with previous levels, while overall schedule reliability is anticipated to improve.

AC Transit first introduced the RAPID bus, Line 72R, service in 2003, a service that continues under 72L today. The agency further upgraded transit efficiency with the San Pablo Avenue Rapid Corridors Project, completed in 2023. This effort improved traffic signals, installed GPS-enabled Transit Signal Priority (TSP) technology, and enhanced overall operations from downtown Oakland to the City of San Pablo.

Major Corridors Study

AC Transit’s 2016 Major Corridors Study laid out both short- and long-term strategies for improving service along San Pablo Avenue. The long-term vision calls for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to boost capacity and reliability. In the short- and

mid-terms, the Rapid Corridors project and on-going planning and design led by Alameda CTC are improving transit infrastructure along San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley and adjacent communities. For more details on their current work, see **Appendix D**.

Existing Transportation Projects

At the time of writing the Plan, several transportation and streetscape improvements are anticipated to take place over the next several years. The improvements proposed in the Plan build upon these ongoing and planned efforts, treating them as baseline conditions. For a comprehensive list and description of these projects, refer to **Appendix D**.

City of Berkeley Projects

The City moved forward with the implementation of several projects identified in the 2017 Bike Plan and 2020 Pedestrian Plan, including several projects that cross or parallel San Pablo Avenue. These efforts were coordinated with Alameda CTC’s San Pablo Avenue Corridor Projects to support broader multimodal safety goals. For a map of current connections and a full list of projects, see **Appendix D** and see Figure 5.8 *Connections Map*.

Alameda CTC Projects

The Plan does not focus on transportation improvements to San Pablo Avenue, because the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) has completed a multimodal planning study for San Pablo Avenue throughout Alameda County. The study led to three improvement projects (see Figure 5.5 *San Pablo Avenue Multimodal Corridor Overview Map*). These projects will result in construction of safety improvements for all users, bus stop improvements, and parallel bicycle facility improvements, as well as a short segment of bicycle and bus lanes on the southern end of San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley. For detailed project descriptions and timelines, refer to **Appendix D**.

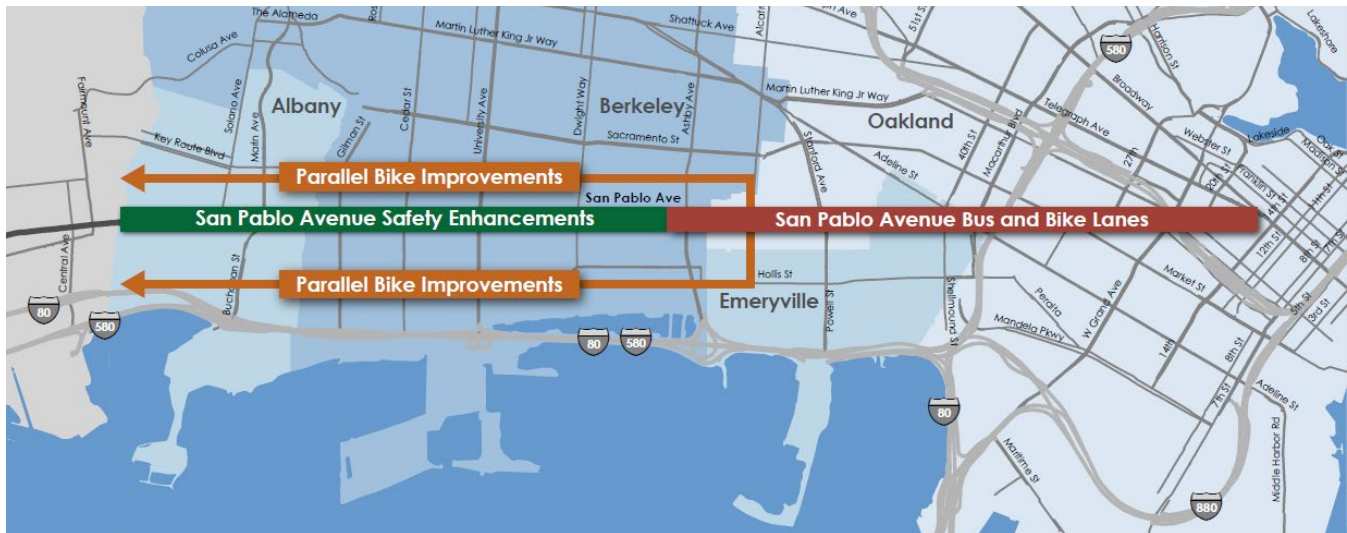


Figure 5.5 Alameda CTC. San Pablo Avenue Multimodal Corridor Overview Map

Alameda Countywide Bikeways Network

San Pablo Avenue is designated as a major bus and bikeway corridor within the Alameda Countywide Bikeways Network¹⁵; it is subject to regional All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bikeway design expectations. For additional details, see **Appendix D**.

¹⁵ Alameda CTC. [Alameda Countywide Bikeways Network](#) Executive Report. December 2022, p.3. Viewed August, 2025.

Transportation Policies and Standards

Multimodal Mobility and Access

Ongoing and planned improvements to transportation infrastructure along San Pablo Avenue establish a foundation for improving mobility and access for all users. Future efforts will build on this momentum to provide infrastructure and operation systems that best serve the community’s vision for the Plan Area as a vibrant mixed-use district.

T-P.1 Improve mobility, access, and safety for all people

Improve conditions for people walking, biking, taking transit, driving, deliveries, freight, emergency response and evacuation and maintenance access along San Pablo Avenue and throughout the Plan Area. Consider particular needs of vulnerable users, including children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Implement the goals for the City’s Complete Streets Policy by designing all street and transportation improvements within the Plan Area to enhance mobility, access and safety for people who are walking, biking, taking transit, and driving while providing for deliveries, freight, emergency response, evacuation and maintenance access. Ensure that design and implementation consider the needs of vulnerable users, including children, seniors, and people of all abilities.

T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue

The Alameda CTC Bus and Bike Lanes Project currently ends at Heinz Street and San Pablo Avenue. Through previous planning and engagement efforts, the community expressed concerns regarding feasibility and the significant roadway changes that would be required to extend dedicated bus or bicycle facilities through Berkeley along San Pablo Avenue. These challenges include removal of all or some portions of the medians which hold mature street trees. With a growing population and reduced off-street parking requirements for mixed-use developments, the demand for alternative transportation options is likely to increase. This suggests that the City may need to revisit the design of San Pablo Avenue in the future.

This Specific Plan recommends that the City, in partnership with Alameda CTC and Caltrans, explore a potential follow-up planning and design process to evaluate multimodal conceptual design options for San Pablo Avenue. This study would serve as a follow-on to, and performance evaluation of the investments already planned as part of the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue corridor projects and would make additional recommendations based on that analysis. This potential future process could study a range of potential bike and bus improvements, including bus rapid transit, bus only lanes, and separated bike lanes. Depending on development activity in Berkeley and other San Pablo Avenue communities there may also be some future interest in studying the potential for streetcar service.

T-P.3 Maintain and improve bus service in collaboration with Alameda CTC and AC Transit

Maintain existing transit service levels along San Pablo Avenue and preserve key east-west “secondary route” connections identified in the City of Berkeley’s General Plan. In alignment with Berkeley’s Transit First Policy (Policy T-2), the City will continue to coordinate with AC Transit to improve service on San Pablo Avenue as needed to enhance east-west service and improve infrastructure. This includes continuing to explore the implementation of AC Transit’s recommendations for primary transit routes and the need for improved connections to the Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations, which is further discussed in BART’s station and access plan.¹⁶ A key element of this approach will be identifying the appropriate lead agency for such studies and project development, as well as adequate funding. Efforts should be guided by the Transit First Policy Implementation Plan to ensure a coordinated and effective approach.

¹⁶ BART, Berkeley-El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan, February 2023, page 66. Viewed 4 September 2025.

T-P.4 Implement signal timing and transit signal priority (TSP)

In collaboration with Caltrans and AC Transit, identify and implement additional TSP improvements at signalized intersections and signal timing that favors transit operations to increase transit reliability and encourage ridership. This effort will build upon improvements made by AC Transit.

Parking and Curb Management

Many businesses along San Pablo Avenue depend on on-street parking for customer access and loading, particularly those without private parking lots or off-street loading.

With new residential developments, community members have raised concerns about parking availability to support the growing population. Business owners have also noted issues such as reduced storefront visibility due to parked cars and lack of parking enforcement leading to vehicles blocking parking spaces throughout the day.

Curb space in the Plan Area, both on San Pablo Avenue and crossing streets, should be managed to support the needs of both businesses and residents, with a shared goal of maintaining available on-street parking access even during periods of peak demand. This Plan recommends a strategy to ensure that on-street parking remains available for customers and other visitors arriving by car.

Provision of parking along San Pablo Avenue needs to be balanced with multimodal needs of all people that use San Pablo Avenue. See T-P.2 regarding the need to study and implement multimodal improvements along San Pablo Avenue.

T-P.5 Create an active parking and loading management program for the Specific Plan Area

The program should include strategies such as adjusting parking meter rates and time limits, similar to the City's goBerkeley Parking Program. It should also consider expanding metered parking locations to side-streets with commercial frontages to maintain the City's target occupancy rate of 65 to 85 percent on metered blocks. Increased enforcement should accompany these measures to ensure compliance and support consistent parking turnover.

Currently, Berkeley's policy does not allow additional Residential Parking Permit (RPP) areas, primarily due to cost considerations. As the effectiveness of pipeline and potential future multimodal improvements are assessed, the City will have an opportunity to reassess parking and loading needs along San Pablo Avenue and surrounding neighborhoods. Based on these assessments, the City Council may consider whether to establish new residential parking permit area(s) in adjacent neighborhoods and whether to allow merchants to purchase permits to park in those areas.

Implement Mobility Hubs

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) defines a Mobility Hub as an access point for “[...] travelers of all backgrounds to access multiple transportation options and supportive amenities. Built on the backbone of frequent and high-capacity transit, Mobility Hubs offer a safe, comfortable, convenient, and accessible space to seamlessly transfer across different travel modes.”¹⁷ Identifying a Mobility Hub can strengthen eligibility for the Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) program, improve transit access, and potentially improve eligibility for some funding sources. In 2020, MTC identified the University Avenue Node as a potential Mobility Hub.¹⁸

T-P.6 Implement Mobility Hub features in the University Avenue Node

In collaboration with MTC and AC Transit, the City should explore implementation of Mobility Hub strategies and features outlined in the [Mobility Hub Implementation Playbook](#). Potential mobility hub features in the University Node may include improvements to bus stops and transit wayfinding, bike share and shared micromobility stations, bike

¹⁷ Metropolitan Transportation Commission. [MTC Mobility Hub Implementation Playbook](#). 30 Apr. 2021, p. 5. Accessed June 4, 2025

¹⁸ Metropolitan Transportation Commission. [San Francisco Bay Region Mobility Hubs](#). ArcGIS Online Map Viewer. Accessed June 4, 2025

corrals in parking lanes, and designated loading areas for ride-hail services, urban freight and delivery.

T-P.7 Evaluate other locations for some Mobility Hub features

Evaluate the potential for Mobility Hub features at other Nodes or on a corridor-wide basis, especially when transit service levels change. Even in locations that may not fully meet MTC’s criteria for a designated Mobility Hub, the City should consider incorporating select hub features.

Multimodal Safety

Collision data identifies San Pablo Avenue as one of Berkeley’s most high-injury corridors, indicated the need for targeted safety interventions that reduce vehicle speeds, enhance visibility, and improve safety for all travel modes. Improving sidewalk safety must also include interventions to support personal security and comfort. Measures such as pedestrian-scale lighting, wider sidewalks and Universal Design are further discussed in the Public Realm section of this chapter (see *PR-P.13 Design for People of All Ages and Abilities*).

Manage Vehicle Speeds and Lowering Speed Limit

Reducing vehicle speeds along San Pablo Avenue can help create a safer, quieter, and more welcoming environment that supports the transformation of the Specific Plan Area into a vibrant mixed-use district.

Speeding and safety
Collision data for San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley indicates that from 2018 to 2022 unsafe speed was the primary collision factor in 26% of collisions that resulted in an injury or fatality, more than any other collision factor.¹



Figure 5.5a Dwight and San Pablo Avenue intersection

T-P.8 Lower Speed Limit on San Pablo Avenue

San Pablo Avenue currently has a posted speed limit of 30 mph. In California, speed limits are primarily established based on rounding the 85th percentile speed¹⁹ observed in an Engineering and Traffic Study (E&TS) to the nearest 5 mph. However, Assembly Bill 43 (2022) allows for greater flexibility in setting speed limits that better reflect safe road conditions for all users through the following mechanisms:

- Agencies may round the 85th percentile speed observed in an E&TS down to the nearest 5 mph, even when the 85th percentile speed would ordinarily be rounded up.
- For roadways where the 85th percentile speed would ordinarily be rounded down, agencies may reduce the speed limit by an additional 5 mph if the reasons for the lower limit are documented in an E&TS.
- Local agencies may reduce the speed limits calculated in an E&TS by an additional 5 mph on designated Safety Corridors or corridors adjacent to land generating high bicycle and pedestrian volumes.
- Regardless of the findings of the E&TS, local agencies may retain the existing speed limit or, if the immediately-prior speed limit was lower than the existing speed limit, reduce the speed limit by 5 mph.
- Local agencies may reduce speed limits from 30 mph to 25 mph (or from 25 mph to 20 mph) in Business Activity Districts without needing an E&TS.

¹⁹ The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85% of vehicles are observed to travel under free-flowing conditions.

Because San Pablo Avenue is operated by Caltrans, only the first two listed provisions would apply.²⁰ The City should coordinate with Caltrans and AC Transit to conduct an E&TS, with the goal of reducing the posted speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. A lower speed limit would complement other proposed traffic calming measures and pedestrian and bicycle safety enhancements along San Pablo Avenue. Signal timing adjustments at the intersections may also be needed to support this change. Ultimately, Caltrans has the authority to set the speed limit on San Pablo Avenue, because the full length of the street in Berkeley is a State Highway. The E&TS should include a supplementary assessment of how lowering the speed limit would affect transit performance in terms of speed and reliability.

If the E&TS process results in the speed limit remaining at 30 mph, but the E&TS shows that a high proportion of drivers are exceeding the speed limit. This information could be used for the City to continue advocating to expand the AB 645 speed safety pilot program to include Berkeley and potentially San Pablo Avenue as a pilot urban state highway high-injury corridor pilot.²¹

Continue to Improve Intersections

Completed and ongoing intersection improvement projects along San Pablo Avenue (see **Appendix D**) demonstrate a broad commitment to improve safety and multimodal connectivity. While these efforts addressed important locations, they represent only a portion of a comprehensive, long-term commitment to improving intersections throughout the street. Opportunities remain to expand existing improvements – for example, by adding pedestrian lighting – and to apply consistent safety enhancements across all intersections. The following policies will inform the design and upgrades to San Pablo Avenue and other streets throughout the Plan Area.

Note that improvements to San Pablo Avenue and its intersections with other streets are required to be approved by Caltrans.

T-S.1 Pedestrian Crossing Frequency

In an urban mixed-use area, frequent and safe pedestrian marked crossings are desired. According to the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan (2020), the average distance between marked crosswalks along San Pablo Avenue is 380 feet, with the longest gap reaching 625 feet between Gilman Street and Harrison Street. To improve pedestrian convenience and reduce unsafe crossings at unmarked locations, the City should consider adding mid-block marked crosswalks at locations where crossing distances exceed 600 feet.²²

- With the expansion of multiple multifamily residential developments between Gilman Street and Harrison Street, the long distance between these intersections makes it a strong candidate for installation of a mid-block crossing to support increased pedestrian activity.
- Other locations to consider new mid-block marked crosswalks include the blocks between Gilman Street and Camelia Street (~600 feet), Cedar Street and Virginia Street (~615 feet), Allston Way and Bancroft Way (~615 feet), and Channing Way and Dwight Way (~590 feet).
- Safe crossing features should align with Policy *T-P.10 Intersection Improvements*.

T-P.9 Pedestrian Crossing Design

Pedestrian crossing design in Berkeley is guided by the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan (2020), Appendix B: Engineering & Design Guidance. Improvements to pedestrian crossings along San Pablo Avenue must also comply with the requirements of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual or receive approval for an exception from Caltrans. The following improvements should be prioritized along San Pablo Avenue:

- **Curb extensions** – Generally, curb extensions into San Pablo Avenue are not appropriate given the potential for future multimodal improvements to use the full roadway width between existing curbs (see T-P.2 for discussion of future multimodal study). For side-street curb extensions, see *T-P.11 Minor Side-Street Intersection Improvements*.

²⁰ California Department of Transportation. [California Manual for Setting Speed Limits](#). Revised March 2025, pp. 19, 31-24

²¹ This is consistent with the Berkeley City Council’s April 29, 2025 adoption a resolution asking the State Legislature to add the city to the existing program or similar program. (See [Resolution No. 17,744-N.S.](#))

²² City of Berkeley. [Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements](#). Adopted 2020, p. 10

- **Crossing islands** as integral part of medians and crosswalks to shorten the crossing distance.
- **Pedestrian-scale lighting**, where needed per standards PR-P.3.

A map with the crossing locations and improvements is provided in Figure 5.6 *Locations with need for Intersection Improvements*.

T-P.10 Intersection Improvements

San Pablo Avenue has undergone several intersection improvements and continues to be the focus of additional planned improvements led by both Caltrans and Alameda CTC. A follow-up safety study should be explored after the completion of these projects to identify additional locations where improvements are needed and to assess whether any additional elements could enhance the effectiveness of previously implemented upgrades. The following are the types of intersection improvements to consider (Intersection specific lists of potential improvements are in **Appendix D**):

Signalized Intersections – These locations should be evaluated for potential improvements such as curb extensions on side-streets, median refuge islands where they do not currently exist, and improved roadway lighting and pedestrian-scale lighting to enhance visibility of people entering and crossing the street. Improvements for bicycles should be considered pursuant to the toolbox recommendations of the Bike Plan, where they do not exist. The need and benefit of adding protected left turns at intersections that lack them should be assessed, along with consideration of right-turn-on-red prohibitions.

Un-Signalized Intersections – These intersections should be evaluated for physical and lighting improvements similar to those listed for signalized intersections. The need for additional or upgraded traffic flashers or signals should be evaluated, such as rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB), pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHB), or full traffic signals.

In the long term, as population, pedestrian and bicycle activity increase within the Plan Area, particularly in the Nodes, intersections should be evaluated for the potential addition of full pedestrian signal phases. A full pedestrian phase stops all vehicle traffic while pedestrians cross in all directions, including diagonal crossings, also known as pedestrian scrambles. These signal phases improve pedestrian safety at intersections with high pedestrian volumes and complex turning movements. Detailed guidance on all-way pedestrian crossings is provided in the [Berkeley Pedestrian Plan \(2020\), Appendix B: All-Way Pedestrian Crossings, p. B-18](#).

A list of proposed potential intersection improvements is provided in **Appendix D**. The Plan's potential improvements are scoped to build upon those of the San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancement project which have not been constructed at the time of this Specific Plan's adoption. Other intersection improvements were recently completed. The combination of these changes define the baseline for future transportation design and investment. The list of improvements in **Appendix D** is a compilation of improvements defined by the 2020 Pedestrian Plan and additional potential improvements. This list may be further refined as part of a planned update to the Pedestrian Plan.

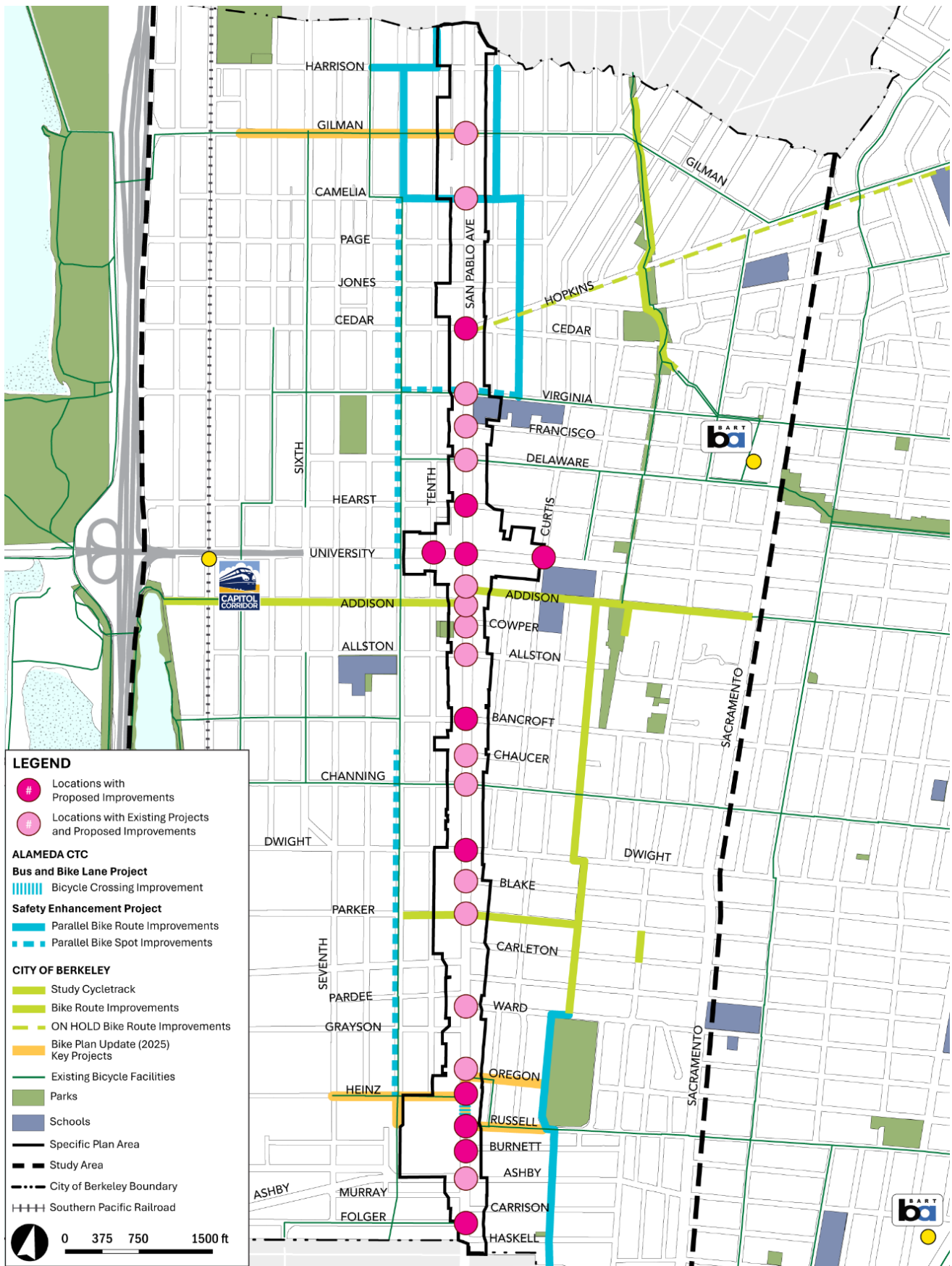


Figure 5.6 Locations with need for Intersection Improvements. For detailed list, see **Appendix D**

T-P.11 Minor Side-Street Intersection Improvements

The City should review collision data and monitor driver behavior at minor side-street intersections and make improvements as needed. Improvement may include:

- **Raised crosswalks on side-streets** – Elevating the crosswalk between minor side-streets will slow drivers as they enter the minor street. Raising crosswalks should be considered in the context of service and emergency vehicle turn movements. Detailed guidance is provided in the [Berkley Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements, p. B-19](#).
- **Side-street curb extensions** – When space is available on side-streets provide a curb extension to shorten pedestrian crossing distance. Curb extensions narrow the opening for vehicles and allow for reduced curb radii, which will slow drivers entering the minor street and provide more space for directional curb ramps. Detailed guidance is provided in the [Berkley Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements, p. B-13](#). (see *PR-S.12 Design and Use of Curb Extensions on Side-Streets* for design and use of curb extensions for public space).
- **Encourage more perpendicular (right-angle) turning movement** at intersections to improve driver visibility of pedestrians in crosswalks. This can be done by extending medians to the crosswalk and providing a median nose to protect the crosswalk where turn movements allow. Intersection legs without medians should have hardened centerlines (see Figure 5.7).

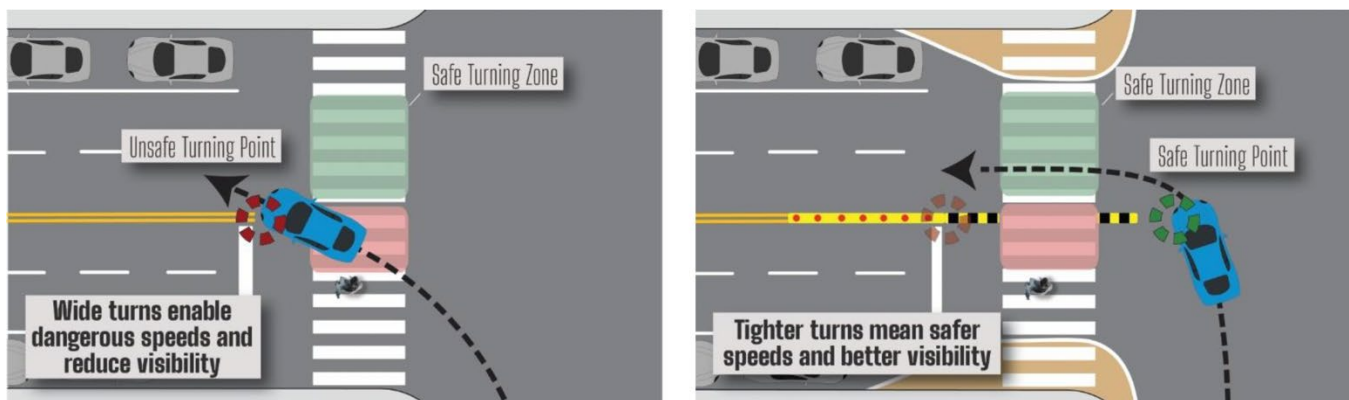


Figure 5.7 Before and after hardened centerline improvement. Source: Chicago.gov

T-P.12 Make Safety Improvements at Driveways

Some driveways in the Specific Plan Area have poor visibility for drivers accessing the street from the parking lot, such as the southern driveway at REI/Chipotle/Walgreens center. Driveways should be assessed for adequate sightlines and red curbs should be provided where sightlines need to be improved. Priority should be given to driveways with more activity and in locations that have a record of collisions.

T-P.13 Prioritizing Multimodal Safety Improvements

The following factors should be used in determining priorities for multimodal safety improvements in the Specific Plan Area.

- San Pablo Avenue intersections with Gilman Street, Cedar Street, University Avenue, Addison Street, and Ashby Avenue which are high-injury streets, as defined in the Vision Zero Plan, 2020, and segments of these streets within the Plan Area (see Figure 5.6). Prioritization of improvements to segments of these streets is discussed in Policy *T-P.17: Prioritize connections*.
- Intersection improvements at Russell Street and Heinz Street are part of Alameda CTC's Bus and Bike Lane Project (**Appendix D**). Improvements for bicycle and pedestrian safety and access are identified in the 2025

Bicycle Plan Update in this area.²³ If the Alameda CTC project is delayed, the City should coordinate with Alameda CTC to pursue more immediate upgrades at these intersection crossings and potential bicycle connection on San Pablo Avenue between the intersections.

- Continuously review transportation collision data and the Annual Vision Zero Report to identify safety “hot spots” for targeted assessment and improvements.
- Prioritize improvements at intersections that serve key connections, in alignment with Policy *T-P. 17: Prioritize connections*.

Improve Connections Outside of the Plan Area

Community members consistently described San Pablo Avenue as a barrier separating West Berkeley from the rest of the city. This perception is driven not only by the lack of safe crossings for people walking and biking, but also by the limited number of multimodal, east-west connections to places outside of the Specific Plan Area.

Although several parks are located within a few blocks of San Pablo Avenue, access to these is often hindered by unsafe or indirect pedestrian and bicycle routes. Side-streets that connect current and future residents along San Pablo Avenue to nearby parks and facilities require targeted multimodal improvements. Strengthening these connections will improve equitable access to help overcome the street’s physical divide.

Connections Network

Strengthening east-west connections across San Pablo Avenue is essential to linking adjacent neighborhoods with citywide destinations such as schools, parks and transit stations. Figure 5.8 *Connections Map* illustrates the network of planned and completed projects aimed at enhancing these connections. The map identifies potential priority pedestrian and bicycle connections currently missing within the Plan Area and consolidates information from several sources, including the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project, City of Berkeley and BART planned Bicycle Improvements, and the proposed facilities from the Bike Plan Update (2025). A subsequent gap analysis highlights areas where east-west connectivity remains limited and where additional infrastructure investments are needed to support safe and continuous bicycle and transit travel.

Figure 5.9 Street Network Map complements this analysis by providing an overview of existing road designations and emergency access and evacuation routes. Comparing the two maps reveals that many major roadways continue to lack complete multimodal facilities.

²³ City of Berkeley. Berkeley Bicycle Plan update, Public Review Draft, July 2025. Accessed 4 September 2025; page 114 and 115.

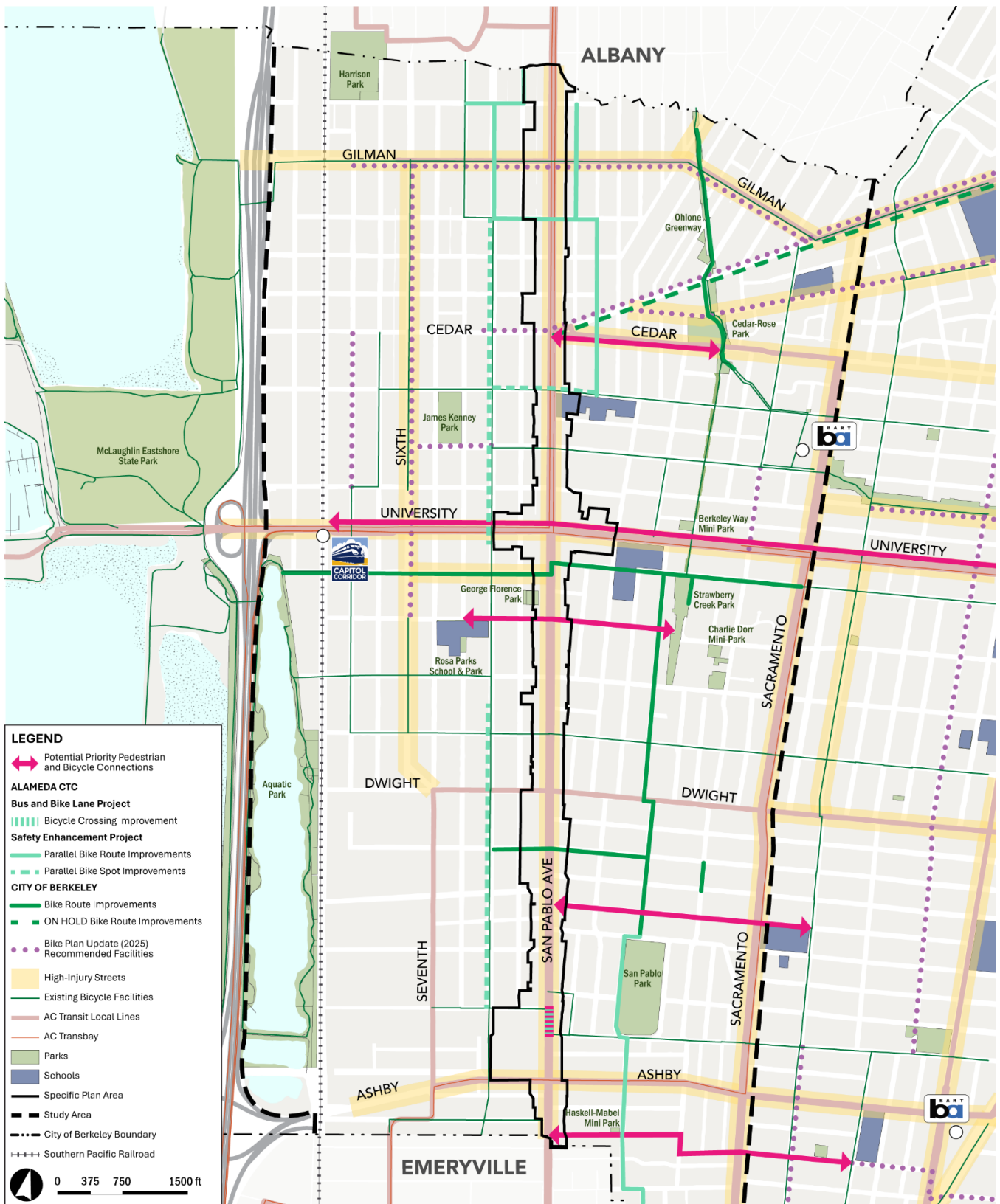


Figure 5.8 Connections Map: Existing and planned Projects. Source: Alameda CTC, AC Transit, City of Berkeley. 2025.

Modal and Functional Policies and Standards



Figure 5.9 Existing Street Network Map. Source: Alameda CTC, City of Berkeley. 2025.

T-P.14 Transit Improvements

The following efforts should be undertaken by the City with partner agencies to improve reliability and efficiency of transit service connecting the Plan Area to BART, UC Berkeley, Downtown Berkeley, and other major destinations:

- In alignment with Transit First Policy 18, explore further study of additional improvements along University Avenue and the Southside area to enhance transit service on Line 51B, strengthening connections between San Pablo Avenue, the Berkeley Amtrak Capitol Corridor Station, Downtown Berkeley, and UC Berkeley.
- Coordinate with AC Transit, BART, and Capitol Corridor to improve connections, reduce transfer wait times, and support future frequency enhancements for east-west bus service that crosses San Pablo Avenue.
- For other transit improvement policies, see section *Multimodal Mobility and Access*.

T-P.15 Bicycle Improvements

In alignment with the Berkeley Bicycle Plan (2017), Bicycle Plan Policy D-1, and consistent with the City’s 2025 Bicycle Plan Update, the City should continue to expand and improve a connected, low-stress bikeway network, with emphasis on comfort and safety:

- Improve infrastructure at the intersections at Gilman and Heinz Street, consistent with the City’s 2025 Bicycle Plan Update. These intersections are critical for enhancing east-west connectivity and safety. Recommended improvements include studying an extension to the existing cycletrack on Gilman Street from 4th Street to San Pablo Avenue and establishing an offset cycletrack crossing at Heinz Street to connect with Russell or Oregon Street and the larger bicycle boulevard network.
- Improve bicycle access for elementary and middle school students traveling to schools located east and west of San Pablo Avenue. Prioritize infrastructure improvements that create continuous, low-stress routes between neighborhoods and school campuses.
- Enhance bicycle connectivity to regional transit, including a safer and direct link to the Amtrak Capitol Corridor rail station to support multimodal travel options for students, commuters, and residents.
- As bicycle improvements are made, provide bicycle wayfinding and directional signage consistent with standards and guidance in the Berkeley Bike Plan (2020), Appendix F and the 2025 Bicycle Plan Update to help navigate bicycle riders through intersections, and guide them to local and regional destinations. If bike lanes are not established on San Pablo Avenue, bicycle signage on the street should direct cyclists to the nearest bicycle boulevards and parallel routes to provide safe alternatives.

T-P.16 Pedestrian Improvements

In alignment with the Pedestrian Plan (2020), additional improvements in the Specific Plan Area should prioritize comfort, safety, and accessibility for pedestrians:

- Provide crosswalk improvements, traffic calming, and sidewalk upgrades
 - Along key walking corridors for elementary and middle school students, such as Cedar Street, Virginia Street, and Allston Way. Coordinate with any Alameda County Transportation Commission Safe Routes to School Safety Assessment plans.
 - Along key walking routes that are within proximity to transit stops and commercial destinations.
- Provide safe, direct, and accessible pedestrian connections to major employers in West Berkeley, North Berkeley and Ashby BART stations, and the Capitol Corridor rail station.
- For sidewalk standards, see *PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards* and other policies and standards in the Sidewalk Space section.

Pedestrian improvements resulting from analysis of an intersection that is already signalized, such as Allston Way, could include extending the San Pablo Avenue median noses towards crosswalks, hardening centerlines on the side-street, and/or installing pedestrian lighting at the corners. These changes would encourage drivers to make safe turning movements to and from San Pablo Avenue and improve visibility of people walking across the streets at night. Other intersections along Allston Way between San Pablo Avenue, Rosa Parks Elementary School and Strawberry Creek Park could also be assessed and improved as needed to enhance connections between these public uses and the Plan Area.

- For pedestrian crossing safety and improvements, see policies and standards in the *Continue to Improve Intersections* section.
- For streetscape improvements to provide lighting, shading, and other amenities for pedestrians, see the Public Realm policies and standards in the *Streetscape* section.

Prioritize Multimodal Connection Improvements and monitor performance

T-P.17 Prioritize Connections with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts

As development occurs in the Plan Area, new residents will need safe and comfortable multimodal connection to parks, schools, grocery stores, and other uses in the surrounding community. These connections should be designed to accommodate users of all ages and abilities. The following priorities are based on public comment received during the Specific Plan planning process and expected needs of future residents. Future updates to the citywide Pedestrian Plan and Bicycle Plan can verify future residents' needs:

During a public open house, parents with a young child said that they appreciated the proximity of San Pablo Park to their home, a mixed-use apartment on San Pablo Avenue near Ashby Avenue. However, they had decided to move because of the poor quality of the pedestrian connection from their apartment to the park.

- Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle improvements on streets that provide access to schools and parks, as well as other routes that typically serve students in the Plan Area and adjacent neighborhoods to the east and west of San Pablo Avenue.
 - Longfellow Middle School at its temporary location just east of San Pablo Avenue, between Virginia Street and Francisco Street (The School is currently scheduled to return to original location to the east of Sacramento Street between Derby and Ward Streets in Summer 2027)
 - Consider improvements that can serve the Berkeley Adult School and Berkeley Unified School District housing in the longer term.
- Bike boulevards that cross San Pablo Avenue and provide parallel access in adjacent neighborhoods.
- Streets within ¼ or ½ mile of housing for elderly people.
- Prioritize efforts in alignment with San Pablo Avenue improvement priorities discussed in Policy *T-P.13 Prioritizing Multimodal Safety Improvements*.

T-P.18 Monitor Changing Multimodal Needs and Conditions

As multimodal activity and development increase within the Plan Area and surrounding Study Area, the City should coordinate with local, county, regional, and state transportation agency partners to monitor travel patterns and evaluate the need for additional improvements to the connection network, including as needed:

- **Regional traffic** – Coordinate with Caltrans to monitor regional traffic, trips that pass through Berkeley on Plan Area streets and intersections with streets that have interchanges on I-80 to understand its impacts on multimodal safety and mobility.
- **Transit service and use** – Work with AC Transit to monitor travel time and reliability of bus service on streets and routes within the Plan Area that provide connections from the Plan Area to the surrounding communities and region. Periodically survey existing and potential transit riders as the population in the Plan Area grows, to identify their travel needs. Use the results to modify bus service as appropriate to better align with changing demand.
- **Vulnerable user needs** – Monitor changes in land use, demographics, and traffic safety with a focus on vulnerable users, including children, seniors, and people with disabilities. For example, if new senior housing or services are developed, evaluate the surrounding streets for needed improvements and consider reprioritizing planned improvements so they are implemented sooner.

This monitoring and assessment should be coordinated with updates to the City's modal plans and will also address multimodal intersections and priority improvement lists that relate to T-P.9, T-P.10, T-P.11 and T-P.13.

Public Realm Policies, Standards, and Projects

The public realm in the Specific Plan Area must satisfy a broad range of transportation, social, and economic needs. The policies, standards, and projects identified in this section, are intended to create an inviting, safe, comfortable, and functional environment along San Pablo Avenue and throughout the Plan Area. The public realm should enable people to move easily and safely along the corridor, whether accessing businesses, transit, homes, parked vehicles or bicycles, and also provide welcoming spaces to meet a friend, exercise, and socialize.

Sidewalk Space



The sidewalk along San Pablo Avenue is typically 13 feet wide with variations in the use and condition of the sidewalk space. In many areas, private landscaping and other encroachments reduce usable space, especially where pavement is damaged around tree wells. These constraints, combined with fast-moving traffic, were frequently raised by community members as safety and comfort concerns. Several mixed-use developments constructed after 2010 include setbacks that expand the sidewalk with additional landscaping or pavement. Encouraging similar setbacks in future development presents one of the few opportunities to increase public space along San Pablo Avenue.

Figure 5.10 Sidewalk Space on San Pablo Avenue in front of 1808 San Pablo Avenue.

A well-designed sidewalk needs to provide enough space for safe, comfortable, and active use by all. The following policies and standards are intended to ensure that new development supports accessibility, safety, and vibrant pedestrian activity. The following policies and standards apply specifically to San Pablo Avenue and immediate side-streets, where noted. For guidance on other streets, refer to the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan (2020), Appendix B Engineering & Design Guidance.

PR-P.1 Sidewalk Zones

To serve the range of uses and infrastructure located within sidewalks, design standards define three zones across the sidewalk width: the Pedestrian Zone, the Amenity Zone, and the Frontage Zone (see Figures 5.11 and 5.12 *Sidewalk Zone examples*). San Pablo Avenue is a state highway, so Caltrans has jurisdiction over the entire right-of-way, including sidewalks. The City, however, is responsible for ongoing sidewalk maintenance and may implement improvements in coordination with Caltrans.

The Berkeley Pedestrian Plan (2020) defines preferred widths for these zones for a Mixed-Use Residential Boulevard like San Pablo Avenue as follows:

- Frontage Zone: 2 feet
- Pedestrian Zone: 8 to 12 feet
- Amenity Zone: 6 to 10 feet
- Total Sidewalk: 16 to 24 feet

The existing sidewalks along San Pablo Avenue, typically 13 feet wide, are 3 feet narrower than the desired minimum width defined in the Pedestrian Plan. **There is no ability to significantly widen the sidewalk area within the existing public right of way.**

To address this constraint, the Plan standards define a flexible approach to best meet the intentions of the Pedestrian Plan guidance. There are some limited segments of sidewalk that are 12 feet wide at the narrowest. In these locations there will be a need to balance the zones of the sidewalk to best meet the standards and land use, depending on the specific location. Policy *PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards* provides minimum widths for sidewalk zones along San

Pablo Avenue. Policy PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements and standard LU-S.1 Sidewalk Expansion Incentive define a way to achieve additional sidewalk width adjacent to new development.

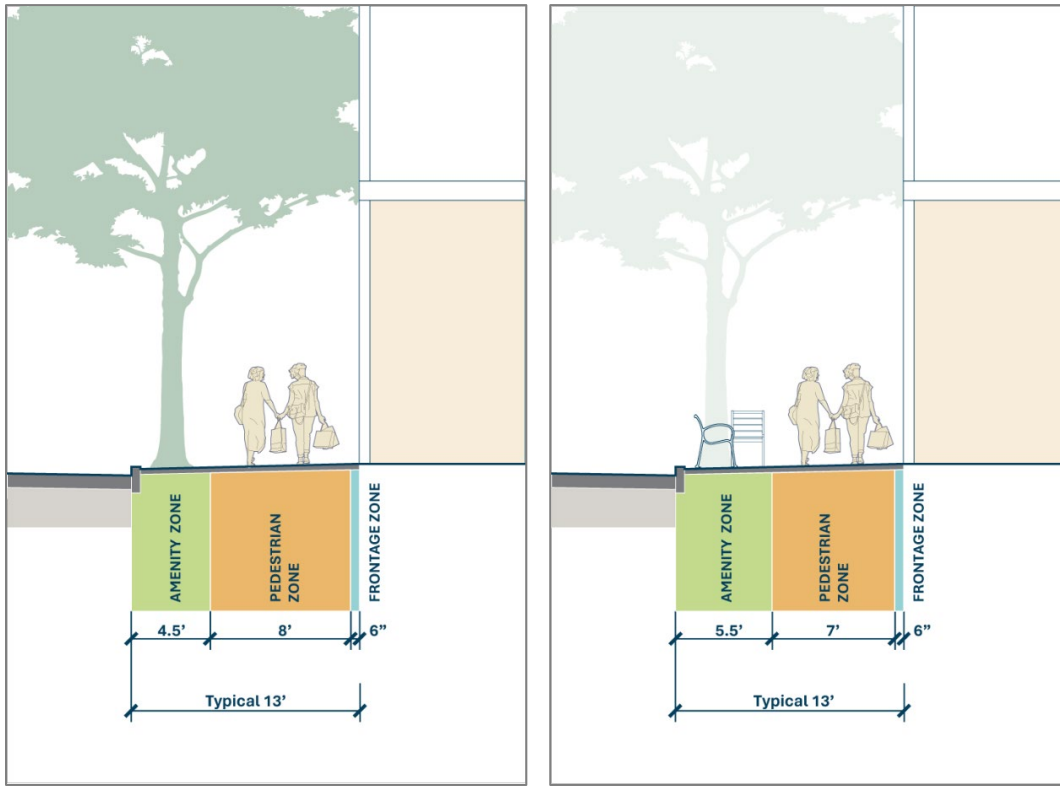


Figure 5.11 Left: Section A - Sidewalk at tree well. Right: Section B – Sidewalk with public seating

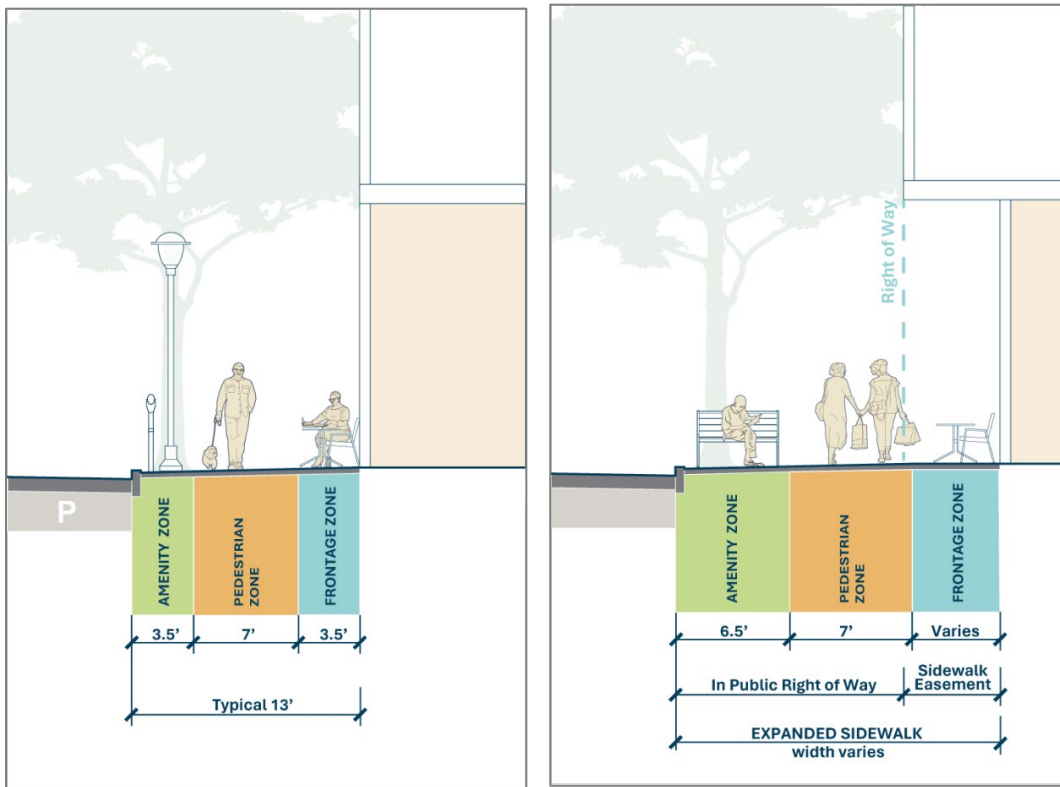


Figure 5.12 Left: Section C – Outdoor seating in the right-of-way. Right: Section D – Sidewalk expansion

PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards

Pedestrian Zone: This is the unobstructed portion of the sidewalk designated for pedestrian movement.

- **In Nodes** on San Pablo and University Avenues, the minimum width is 7 feet to allow for higher levels of pedestrian activity.
- **Outside of Nodes**, 7 feet is preferred in active locations, with a minimum of 6 feet. Due to the existing right-of-way constraints, the Pedestrian Zone may be offset along the street to accommodate different sidewalk space needs in the Amenity and Frontage Zones.



Figure 5.13 Example of the sidewalk zones.

Amenity Zone: This is the zone between the street and the Pedestrian Zone that provides space for street tree wells, public seating, bicycle parking, bus shelters, streetlights and signal poles, utility boxes and panels, trash/recycling containers, and other streetscape elements. This zone includes the six-inch curb at the edge of the sidewalk. The width may vary as needed while ensuring the adjacent Pedestrian Zone meets minimum pedestrian clearance requirements.

- The Amenity Zone should be at least 4.5 feet wide to accommodate a minimum 4-foot wide tree well. A width of 5.5 feet allows space for benches or other sidewalk seating for social interaction (see Figure 5.11 Section B).
- The width may be reduced to a minimum of 3.5 feet where the adjacent Frontage Zone in the public right of way is 3 feet wide, see Frontage Zone below.

Frontage Zone: This is the zone between the Pedestrian Zone and adjacent property. Its width may vary depending on site conditions and may be extended where a frontage setback or easement on private property provides additional space. This zone can accommodate features such as outdoor seating, additional landscaping, or expanded general sidewalk space.

- The Frontage Zone shall be a minimum of 6 inches wide to provide a buffer between people walking in the Pedestrian Zone and adjacent buildings on private property.
- If an adjacent business applies for and receives an encroachment permit, the zone may extend up to 3 feet into the sidewalk, provided this does not conflict with the required Pedestrian Zone width (see Figure 5.12 Section C).
- The Frontage Zone may extend beyond the right-of-way when the adjacent property grants a public access easement within the setback area (see Policy *PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements* and Figure 5.12 Section D). It may also be widened into an adjacent Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Open Space (POPOS) (see Policy *PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces*).
- A maximum of 20% of the frontage width may be permanent in the ground or raised landscaped areas. Pots and other above-ground planters that can be easily removed and have sidewalk below them are preferred for flexibility of use over time, and may result in a maximum of 30% of the frontage width being landscaped areas.

PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements

Widening sidewalks is a key strategy to improve pedestrian comfort. Increasing the distance between the walkway and roadway allows more space for trees, landscaping and other amenities in the Amenity Zone, while also creating more space for social activity within the public realm. In some locations, recent mixed-use residential developments have incorporated frontage setbacks that effectively widen the sidewalk, enhancing the pedestrian experience and contributing to more attractive streetscape (see Figure 5.14 example images). Widening of the sidewalk with an easement is encouraged and supported by *LU-S.1 Sidewalk Expansion Incentive*.



Figure 5.14 Examples of mixed-use residential developments with easement setbacks. Left: “Bloom Berkeley” 2747 San Pablo Avenue. Right: “The Jones” 2748 San Pablo Avenue.

Where developments provide an easement widening the sidewalk, the additional space can be allocated to any of the sidewalk zones. For example, the Amenity Zone could be widened to allow for additional landscaping and seating, or the Frontage Zone could be widened to accommodate public seating, outdoor dining, or amenities for an adjacent bus stop (see Figure 5.15 *Frontage zone*). Improvements within the frontage zone must be installed and maintained by the property owner or adjacent business.

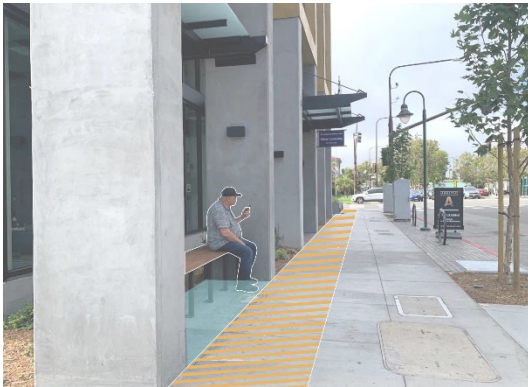


Figure 5.15 Frontage zone includes decorative elements, outdoor seating, and a bus bench. “Aquatic at Ashby”, 3000 San Pablo Avenue.

PR-S.2 Reestablish Sidewalk Width

In several locations along San Pablo Avenue, sidewalks are less than 13 feet wide between the face of curb and landscape along adjacent property frontages. There are a limited number of locations where older buildings are less than 13 feet from face of curb, and these conditions will likely remain. If these locations lack an approved encroachment permit, the full sidewalk width should be reestablished over time as public improvements are made, and as adjacent properties are redeveloped or building permit applications are filed.

Streetscape

The Specific Plan updates streetscape standards to improve San Pablo Avenue’s quality and identity of the public realm, and to support the economic and social vitality of the Plan Area. These streetscape standards build upon and update the San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan (2003) and include revised standards on pedestrian-scale lighting, street furnishing, bus stop improvements, medians, trees, and landscaping. Elements of the streetscape standards apply to side-streets within the Specific Plan Area, particularly to University Avenue.

Lighting

Improving pedestrian lighting along San Pablo Avenue was the most consistent need expressed by community members during the Plan process. Existing streetlights are mostly designed to light the roadway and intersections, leaving sidewalks dimly lit, unless there is light spilling from storefronts, nearby buildings, or the occasional pedestrian fixture at a bus stop. This issue was raised in the 2004 San Pablo Avenue Public Improvements Plan, which proposed new lighting standards. While some private developments have added pedestrian-scale lighting, no comprehensive public investment has yet been made. There are similar existing lighting conditions on other streets within the Specific Plan Area. The City has been preparing a citywide streetlighting standards document but it has not been fully drafted to date. The following recommendations should be considered as the standards are finalized.



Figure 5.16 Pedestrian Light.
Source: San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan, 2004



Figure 5.17 Example of Pedestrian scale lighting. “Aquatic at Ashby”, 3000 San Pablo Avenue.

PR-P.3 Improve Street Lighting for the Safety and Comfort of All Users

The following policies and design recommendations build upon those of the 2004 San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan.

Roadway and Pedestrian-Realm Lighting

To cost-effectively improve lighting within the Plan Area, the City should implement the design approach defined in the Public Improvement Plan, which calls for the maintenance and incremental improvement of existing roadway lighting. This approach includes attaching pedestrian pendant lights to the existing roadway poles and painting the roadway poles and fixtures the color defined below (see Figure 5.16). Depending on roadway pole spacing, one or two 12-foot poles with pedestrian pendant lights should be added between roadway poles. The pendant lights should extend over the sidewalk, positioned below the mature tree canopy to maximize the illumination of the public realm.

Pedestrian-scale Light Fixture: Selux, Beta Pendant LED with pole mount fitter or single arm as appropriate (see Figure 5.16).

Color: RAL 5008 dark slate blue

Lighting Analysis: Scoping, funding, and implementation of street improvement projects should include a lighting analysis of existing lighting conditions within the project area so that lighting improvements can be implemented as part of the project where feasible.

Lighting Levels: The following recommended light levels are informed by lighting standards from other Bay Area cities and can be revised through technical analysis and future development of citywide standards.

Location	Minimum		Optimum ¹	
	Illuminance (footcandles)	Uniformity Ratio (avg. to min.)	Illuminance (footcandles)	Uniformity Ratio (avg. to min.)
San Pablo Avenue, Gilman Street, University Avenue, and Ashby Avenue	1.5	3:1	2.5	2:1
Hopkins Street, Cedar Street, and Dwight Way with C-SP frontage	1.1	4:1	1.8	3:1
Other streets in Plan Area	0.8	6:1	1.2	4:1
Transit Areas ²	2.0	3:1	3.0	2:1

Notes:

1. When installed or until end of maximum lighting with smart lighting systems.
2. On both sides of the street within one block of bus stops on San Pablo Avenue, Gilman Street, University Avenue, and Ashby Avenue, and within one-half block on both sides of the street for bus stops on other Plan Area streets.

Smart Lighting Systems

The City should pursue grants and other funding to implement a smart lighting system on San Pablo Avenue and throughout the Plan Area to maximize the utility and efficiency of the street and public realm lighting. Smart lighting systems allow for centralized control and management of lighting. Lighting levels can be programmed and automatically adjusted based on time of day, season, ambient light level sensors, motion detectors, and other relevant factors. These systems also monitor the condition and performance of lighting equipment, improving lighting management, energy efficiency, and maintenance.

Landscaping

The street tree canopy, mature street tree canopy and landscaped medians of San Pablo and University Avenues are defining features of their visual identity. The community views these as valued assets giving the streets their unique character (see Figure 5.18). However, the tree canopy is inconsistent, with noticeable gaps and maintenance issues affecting both trees and tree wells. Beyond the medians, public landscaping is limited. In some locations, adjacent property owners and tenants maintain landscape along their frontages, which sometimes narrows the available sidewalk width.



Figure 5.18 Left: Mature street trees grew to the same height as this four-story mixed-use building. Right: Tree canopy cover

Many of the existing gaps and maintenance issues were identified previously in the 2004 San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan. Since then, some improvements have been advanced through private initiative or targeted city investments, but funding constraints have limited the extent of implementation. The Plan builds on these earlier recommendations to guide future public realm improvements.

Since 2004, landscape standards and requirements have evolved to reflect new priorities. These include new irrigation standards, and requirements for landscaping that captures and treats stormwater runoff from development

and street projects. Current best practices emphasize water-efficient plant selection and species that can thrive under global climate change impacts, such as changes to local rainfall, higher average temperatures, and other factors. The Plan updates those outlined in the 2004 Improvement Plan to reflect these practices.

Additional policies, standards, and implementation strategies address the issues of capital, maintenance cost and responsibilities for landscaping within the Specific Plan Area.

Street Trees

PR-P.4 Enhance Tree Health and Expand Tree Canopy

Existing street trees should be well maintained, and their positive impact on the public realm should be enhanced by planting additional trees and other landscaping. Establishing a consistent and continuous tree canopy along sidewalks and medians will strengthen the Plan Area’s character, improve pedestrian comfort, help to reduce urban heat island effect, and address the community’s desire for a greener environment.

The **tree canopy** should be as continuous as possible with mature tree canopies touching those of adjacent trees. Breaks may occur at roadway street light locations. Pedestrian-scale lighting is to be installed below the mature tree canopy to minimize conflicts.

Street tree planting shall follow the City of Berkeley standard details, including tree well modifications described below, which define additions and some exceptions to citywide standards as they apply to specific street sidewalks and median conditions in the Plan Area.

Tree wells should be as large as feasible and meet the minimum standards for specific streets described in the standards below. Maximizing tree well size supports the long-term tree health and offer opportunities for additional plantings.

- In Nodes, along University Avenue within the Specific Plan Area, and within proximity to bus stops and other high pedestrian activity areas, tree well should be “filled” with flexible porous pavement. This material allows water and oxygen to reach the soil and roots to maintain tree health, while the pavement surface provides a level, walkable and ADA compliant surface (see Figure 5.19).
- In areas with less pedestrian activity, gravel mulch and other plantings can enhance visual interest.
- See PR-S.6 *Landscaping in Tree Wells and Planters*, below for further discussion.



Figure 5.19 Flexible porous pavement in downtown Berkeley tree well

PR-S.3 San Pablo Avenue Tree Standards

Some of the most comfortable and engaging blocks along San Pablo Avenue feature large mature trees in the sidewalks and medians that form a full tree canopy across the street. This canopy creates a human scaled streetscape (see Figure 5.20). As taller mixed-use buildings are built along San Pablo Avenue, expanding the street tree canopy will soften the perceived scale of these structures and enhance the character of the public realm and provide meaningful urban greening.

Tree species. The predominant tree species along San Pablo Avenue are London Plane (*Platanus x acerifolia*), Western Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), American Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and Red Sunset Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* ‘Franksred’). Other trees and smaller tree species are also present. However, several trees, particularly the American Sweet Gums, are in decline or poor condition. While Ginkgo biloba trees have also been planted, they tend to grow slowly and do not achieve the desired large and rounded form.

- London Plane trees should be prioritized for new plantings and when existing trees are replaced, continuing the standards of the San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan (2003) which this Specific Plan replaces.
- To avoid a monoculture of tree species, different cultivars such as ‘Exclamation’ and ‘Columbia’, which can grow wide and up to 50’ tall can be planted. Western Sycamore is another alternative to support more diversity of tree species.
- In locations where these species are not suitable, as determined by the City forestry staff, a deciduous tree similar to the London Plane in height and canopy width should be selected. Red Maple trees are one example with appropriate cultivars and some Red Sunset Maples are already planted along San Pablo Avenue.
- If tree size is the limiting factor, a tree that will reach the largest possible size given the specific location conditions should be selected, and tree spacing should be adjusted to maintain a more continuous tree canopy.

Trees in Medians. The size and placement of trees in San Pablo Avenue’s medians are governed by the Caltrans Highway Design Manual and other Caltrans Standards. The full-width medians along San Pablo Avenue are typically 13 feet wide. Caltrans Standards require a minimum clearance of 5 feet from median curb face to the tree trunk of a mature tree. The trees recommended above satisfy this requirement.

Tree Trimming Maintenance. Branches of existing mature trees in sidewalk locations should not reach lower than 14 feet above the adjacent roadway or sidewalk level. This provides the vertical clearance required by Caltrans for street traffic, provides visibility to storefronts and signs, and reduces shadowing of pedestrian-scaled and storefront lighting.

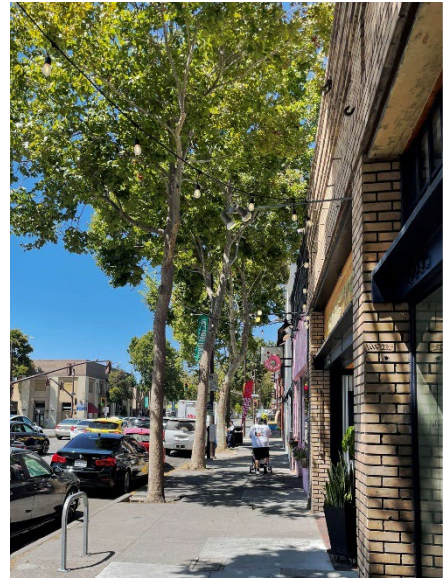


Figure 5.20 Trees in San Pablo Avenue sidewalk south of University Avenue

Tree Wells. The predominant size of existing tree wells along San Pablo Avenue is 3 x 3 feet and undersized for large canopy trees (see Figure 5.21).

- A minimum size of 4 x 6 feet is required for new wells, with the longer dimension oriented parallel to the curb.
- Where possible, a 4 x 8 foot tree well is desirable.
- The 4 foot dimension can also be wider in many cases given other standards defined for sidewalk use (see Policy *PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards*).
- See Policy *PR-P.4 Enhance Tree Health and Expand Tree Canopy* for more details about tree well materials and *PR-S.6 Landscaping in Tree Wells and Planters* for landscaping.



Figure 5.21 Tree on San Pablo Avenue overgrowing a 3 foot by 3 foot tree well

PR-S.4 University Avenue Tree Standards

On University Avenue between 9th and Curtis Streets is within the Specific Plan Area, sidewalks are 10 feet wide, narrower than those along San Pablo Avenue. The median between 10th Street and San Pablo Avenue contains an extended left-turn lane and only one tree.

Tree Species and Spacing. Existing trees along this section of University Avenue are of various species. Chinese Elm trees (*Ulmus parvifolia*, *Ulmus* ‘Frontier’ and other varieties) are most common, accompanied by Tulip trees (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and Honey Locusts (*Gleditsia triacanthos*). Many trees are in poor health. Elm trees with a large mature vase-shaped form, such as Allee Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia* ‘Emer ll’), should be prioritized for replacement and new plantings. As tree health is evaluated, new trees should be added to create a continuous tree canopy with a spacing that allows mature tree canopies to touch those of adjacent trees.

Trees in Medians. The medians are planted with various California natives. Coast Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) have performed the best, while California Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) and Blue Blossom Ceanothus (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*) are in poorer condition. Narrow, medium-sized, drought-tolerant deciduous oaks, such as Chisos Red Oak (*Quercus gravesii*) or Spanish Oak (*Quercus cerrioides*) should be used as replacement species.

Tree Trimming Maintenance. Branches of existing mature trees in sidewalk locations should not reach lower than 14 feet above the adjacent roadway or sidewalk level. This provides the vertical clearance needed, given bus and truck traffic on this street, provides visibility to storefronts and signage, and reduces shadowing of pedestrian-scaled and storefront lighting.

Tree Wells. The predominant size of existing tree wells along this part of University Avenue is 3 x 3 feet and undersized for large canopy trees.

- The minimum size of 4 x 6 feet is required for new wells, with the longer dimension oriented parallel to the curb.
- Where possible, a 4 x 8 foot tree well is desirable.
- Given the narrower typically 10 foot sidewalk width along University Avenue the tree wells should use flexible porous pavement in order to provide the desired 6 foot minimum width for the sidewalk’s Pedestrian Zone that meets universal access design considerations.
- See Policy *PR-P.4 Enhance Tree Health and Expand Tree Canopy* for more details about tree well materials and *PR-S.6 Landscaping in tree wells and planters* for landscaping.

PR-S.5 Other Side-Street Trees

A wide variety of tree species are planted on streets intersecting San Pablo Avenue. The following design standards apply to those portions of the intersecting streets, except for University Avenue, which fall within the Plan Area. For University Avenue, see PR S.4 *University Avenue Tree Standards* above.

Tree Species and Spacing

- Outside of Nodes, side-street trees adjacent to properties that front or side onto San Pablo Avenue should match the species planted on the adjoining block face of San Pablo Avenue, unless sidewalk widths, utility lines, or other site conditions make this infeasible.
- In Nodes, street trees should match the adjacent San Pablo Avenue species for the length of the sidewalk that is within the Plan Area.
- If San Pablo Avenue tree species are infeasible, trees should match the predominant species already established along the side-street.

Tree Wells. Sidewalk widths vary along side-streets, resulting in different tree well sizes.

- A minimum tree well size of 4 x 6 foot, as defined for San Pablo Avenue, is preferred.
- Where sidewalks widths are too narrow to provide both a 5-foot-wide Pedestrian Zone with a 4-foot-wide tree well, the size of the tree wells may be reduced in size or filled with flexible porous pavement. This pavement allows the Pedestrian Zone to overlap into the tree well.
- *PR-P.4 Enhance Tree Health and Expand Tree Canopy* for more details about tree well materials and *PR-S.6 Landscaping in tree wells and planters* for landscaping.

PR-P.5 Enhance and Expand Other Landscaping

Beyond street trees, the landscape character of the Plan Area is defined by other plantings in the medians and some street tree wells, and other small areas of plantings along the sidewalk. As the Plan is implemented, additional opportunities for landscaping may arise in new curb extensions, partial and full side-street plazas (see Policy *PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas*), planters in the sidewalk Amenities and Frontage Zones, and in Privately-owned public open spaces (see Policy *PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces*).

In the future, should a Community Benefit or Business Improvement District form within a portion of the Specific Plan Area this organization could negotiate an agreement with the City to improve and maintain landscaping within the sidewalk, median, and other landscaped areas within the public right-of-way. See Policy *ED-P.4 Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)*.

PR-S.6 Landscaping in tree wells and planters

Where tree wells do not need to be filled with flexible porous pavement, tree wells can be planted to create a distinct identity for locations along San Pablo Avenue (see Figure 5.22).

- Plantings in tree wells, except for the tree itself, will not be maintained by the City. Tree wells with landscape planting need to be maintained by adjacent property owners, residents, businesses, tenants, or a future Community Benefit or Business Improvement District.
- Planting of a tree well shall comply with Specific Plan standards and the requirements of the Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 12.44 Trees and Shrubs.
- Plantings shall not impede public use of other sidewalk areas, such as adjacent Pedestrian and Amenity Zones.



Figure 5.22 Additional landscape in large tree well on San Pablo Avenue.

Landscaping in medians

Full-width and narrow width landscaped medians are generally planted with grass and not irrigated along San Pablo Avenue. Narrow medians next to left turn lanes vary in conditions with some narrow medians having hedges, which were once a dominant treatment, but these have not been consistently replaced as they die or become damaged. Where narrow medians next to left-turn lanes have been modified, they have typically been paved with concrete.

Although the grass and tree treatment in the medians positively impact the character of San Pablo Avenue, during dryer times of the year the appearance of the grass deteriorates. Maintaining green grass would require regular irrigation which is not environmentally appropriate, and existing irrigation systems are not currently in use. In addition, the grass requires regular mowing and other maintenance. A more sustainable and climate-resilient approach would involve replacing grass over time with a low- water drought-tolerant landscape treatment that can adapt to climate change and not require irrigation after the plants are established.



Figure 5.23 Median landscape on San Pablo Avenue

PR-P.6 Near-term Opportunities for Re-landscaping medians

Significant investment in median re-landscaping is not advisable in the near-term given the potential for future multimodal transportation projects along San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley. However, when opportunities arise through smaller transportation improvement projects, the City should replant sections of medians using landscape design treatments that reflect the **long-term landscaped median design** vision. These demonstration segments can help build support and establish precedent.

PR-P.7 Long-term landscaped median design

In the long-term, landscape medians along San Pablo Avenue should be aesthetically pleasing, low-maintenance, and free of irrigation. The design should include a ground cover of crushed rock or wood mulch, with trees and low-water, drought-tolerant, low growing shrubs, grasses, succulents, and other plantings. Suitable species may include mat rush (*Lomandra species*), California yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), aloe (*Aloe species*), finger aloe (*Cotyledon orbiculata var. oblonga 'Flavida'*), and Majorcan germander (*teucrium cosonii*). Berkeley's Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department will take a lead role in determining which plant species are most appropriate for long-term landscaping in medians.

Green Infrastructure

Transportation improvements and other construction within Specific Plan Area that meet specific criteria must include green infrastructure consistent with the Caltrans NPDES Order 2022-0033-DWQ Stormwater Permit when within the Caltrans right of way of San Pablo Avenue and the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit Order No. R2-2022-0018 (MRP 3.0) when in city right of way or private property. Green infrastructure is a sustainable landscape and civil engineering improvement that captures, slows, and treats stormwater runoff with a primary goal of reducing pollutants entering the San Francisco Bay.²⁴ Green infrastructure systems support Berkeley's climate change and sustainability goals. The City's [Green Infrastructure Plan \(2019\)](#) includes guidelines for implementation of green infrastructure in Berkeley and should be referred to during the planning and design phases of both streetscape improvement and private development projects in the Specific Plan Area.

²⁴ San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, [Stormwater webpage](#), accessed June 30, 2025.

PR-P.8 Green Infrastructure in Public Projects

All publicly funded projects must meet the requirements of the current MRP and/or the Caltrans NPDES permit as applicable. In addition to fulfilling the Specific Plan’s public realm policies and standards, green infrastructure should contribute positively to pedestrian comfort and safety.

- Design approaches may include permeable or porous pavement materials to maintain required sidewalk widths, and use of tree wells, and can be integrated into side-street curb extensions and side-street plazas if Caltrans and the City reach a maintenance agreement for specific improvements.
- See *T-P.11 Minor Side-Street Intersection Improvements*, and *PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas* for design related policies and standards.

PR-P.9 Green Infrastructure in Private Development

Private development projects are also required to meet the requirements of the current MRP. The Plan supports and provides flexibility for private development to fund and integrate public spaces that serve dual purposes for stormwater management and the community.

- Green infrastructure that serves to treat private property stormwater can be integrated into the public realm and may be included in side-street curb extensions, see *T-P.11 Minor Side-Street Intersection Improvements*, or within *PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements*, *PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces*, *PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas* for design related policies and standards
- When a development constructs green infrastructure in the public right of way the property owner must enter into a maintenance agreement with the City. Then the improvement may be used towards the project’s stormwater compliance requirements with the concurrence of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Street Furniture

PR-S.7 Public Seating

Public seating may be installed within the Furniture Zone of the sidewalk or integrated into *curb extensions on side-streets* (see T-P.11) and *PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas*. Seating must not encroach into the Pedestrian Zone, which shall remain clear as required in *PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards*. Public seating must provide wheelchair-accessible space per the requirements of Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). These standards are in addition to, not a replacement of, Berkeley Municipal Code 14.48.150 Sidewalk seating, benches and planters.

Placement. Benches in the Furniture Zone should face away from the street. Alternatively, there may be pairs of short benches placed perpendicular to the street and face each other to allow for a small group gatherings.

Developments along San Pablo Avenue have introduced public-facing elements such as benches or seating areas within the ground floor setbacks. While located on private property, these spaces are accessible to the public.



Figure 5.24 Left: Seating Wall at 3000 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. Right: Bench variations of LandscapeForms Scarborough bench in Downtown Berkeley.

Style.

- Benches provided and maintained by the City shall be “[Landscape Forms Scarborough](#)” bench in black. This bench model is available in four standard lengths in both back or backless versions. These benches have been used in the Shattuck Avenue reconstruction project in Downtown Berkeley and other improvements in Berkeley. Using the same model on San Pablo Avenue will streamline city maintenance.
- Benches or other public seating installed and maintained by adjacent property owner or businesses may be custom design or an alternative style. All seating and street furniture must be approved by the City through their sidewalk seating application process.²⁵ The applicant is responsible for installation and ongoing maintenance. Privately installed public seating shall satisfy the requirements and guidance of PROWAG and other ADA requirements.
- Seating in curb extensions and side-street plazas can be integrated into planter walls that are part of green infrastructure systems, or consist of movable tables and chairs or other context-sensitive design.

PR-S.8 Trash and Recycling Receptacles

City-standard trash and recycling receptacles shall be placed in the sidewalk Furniture Zone or integrated into curb extensions on side-streets and side-street Plazas.

Style. The color and design of public must follow the citywide standard and be Forms + Surfaces “Modified Urban Renaissance” model with upper integrated recycler module in dark green color or approved equal. [Picture of type.]

- *Privately Owned Public Open Spaces*, shall have adequate receptacles and may be of a different manufacture and model as they will be maintained by the property owner.

Placement.

- In designated Nodes, where foot traffic and stores are more frequent, two (2) city-standard receptacles should be installed per intersection, on opposite sides of the street.
- Between designated Nodes, one city-standard receptable should be installed per block face. Consider placement at bus stops or locations where trash may otherwise accumulate.
- Businesses, property owners, and future Community Benefit or Business Improvement Districts may place and maintain refuse cans in the public right of way if they have a maintenance agreement with the City.



Figure 5.24a Trash Receptacle

PR-S.9 Bicycle Racks

Bicycle racks along streets in the Specific Plan Area shall be placed in the Furniture Zone and meet the clearance and space standards outlined in the Berkeley Bicycle Plan, Appendix F.²⁶

Style. All racks in the right-of-way must be a city-approved design. The color may be black or galvanized as in other parts of the city.

Placement.

- The City of Berkeley offers a bike rack installation program to improve bicycle access to local businesses and destinations. Through this program, the City installs bike racks on sidewalks in commercial areas at no cost to property or business owners. Business owners and community members can request new



Figure 5.24b Bicycle Rack

²⁵ City of Berkeley. [Outdoor Commerce, Sidewalk Seating, and Parklets](#).

²⁶ City of Berkeley. Berkeley Bicycle Plan, [Appendix F Facility Design Toolbox](#). Adopted 2017, p. F-106

bike racks in areas where demand exists, or existing bicycle parking is insufficient. The application procedures are [available on the City’s website](#).

- Private development projects may install bike racks in the public right of way adjacent to their developments with approval of the Public Works Department

PR-S.10 Raised Planters

Raised planters can enhance the streetscape by adding greenery and visual interest, providing a buffer from the roadway, and expressing community care for public space.

- Raised planters may be used in the Frontage Zone, curb extensions, plazas, side-street plazas, and privately owned public open spaces, with planter edges offering opportunities for informal seating.
- Freestanding planter pots allow for flexible placement as single installations or groupings.
- All planters must be stable and secure to prevent tipping or shifting.
- Planters shall not encroach into the Pedestrian Zone maintain the sidewalk clearance specified in *PR-S.1 Sidewalk Zone Standards*.
- Planters shall maintain required clearances from face of curb.
- Planters and low walls should not exceed 30 inches in height from sidewalk grade, and the combined height of planter and landscaping shall not exceed 36 inches above the sidewalk when within 20 feet of an intersection or 10 feet of a driveway to provide line of sight between pedestrians and vehicle drivers.

PR-P.10 Other Street Furnishings

Additional public street furnishings, such as public restrooms or information kiosks, may be installed in the right-of-way where an identified need exists. These furnishings must be designed and located in accordance with the *PR-P.1 Sidewalk Zones* and all other applicable standards and policies in this document.

Bus Stop Improvements

To support use of bus transit along San Pablo Avenue and throughout Berkeley and its agency partners, AC Transit and Alameda CTC, have been planning and building bus stop improvements. Improvements include new shelters, benches, lighting, and other improvements to adjacent intersections and crosswalks. Within the Plan Area, bus stop improvements will be made as part of the San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancement project. The improvements are focused on stops that are used by limited-stop bus routes. These efforts are achieving the goals of Berkeley’s *Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan (2022)* and AC Transit’s *Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines (September 2022)*. In addition, it is the intent of the Specific Plan that improvements made in the Plan Area treat ADA requirements as the minimum standards for accessibility and strive for achieving universal design for users with a broad range of abilities. Bus stop improvements should be designed in this way (see *PR-P.13 Design for People of All Ages and Abilities*).

PR-P.11 Continue to Improve Bus Stops

Berkeley and its agency partners should continue to identify funding for and implement stop improvements beyond those provided through the San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancement project. This will include improvements to bus stops from Heinz Street to the south along San Pablo Avenue that are part of the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Bus Lanes and Bike Lanes Project. Other bus stops in the Plan Area along San Pablo Avenue and those serving bus routes on crossing streets should also be assessed and improved as funding is identified.

Prioritization of bus stops to receive improvements should consider existing ridership and potential ridership growth based on nearby destinations and development that brings new residents to the area, as well as the current condition or absence of bus stop improvements.

- Potential improvements may include installation of shelters, benches, pedestrian lighting, maps, signage, emergency call systems, and street tree plantings for additional shade.

- Other features and fixtures identified in Berkeley’s *Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan* (2022) and AC Transit’s *Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines* (September 2022) should also be considered.

Berkeley and AC Transit should collaborate to identify and determine bus shelter models that provide weather protection and a safe and comfortable environment for waiting transit riders at bus stops while being practical to maintain. They should also include maintenance agreements as needed.

Wayfinding, Placemaking and Public Art

PR-P.12 Facilitate Wayfinding and Placemaking Programs

As development increases and pedestrian and business activity grows within Specific Plan Area, coordinated signage, banners, and public art can support navigating the area, reinforce local identities and highlight distinct places within the Plan Area.

- The Berkeley Office of Economic Development could work with existing business organizations or clusters, such as the Berkeley International Marketplace to facilitate installation of signs, banners, public art, and similar elements to support placemaking efforts, see Policy ED-P.3. *Support and Expand Existing Business Clusters*.
- Identify wayfinding opportunities that reflect distinct character areas for business clusters or Nodes, and explore coordinated or branded approaches across San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley.
 - For instance, banners mounted on streetlight poles to highlight unique areas along the Plan Area. In the near-term, these could be funded by a combination of the City and local business groups.
- Incorporate public art into wayfinding design to reflect local character, history, and destinations. See PR-S.11 *Public Art in Public Spaces*.
- Should Community Benefit or Business Improvement District(s) form in the Specific Plan Area, these organizations may take on a larger role in managing and expanding wayfinding efforts. See Policy ED-P.4, *Study the Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)*.



Figure 5.25 Wall art on the façade of Ashkenaz, funded by the business.

Facilitate Installation of Public Art that Benefits the Public Realm

San Pablo Avenue currently features a range of informal and formal public art that create or reflect historic, demographic or commercial identities for Plan Area segments. Community input expressed support for more public art to enrich the public realm and strengthen the street’s sense of place. For public art on private development, see ODS.79 and 80.

PR-S.11 Public Art in Public Spaces

Public art should be integrated into public spaces throughout the Specific Plan Area to enhance the pedestrian experience and reflect the community’s character and culture.

- The process for incorporating art in public spaces is governed by Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 6.13 *Visual Art in Public Places*, and is administered by the Civic Art Commission and Civic Arts Coordinator.
- Opportunities for public installations include public infrastructure projects (as funding allows), existing medians and sidewalks (with specific public art funding), and within the public right of way through partnerships with adjacent property owners, businesses, and community development or business improvement districts (see ED-X.4 *Initiate a Study of the Feasibility and Scope of Forming a Business Improvement District*).



Figure 5.26 Existing examples of public art installations in Berkeley. Image on the left is a temporary art installation on Heinz Street in the Specific Plan Area by Amrita Singhal through a program with the Berkeley Art Works Project (photo by CD+A). Image on the rights is at Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Addison Street Intersection; *Delivered, Mable’s Promissory Note*; 2024 by Milred Howard (photo by Ethan Kaplan).

- Public art proposed within San Pablo Avenue’s right-of-way, which includes medians, street murals, or sidewalks, requires review and approval by Caltrans. This includes obtaining an encroachment permit, and a maintenance agreement between the City and Caltrans. This process adds time and cost of from concept to installation of the art.
- Future Community Benefit or Business Improvement District(s) are also encouraged to integrate art into their marketing and identity programs. This could include art installations in the public realm with maintenance agreements with the City.
- Promote cultural programming and community art events along the corridor by supporting flexible gathering and event spaces that can host a wide range of activities. Such events should complement existing programming, expand the diversity of event types, and attract both local residents and visitors. Cultural events can help activate the corridor, strengthen its identity, and foster a more vibrant and inclusive public realm.

Universal Design

PR-P.13 Design for People of All Ages and Abilities

The Specific Plan Area’s public realm shall be designed, implemented, maintained, and operated to serve people of all ages, sizes, and abilities. Universal design approaches should be applied to promote inclusive access to streets, sidewalks, open spaces, and transit.

- At a minimum, all improvements must comply with the Federal Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.
- Accessibility improvements should be prioritized proximate to senior housing and other uses frequently visited by individuals with a range of abilities
- When designing public realm improvements, the city, developer, and/or other project sponsors should consult with accessibility advocates and organizations serving people with access and functional needs to guide priorities and ensure inclusive design.
- Advanced Universal design strategies may include:
 - Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS)²⁷, Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPIs)²⁸ and extended pedestrian signal phases to maximize crossing time.

²⁷ City of Berkeley. [Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements](#). Adopted 2020, p. 16

²⁸ City of Berkeley. [Pedestrian Plan Appendix B: Toolbox of Pedestrian Improvements](#). Adopted 2020, p. 17

- Use of tactile detectable warning surfaces, in addition to typical truncated dome panels at crosswalks. These additional warning surfaces should be used when blind/low-vision people may experience non-typical circulation conditions in the public right-of-way. Use of these materials can be discussed in consultation with accessibility stakeholders during the design of public realm improvements in the public realm.
- Passenger loading zones and accessible parking near senior and mixed-use housing that meet and, where possible, exceed PROWAG and ADA regulations.

Public Realm Expansion and Improvements

As noted in **Appendix A: Key Existing Conditions**, San Pablo Avenue lacks public parks or plazas, and the streets and sidewalks are the only public space today. As new homes are built in the Plan Area, demand on the public realm will grow, since it functions as the primary social space for the people living, working and shopping in the area. During community outreach, residents and business owners expressed a strong desire for shared spaces that bring people together, support street-level business and community activity. In addition to opportunities for sidewalks widening (see *PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements*), **the Specific Plan encourages a variety of new public spaces**, including:

- Corner plazas at University Avenue to highlight the intersection as a major entry point into Berkeley from the highway.
- Plazas in designated Nodes and near (rapid) transit stops.
- Temporary or permanent conversion of parking lots to community-oriented uses.
- Mini-plazas in the public right-of-way created through full or partial side-street closures.
- Flexible spaces between sidewalks and adjacent buildings that can be used for seating, planting, and gathering.
- Side-street parklets and curb extensions used for public space and/or outdoor dining.

The following policies and standards offer strategies to expand the public realm and support the development of new public spaces. In the near term, improvements can be made through pavement-to-park initiatives like parking lot conversions, parklets and side-street entry closures. Over the long term, opportunities include curb extensions and side-street plazas, public open space and privately owned public open spaces (POPOS) at designated Nodes, mini-parks, and mid-block pedestrian pathways can provide lasting enhancements to the public realm.

San Pablo Avenue’s designation as a state highway limits opportunities for its closure for street festivals. For special events or any activity within the State highway right-of-way an Encroachment Permit²⁹ with an extensive approval process is required. However, events and neighborhood gatherings have taken place on side-streets, see sidebar.

Festival Street Closure: Until the end of 2024, the non-profit cultural organization Brasarte, which is dedicated to preserving Brazilian arts and culture in the Bay Area, was located on San Pablo Avenue at the Casa de la Cultura. Each year, for their celebration of SF Bay Brazilian Day & Lavagem Festival, they organized a street closure adjacent to their building, closing a block of Hearst Street and activating an adjacent parking lot for festivities.



Figure 5.27 Photos of the Festival in September 2023.

²⁹ California Department of Transportation. [Local Development Review and Encroachment Permit Process](#). 2025

PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas

The City should explore opportunities to convert minor streets into small side-street plazas by limiting or removing vehicle access between San Pablo Avenue and these streets. These closures would create room for public gathering spaces, urban greening and green infrastructure systems. Potential locations include side-streets that extend only a few blocks east or west from San Pablo Avenue, or streets that intersect San Pablo Avenue without a vehicular median break. See Figure 5.29 *Map of potential side-street plaza closures* to the right.

The plazas can be designed to close vehicle access entirely or only allow one-way entry or exit. Designs should allow emergency vehicle and refuse vehicle access, provide maneuvering space for private vehicles on the side-street to turn around, and maintain pedestrian and bicycle access to ensure neighborhood connectivity. Site and use specific conditions would also be assessed, such as side-street commercial loading, and ability of adjacent parallel streets to provide for vehicle access. The design also must provide necessary property access along the side-streets.

In the near-term, the City can partner with non-profits, businesses- and neighborhood advocacy groups, and other community organizations to identify pilot locations for quick-build plaza projects. These should be prioritized where local community partners will use, program, or activate the plaza space.

- Quick-build treatments can include barriers (e.g., jersey barriers, stone blocks or planters), markers for space and lanes with striping and paint, and table with seating of different types. Also, boulders, logs, or small structures can be installed to engage children.



Figure 5.28 *Sunset Triangle Quick-Build Plaza* (source: LADOT)

In the long term, when funding is available and where community support in activating a side-street plaza is strong, permanent plaza improvements may be pursued. Several implementation and maintenance models are possible:

- **City-Community Partnership:** Local group of residents, businesses, and/or property owners may reach out to the City and work with the Office of Economic Development (OED) and the Transportation Division to identify funding. The community could take an active role in ongoing maintenance and programming.
- **Future community benefit or business improvement District:** They may take a leadership role and partner with the City and adjacent community, to

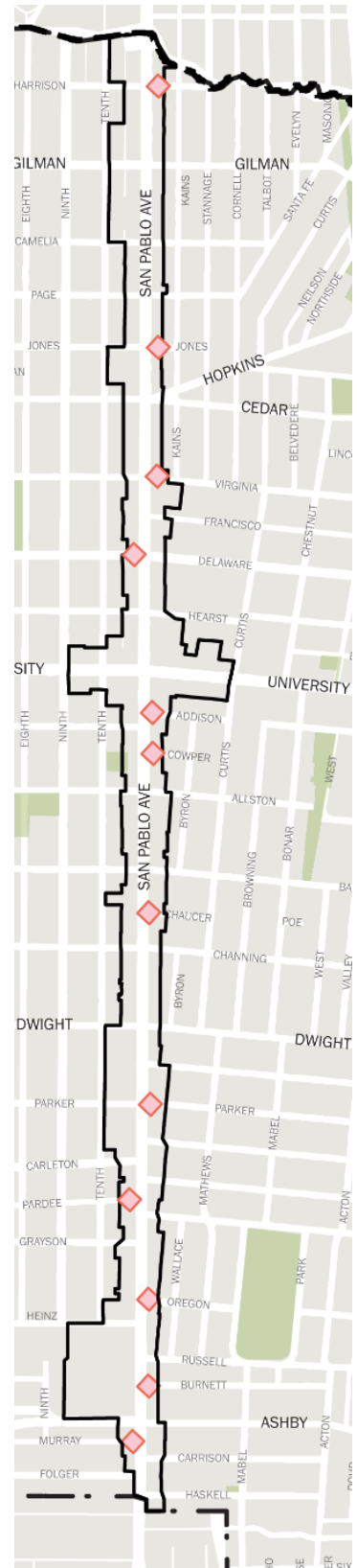


Figure 5.29 *Potential Side-Street Plaza Locations*

manage and maintain the plaza, under a formal agreement with the City, similar to how the Downtown BART Plaza or the plaza space in Strawberry Creek Park (see ED-4. *Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District*).

- **Adjacent Development:** A developer or property owner of a new residential or mixed-use building adjacent to the plaza may design, build, activate, and maintain the public space under agreement with the City (see LU-S.3 *Side-Street Plaza Implementation Incentive*).



Figure 5.30 Street closed to vehicles and converted into a plaza with landscaped seating with bicycle and emergency vehicle pass-through at Vancouver Street and McClure Street, Victoria, BC. [Google maps](#), November 2022.

Parklets and Curb Extension Common Spaces

Though smaller in scale than side-street plazas, parklets and curb extensions offer opportunities to create community gathering areas, business spaces and streetscape landscaping within the public right-of-way. Opportunities for these types of spaces include smaller parklets along the commercial frontages on the southside of Dwight Way, on either side of San Pablo Avenue, as well as a larger potential gathering space on the east side of San Pablo Avenue at the Hopkins Street and Cedar Street merge, where intersection reconfiguration could a more usable and inviting public area.

PR-P.15 Support Use and Creation of Parklets

Parklets are allowed on San Pablo Avenue but must follow strict design criteria set by the Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual. They must also be publicly accessible, be applied for and maintained by the City of Berkeley, and cannot serve as semi-private spaces, such as exclusive outdoor seating for restaurants or cafés. Permits for parklets are limited to one year, and extensions are not guaranteed, adding to the uncertainty of long-term use.³⁰

Side-streets including University Avenue, however, provide opportunities for parklets as another way to support outdoor seating and dining for nearby businesses. This approach can enhance corner locations, making them more appealing for restaurants and cafés, thereby boosting business activity and economic vitality while providing the

³⁰ California Department of Transportation. [Encroachment Permits Manual](#). Section 500.3I, "Parklets," July 2021, pp. 5-12

public with valued common space. Preferred locations include designated Nodes and areas prioritized by pedestrian safety. These could also be part of “piloting” a side-street plaza.

- Parklet location, design, use and other requirements include the BMC 14.48.190 *Parklets* and BMC 14.48.150 *Sidewalk seating, benches, and planters*.
- **Incentive** – To support business activity within the Specific Plan Area, the Outdoor Commerce Use Fee will be waived for businesses using free parking spaces and reduced by 75% for those using paid parking spaces. Evaluate incentive after first 3 years of implementation and revise as appropriate.

PR-S.12 Design and Use of Curb Extensions on Side-Streets

Curb extensions (also called bulb-outs) extend the sidewalk into the parking lane, to narrow the roadway, shorten pedestrian crossing distances and slow turning vehicles.

The Alameda CTC Safety Enhancements project is planning bus curb extensions at select locations on San Pablo Avenue. In these locations and further projects, the City should assess whether added space can accommodate outdoor seating or other placemaking efforts.

New curb extensions should be located on side-street corners along San Pablo or University Avenues and extend only into the side-street parking lane. They must not extend into the San Pablo Avenue parking lane or shoulder. Potential curb extensions must be evaluated for feasibility in terms of private vehicle, truck, and emergency vehicle turn movements.

On side-streets, curb extensions can be used in the public realm for:

- Street Trees (see tree related policies and standards within the Streetscape section of this chapter)
- Landscaping opportunities such as Green Infrastructure (see other landscape related policies and standards within the Streetscape section of this chapter)
- Pedestrian-Realm Lighting (see PR-P.3)
- Outdoor seating or dining (see PR-P.16 *Commercial and Other Private Use of Sidewalk*)
- Public Art in Public Spaces (see PR-S.11)

Similar to Side-Street Plazas, see PR-P.14, a developer or property owner of a new mixed-use or residential building adjacent to a side-street may propose to design, construct and activate a curb extension. This space would be maintained through an agreement with the City. Implementation details include:

- The location and design of any curb extension shall be approved by the Public Works Department.
- Requirements of BMC 14.48.150 *Sidewalk seating, benches, and planters* shall apply to these curb extensions with the exception of the Sidewalk Seating Permit fee waivers described below.
- **Incentive** – To encourage construction of curb extensions and activation of the Common Space, the Sidewalk Seating Permit fees that would otherwise result from commercial use of the curb extension space shall be waived for up to 10 years for the first commercial seating use of the space.



Figure 5.31 Curb extensions with seating and planters at University Avenue and Kala Bagai Way

Sidewalk and Other Public Realm Activation

PR-P.16 Commercial and Other Private Use of Sidewalks and the Public Realm

While side-street plazas, parklets, and curb extensions focus on enhancing adjacent side-streets, the sidewalk frontage along San Pablo Avenue or other existing sidewalks offers opportunity for activation through seating, landscaping and small gathering spaces.

- The requirements of BMC 14.48.150 *Sidewalk seating, benches, and planters* shall apply to commercial and other private use of the sidewalk.
- As discussed in *PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements*, new developments may expand useable sidewalk space on San Pablo Avenue and other streets in the Plan Area through public easements.
- **Incentive** – In these cases, permit fees for the commercial use of the sidewalk shall be waived for up to 10 years from the date of first commercial seating use.

Pocket Parks and Plazas Along San Pablo Avenue

There are no publicly owned park, plazas, or other community spaces located along San Pablo Avenue and only a few within the Specific Plan Area. One example is the small Kains Avenue Park at the north end of the Plan Area along Cordonices Creek, which has not yet open to the public. However, several parks, including George Florence Park, James Kenney Park, Strawberry Creek Park, and San Pablo Park are located within a few blocks (see Figure 5.9. *Street Network Map*).

Community feedback throughout the planning process emphasized a strong desire for accessible public open space along San Pablo Avenue. In the absence of dedicated public open space, a variety of semi-public spaces or “third places” have emerged organically. These include outdoor seating at restaurants and cafes, and the use of gas stations or paved areas by food trucks and trailers with temporary seating.



Figure 5.32 Example of a food truck using a parking lot.

PR-P.17 Purchase Underutilized Small Properties for Public Open Space

Several small and underutilized properties along San Pablo Avenue could, over time, have the potential for public acquisition and could be developed as public parks or plazas. Currently, the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department’s does not have sufficient funding to purchase property for park development. If future funds become available, the Department should consider purchasing property along San Pablo Avenue to develop into public parks or plazas.

One potential funding mechanism is outlined in *LU-S.5 Medium Development and Mid-rise Public Open Space Requirement*, which requires that high-rise developments and larger developments to either create a privately-owned public open space (POPOS), pay an in-lieu fee, or provide a combination of other public open space.

PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces

An important strategy to create public open space within the Specific Plan Area is to encourage and incentivize the development of privately-owned public open spaces (POPOS). POPOS are publicly accessible open spaces that are built and maintained on private property. They can come in many forms, e.g., plazas, courtyards, recreational facilities, play areas, dog parks and usable green space. Key benefit of POPOS is that the construction and maintenance costs are typically the responsibility of the private developer, rather than the City. These spaces are encouraged in new commercial, multi-family, and mixed-use developments, and they also present an opportunity to transform existing parking lots or underutilized properties into open areas for the public.

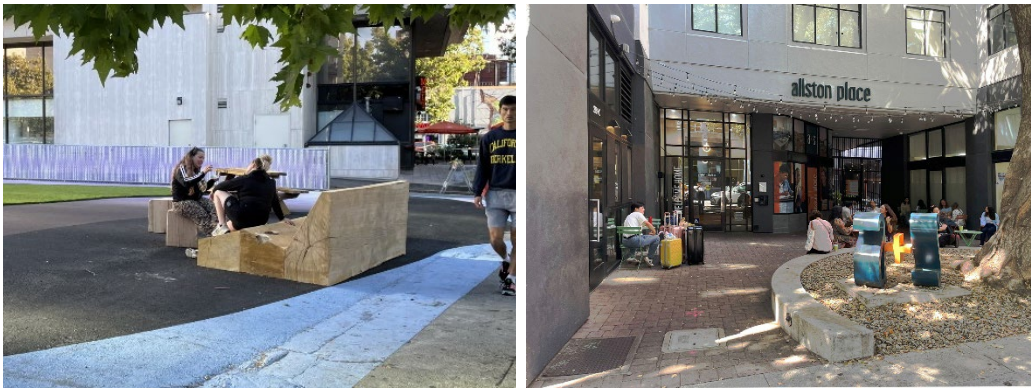


Figure 5.33 Left: Quick build POPOS plaza on former parking lot at Broadway and 21st Street in Oakland. Right: POPOS Plaza in front of mixed-use development, 2161 Allston Way, Berkeley

LU-S.2 *Privately Owned Public Open Space within the Nodes*, further encourages POPOS as part of new mixed-use residential development projects in the Nodes in the Plan Area. This land use policy defines minimum size requirements and a range of incentives and benefits when a development provides a POPOS.

LU-S.5 *Medium Development and Mid-Rise Public Open Space Requirement* defines a requirement for including a POPOS or contributing an in-lieu fee for large and/or high-rise developments.

Priority Locations

The intersections of major Nodes, including Gilman, University and Ashby, with San Pablo Avenue should be prioritized for implementation of POPOS. In addition to being designated as areas for increased development intensity, these locations are key gateways into Berkeley and points of entry from I-80. Given their prominence and development potential, a public open space at these locations would significantly improve the character and functionality of the public realm.

Mid-Block Passages

Mid-block passages are a type of POPOS but are subject to Design Standards (see ODS.61) and Land Use Standards for eligibility to receive usable open space benefits (LU-S.8). They improve the walkability within the Plan Area by creating “shortcuts” through long block and through-lots, linking San Pablo Avenue, and possibly University Avenue, with parallel streets and improving accessibility between the avenues and surrounding neighborhoods. These connections are required for new developments that exceed a specified minimum site frontage as described in LU-S.8.



Figure 5.34 Student practices painting in a POPOS provided by the adjacent development. Hudson Yard, New York City.

Utilities

Utility services required to support the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area include domestic water, wastewater, stormwater, telecommunications, electricity, natural gas, waste and recycling. According to the City of Berkeley 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (HEU) EIR--SCH #2022010331-- (HEU Final EIR), including the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Addendum to the Housing Element Update Final EIR (SCH #2022010331) (HEU EIR SPASP Addendum), existing utility systems for domestic water, wastewater, stormwater, telecommunications, electricity and natural gas facilities in Berkeley have sufficient capacity to serve the planned housing developments. x

Water

Domestic Water

The City of Berkeley and East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), the water supplier for the City of Berkeley, typically require individual developments to make any necessary upgrades. EBMUD's water system is primarily sourced by the Mokelumne River Watershed west of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. There is currently sufficient water capacity for the City and the development anticipated by this Specific Plan. However, the long-term adequacy of the water supply has been susceptible to the effects of climate change. The development of water recycling and conservation programs have offset climate change concerns to date. California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) requirements include plumbing fixture maximum flow rates intended to reduce water consumption for all residential and commercial buildings. These standards would be implemented with the Specific Plan development.

Wastewater

There are two components to ensure the City of Berkeley's wastewater is properly managed: (1) the treatment facility and (2) the collection and conveyance pipes. EBMUD operates the large diameter interceptor sewer and provides municipal wastewater treatment for Berkeley. The City of Berkeley owns and maintains its own sewage collection system. This system includes 254 miles of City-owned sanitary sewer pipe.

EBMUD is anticipated to have adequate dry weather capacity to accept wastewater flows from the planned buildout of this Specific Plan³¹. Wet weather flows may also be accommodated with implementation of ongoing local and regional programs to reduce infiltration and inflow during wet weather events (City of Berkeley, Housing Element Update EIR, 2022).

Future development under the proposed HEU will require new connections for wastewater conveyance. As described in the HEU Final EIR (see page 4.16-4 of the Draft EIR), Chapter 17.05 of the BMC requires that new development pay its fair share of improvements to the sewer system that would be necessary to accommodate increased flows. This policy and BMC requirements would ensure that new developments are not approved until it can be demonstrated that adequate wastewater collection capacity exists, or until a financial commitment to create such capacity has been made.

Stormwater

The Specific Plan Area is highly urbanized and the area is almost entirely covered with impervious surfaces except for landscaped areas. Future development will have to comply with existing programs and permits, including the BMC and the Municipal Regional Stormwater (MRP 3.0) NPDES Permit (No. CAS612008). All new development or redevelopment projects that create or replace 5,000 square feet of impervious surfaces are "regulated projects" and are required to implement Low Impact Design (LID) Measures and hydromodifications management measures required under the C.3 provisions of the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP). These features may include but not be limited to bioretention, permeable paving, detention basins, underground stormwater storage (see *PR-P.8 Green Infrastructure in Public Projects* and *PR-P.9 Green Infrastructure in Private Development* for Specific Plan

³¹ The City's wastewater treatment capacity is 320 mgd. The existing average daily flow is 63 mgd and the HEU would add 0.77 mgd. Based on the HEU wastewater generation assumption of 40 gallons per day (gdp) for a multifamily unit, the SPASP buildout, which is 3,250 units above the HEU maximum buildout, would add 130,000 gdp, which is 0.13 mgd and well within the City's treatment capacity.

policies related to rainwater management). For example, on-site infiltration would improve the water quality of stormwater.

Implementation of rainwater measures can be especially challenging in a dense urban area. Measures such as rain barrels and cisterns, green roofs, and preserving undeveloped open space may also need to be considered. MRP 3.0 specifies methods to calculate the required size of treatment devices.

Improvements with Caltrans right-of-way are subject to requirements of Caltrans NPDES Permit Order No. 2-2022-0033-DWQ.

There is a minor possibility that underground creeks beneath San Pablo Avenue, due to deterioration, daylighting, or other creek crossings, could cause the need to reconstruct major storm drain infrastructure. However, the risk appears low given that the historic creek crossings have already been directed into a main storm drain within San Pablo Avenue through this area. The Specific Plan Area also falls outside of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Zone.

Electric, Gas, and Communications

Natural gas and electrical services for the City of Berkeley are provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). There is also telecom (cable and internet) service throughout the Plan Area, mainly provided by AT&T and Comcast. Electrical systems within the Plan Area have mainly been undergrounded. Most overhead electrical lines are located within the cross streets.

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Communications upgrades will continue to be available from the providers. Typically, the utility companies will upgrade facilities as needed. It is expected that PG&E will accommodate the electrical and gas demands of the Specific Plan. A service application submitted to PG&E will be required to trigger a review of added electrical and natural gas demand for each new individual development. Likewise existing telecom infrastructure and providers are expected to be able to accommodate development that may be generated by the Plan. In addition, East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) is a local public agency tasked with supplying clean electricity at low rates to customers in Alameda County. EBCE procures electricity and provides local renewable resources, while PG&E continues to administer natural gas service as well as energy transmission, distribution, repair, customer service, and billing for EBCE customers.

Waste and Recycling

The City of Berkeley is one of the few cities in Northern California to operate its own refuse, dual stream recycling and green/food waste curbside collection system, as well as material recovery/drop-off and buyback facilities. The service provides curbside recycling, green/food waste, and refuse collection services. Some of the programs offered by the City's Solid Waste Division include recycling collection programs for businesses as well as residential and commercial refuse and organic waste collection. Solid waste, recyclable, and compostable materials collected by the City and its contracted companies are transported from the Berkeley Transfer Station, located at 1201 Second Street, for sorting or disposal at off-site facilities.

One permitted landfill in Alameda County has the capacity to accommodate solid waste generated in Berkeley: the Altamont Landfill. The maximum permitted daily throughput at the Altamont Landfill is 11,150 cubic yards, and the maximum permitted capacity is 124.4 million cubic yards. The remaining capacity for solid waste at this landfill is approximately 52.3 million cubic yards (CalRecycle, Solid Waste Information System (SWIS), 2025). The City of Berkeley has achieved a solid waste diversion rate of 69 percent of its solid waste.

Development facilitated by the Specific Plan would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure. The Landfills that serve the City of Berkeley have adequate capacity to serve development under the proposed Specific Plan³². The solid waste reduction goals would be in alignment with

³² Based on the HEU solid waste generation rate of 4/lbs/unit/day, and conversion factor of 1,000 pounds per cubic yard, the SPASP buildout would generate 13 cubic yards of solid waste per day. With Berkeley's 69% diversion rate, the SPASP buildout would generate an additional 4.03 cubic yards of solid waste per day, which equates to 1471 cubic yards per year. This represents 0.00282% of the current total remaining landfill capacity of 52.3 million cubic yards.

the development of projects within the Plan Area and would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste (City of Berkeley, Housing Element Update EIR, 2022).

The City of Berkeley General Plan's Environmental Management Element includes the following goals and policies applicable to solid waste:

- Policy EM-7: Reduced Wastes. Continue to reduce solid and hazardous waste.
- Policy EM-8: Building Reuse and Construction Waste. Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of buildings whenever appropriate and feasible in order to reduce waste, conserve resources and energy, and reduce construction costs.
- Policy EM-9: Recycling and Waste Transfer Stations. Ensure convenient access for Berkeley citizens to transfer stations, recycling, composting, and collection of household hazardous waste products.
- Policy EM-10: Materials Recovery and Remanufacturing. Support and encourage serial materials recovery and remanufacturing industries.

Development facilitated by the Plan would follow the City of Berkeley policies for waste reduction and recycling.



Chapter 6 Implementation

- Public Review Draft -

Project Administration

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan will be implemented through the adoption of its Land Use, Transportation, Public Realm, and Objective Development Standards and regulations, which are designed to align private investments with the Plan's vision and goals. These will also be reflected in necessary General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates. In addition, public improvements and programs will require the City and its partners to leverage existing resources, establish new funding mechanisms, and pursue partnerships to complete the implementation actions in this chapter. These include regular monitoring and updates to ensure responsiveness to changing conditions, evolving laws, funding opportunities, and community priorities.

The City maintains a [dedicated webpage](#) for the adopted Plan, implementation updates, and resources for property owners, developers, and community members.

Environmental (CEQA) Review

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan is accompanied by an Addendum to the 2023–2031 Housing Element Update Environmental Impact Report ("2023 EIR"), which evaluates whether the proposed Specific Plan would result in any new or substantially more severe significant environmental impacts not previously identified in the 2023 EIR, or require new or different mitigation measures. The 2023 EIR, certified by the City of Berkeley in January 2023, analyzed citywide housing growth under the Housing Element Update, including 3,682 housing units anticipated within the San Pablo Avenue Plan Area. The proposed Specific Plan would increase this development potential to a total of approximately 6,750 units, representing an additional 3,068 units, rounded to 3,250 for the purposes of the CEQA analysis.

The project analyzed in the Addendum includes amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan, which include new development standards for the C-SP zone such as height and FAR, particularly at designated commercial nodes. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, the Addendum concludes that the proposed changes do not meet the conditions outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 that would require preparation of a subsequent or supplemental EIR. The Addendum compared the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan to those disclosed in the 2023 EIR and found no new significant impacts or substantial increase in severity of the impacts disclosed in the 2023 EIR. Updated analysis was conducted for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Plan Area qualifies as a Transit Priority Area and Low-VMT Area under the City's adopted thresholds. Updated modeling for GHG emissions under revised electrification assumptions found that the combined buildout scenario would not exceed the applicable plan-level thresholds.

The City of Berkeley, as lead agency, must determine whether any of the criteria under CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, requiring a subsequent or supplemental EIR, have been met. Namely, whether any new significant environmental impacts, substantial increases in the severity of previously identified impacts, or new information of substantial importance have emerged. The City will consider the Addendum, together with the certified 2023 EIR, before taking action on the Specific Plan.

Implementation Actions

The following tables describe a range of implementation measures, actions, responsibilities, and timeframes, as well as potential funding sources for these measures. These actions should be considered in tandem with the corresponding policies and standards outlined in **Chapters 3 through 5**.

Abbreviations

City of Berkeley

CMO – City Manager’s Office

CAO – City Attorney Office

HHCS – Health, Housing and Community Services

OED – Office of Economic Development

PLNG – Planning and Development Department

PR&W – Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department

PW-Public Works

- Transportation Division (“PW Trans”)
- Engineering Division (“PW Eng”)

RSB – Rent Stabilization Board and Staff

BHA – Berkeley Housing Authority

Other:

Alameda CTC-Alameda County Transportation Division

AC Transit – Alameda Contra Costa Transit

Alameda County SBDC – Alameda County Small Business Development Center

BART – San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

BBDN – Berkeley Business District Network

Caltrans – California Department of Transportation

Timeline

Each table includes the timing of each implementation action, assuming Specific Plan adoption in 2026. Many implementing actions depend on the availability of funding, and once initial funding is secured, it can be used to identify and pursue additional resources to carry out the program or improvement. Therefore, the timeline will need periodic refinement and updating.

- **On-going** – actions that are already occurring and may be affected by Specific Plan policies and standards.
- **Immediate** – actions that will start with adoption of the plan.
- **Following other actions** – some actions are dependent on implementation of projects or other actions. In this case, the dependent project or action is listed.
- Specific time periods are listed for some implementation actions; time periods are in response to:
 - Priorities for the action;
 - Estimate of time needed to undertake action; and
 - Some actions can only start once another action has been completed.

Table 6.1 Plan Administration Implementation Actions

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>Provide annual updates on Specific Plan implementation through the General Plan Annual Progress Report (APR)</p> <p>The annual update should include metrics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new housing units entitled, permitted, or completed. • Summary description of transportation, streetscape, and open space improvements under design, construction and completed. • Summary report of collisions that have occurred within the Plan Area. • Number of active businesses, including new business licenses within the Plan Area. • Funding secured and partnerships established with community groups, agencies, and developers. 	PLNG	Input from other City Departments and Partner Agencies	On-going	General Fund
<p>Identify and Pursue Funding Opportunities</p> <p>Coordinate and monitor grant and other funding opportunities to implement Specific Plan policies.</p>	PLNG, OED, PW		On-going	General Fund
<p>Monitor opportunities to pursue Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grants. AHSC is an annual state grant program that funds construction of affordable housing and improvements related to reducing GHG emissions. Certain multimodal and other transportation improvements are fundable.</p> <p>As appropriate work with affordable housing developers and partner agencies to prepare and submit AHSC grants for housing within the Specific Plan Area and transportation infrastructure improvements that are prioritized in this Plan.</p>	PLNG, PW	Affordable housing developers, AC Transit, Caltrans, etc.	On-going	General Fund

Table 6.2 Land Use Implementation Actions

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>LU-P.1 Establish the Commercial San Pablo (C-SP) Zoning District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the zoning ordinance to include the C-SP zone and the following standards as described in Chapter 3 Land Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LU-S.4 <i>Development Standards, Table 3.1</i> ○ LU-S.5 <i>Large Development and High-Rise Public Open Space Requirement</i> ○ LU-S.6 <i>New Development Amenities</i> ○ LU-S.7 <i>Streetscape Standards</i> ○ LU-S.8 <i>Mid-Block Passages</i> 	PLNG		Immediate	
<p>LU-P.2 Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include Tier 1 and Tier 2 Nodes, as described in Chapter 3 Land Use, and adopt node-specific development standards and frontage requirements. • Periodically evaluate Node performance and adjust boundaries 	PLNG		Immediate + On-going	General Fund (staff time)
<p>LU-P.3 Housing Overlay District to Allow Affordable and Family Friendly Housing on MU-LI Zoned Parcels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a zoning overlay on MU-LI parcels within the Specific Plan Area and amend the zoning ordinance permitting affordable housing and family-friendly housing consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 3, including definitions and deed-restriction requirements • Allow qualifying projects to use C-SP standards 	PLNG		Immediate	General Fund (staff time)

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>LU-P.4 Amend the General Plan and Zoning Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the General Plan Map as described in the Chapter 3 Land Use • Amend the Zoning Map as shown in the Proposed Zoning in Chapter 3 Land Use, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific Plan Boundary ○ Tier 1 and Tier 2 nodes ○ Rezone all C-W and C-U parcels within the Specific Plan Area to C-SP ○ Include MU-LI Overlay ○ Remove split-zoning inconsistencies and other minor rezoning corrections ○ Add the 15 additional housing opportunity sites 	PLNG		Immediate	General Fund (staff time)
<p>LU-P.5 Planning and Commercial Permit Streamlining</p> <p>Review permitting processes after 5 years. Update intake, completeness, and over-the-counter TI pathways, align with CEQA tiering, and publish processing dashboards. At that point determine if further monitoring is needed.</p>	PLNG	OED, PW	5 years	General Fund (staff time)
<p>LU-P.6 Public Space Development Incentives</p> <p>Amend the Zoning Ordinance to implement the following standards consistent with their descriptions in Chapter 3 Land Use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU-S.1 <i>Sidewalk Expansion Incentive</i> • LU-S.2 <i>Privately-Owned Public Open Space within Nodes</i> • LU-S.3 <i>Side-Street Plaza Implementation</i> 	PLNG		Immediate	General Fund (staff time)
<p>LU-P.7 Encourage a Mix of Community-Serving Uses</p> <p>Amend the Allowed Uses Table in the Zoning Ordinance to allow residential, retail, office, cultural, and maker uses throughout the C-SP zone.</p>	PLNG	OED	Immediate	General Fund (staff time)

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
LU-P.8 Expand the list of Allowed Uses and Allow Temporary Pop-ups	PLNG	OED	Immediate	General Fund (staff time)
Amend the Allowed Uses Table in the Zoning Ordinance to expand by-right uses (e.g. galleries, coworking, light-industrial); streamline pop-up permitting with temporary use permits.				
Develop outreach program for small businesses (coordinate with ED-P.1,2,3)	OED	PLNG	0-3 years	General Fund (staff time)
LU-P.9 Define Residential Mixed-Use with On-Site and In-Lieu Options	PLNG	OED	Immediate or within 1 year	General Fund (staff time)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Residential On-site Mixed-Use and In-Lieu Mixed-Use definitions consistent with the Policy described in Chapter 3 Land Use and amend the Zoning Ordinance to include the definitions within the C-SP zoning district. Amend the City’s Fee Schedule to include the Commercial In-Lieu fee and adopt an ordinance dedicating revenues to the San Pablo Avenue Small Business Support Fund. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop developer and administrative guidance documents for the program. 			Within 1 year	
LU-P.10 Establish Ground Floor Typologies to Promote Pedestrian-Scaled and Flexible Ground Floors	PLNG		Immediate	General Fund (staff time)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend the Zoning Ordinance and establish ground floor frontage typologies and location standards (and exceptions) as described in the Policy in Chapter 3 Land Use and the corresponding Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LU-S.9 <i>Ground Floor Typologies</i>, including Storefront, Other Non-Residential, Active Residential, and Live-work. 				

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>LU-P.11 SPASP Density Bonus Program</p> <p>Adopt a local density bonus ordinance for the Plan Area consistent with the Policy described in Chapter 3 Land Use, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring in-lieu contributions to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund • Prohibiting waivers of critical standards and ODS • Requiring applicants opt-out of State Density Bonus 	PLNG		Immediate or within 1 year	General Fund (staff time)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop developer and administrative guidance documents for the program. 	PLNG		Within 1 year	General Fund (staff time)
<p>LU-P.12 Artists Housing and Cultural Districts</p> <p>Should Berkeley create a cultural district within one-half mile of the Plan Area, coordinate with the City Civic Arts Commission/Housing Advisory Commission to consider creation of an affordable artist housing overlay in portions of the Plan Area.</p>	PLNG	OED/Civic Arts, HHCS	Timing dependent on City establishing a cultural district	General Fund (staff time)
<p>Supportive Action - During the Plan Bay Area update, MTC allows Cities to request PDA adjustments. The City shall request that the PDA boundary be updated to match the Specific Plan boundary.</p>	PLNG	MTC	0-3 years	General Fund (staff time)

Table 6.3 Economic Development Implementation Actions

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>ED-P.1 San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Focused Small Business Support Fund</p> <p>Develop and establish a Local Small Business Support Fund within the City’s existing Revolving Loan Fund program or economic development funding mechanisms consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define loan guidelines including loan terms, eligibility criteria, fund disbursement methods, and oversight structures. Launch the Small Business Loan Program with an Outreach Campaign (see ED-P.2 and ED-P.3) to Plan Area businesses, especially businesses that are culturally significant or at risk of displacement, as well as business owners who are people of color, women, and other underserved potential applicants for Support Fund loans. 	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund	0-3 years	Mixed-Use In-Lieu Fee revenues (LU-P.9), General Fund, federal and state grants, and loan payments.
<p>Small Business Support Fund Annual Tracking and Reporting as part of the Commercial District Dashboards</p> <p>Conduct annual performance tracking on fund deployment, repayment, and Plan Area impacts</p>	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund	On-going	General Fund
<p>Small Business Support Fund Outreach and Program Refinements</p> <p>Conduct outreach to small businesses to assess evolving needs, and opportunities to expand eligibility criteria for the Fund following first 3-years of fund availability. Also, inform businesses about other funding opportunities such as the existing Revolving Loan Fund. Based on findings, the City should consider adjusting eligibility, loan terms, or allowable uses of funds.</p> <p>The Fund’s program guidelines may be reviewed and updated as needed following the initial review, incorporating feedback and</p>	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund, CBOs	3-years, as determined following first outreach and review	General Fund

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>data on program performance, utilization, and other economic trends.</p> <p>In alignment with ED-P.1 <i>San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Small Business Support Fund</i>.</p>				
<p>ED-P.2 Establish Public-Private Partnerships</p> <p>Build partnerships with community organizations, local institutions, merchant groups, property owners, and other stakeholders to activate community spaces and organize events consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4 Economic Development. Initial role for OED Liaison with lead shifting to business organizations and potential BID(s) over time. (See ED-P.5 <i>Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area</i>)</p>	OED	PLNG, CBOs and business organizations	On-going	General Fund (staff time); partner contributions
<p>Outreach by OED Liaison to potential community organization, business, and other private and institutional partners. This can include develop of a technical assistance FAQ for navigating permits such as encroachment permits, temporary use, temporary street closures, and vendor permits.</p>	OED	PLNG, PW, Neighborhood Services/Special Events	0-3 years	
<p>Leverage Berkeley Business District Network and CBOs to coordinate events and Plan Area-wide promotions.</p>	OED	BBDN, CBOs	On-going	
<p>ED-P.3 Support and Expand Existing Business Clusters</p> <p>City Support and Technical Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OED to offer technical assistance to emerging clusters as defined in the policy. Initial outreach by OED Liaison 	OED	BBDN	On-going + 0-5 years	General Fund (staff time)

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>Coordination with related policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure coordination with implementation of Policy ED-P.6. <i>Prioritize Initial Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes</i> to ensure improvements are aligned with cluster organization initiatives. • Ensure coordination with Policy ED-P.1 <i>San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Small Business Support Fund</i> to ensure that the use of funds and business eligibility are aligned with small business needs. 	OED, PLNG		On-going + 0-5 years	General Fund (staff time)
<p>ED-P.4 Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)</p> <p>Fund and initiate a feasibility study of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the SPASP area, consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gauge Plan Area stakeholder interest in moving forward with a feasibility study through initial OED Liaison outreach. (See ED-P.5 <i>Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area</i>) • Consider multiple geographies (full corridor vs. nodes), hybrid models, and cultural district components. • Consider the potential for Community Benefit Districts and other organizations similar to BIDs . • Conduct equity-centered outreach with businesses, property owners, CBOs, and nonprofits. 	OED, OED Liaison	Local businesses and property owners	3 years (potentially earlier if strong interest is expressed by Plan Area stakeholders and funding is available)	General Fund (staff time) Identify funding for BID feasibility study (potential General Fund and grant funding)

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>ED-P.5 Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area</p> <p>Establish a liaison position consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4 Economic Development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish approach for initial staffing of liaison role. Review effectiveness after 24 months and decide future viability to fund a dedicated liaison position, continue as a part-time role for existing staff, or discontinue the liaison role. 	OED		<p>24 month start up effort</p> <p>Possible extension following evaluation and identification of funding</p>	General Fund
<p>ED-P.6 Prioritize Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes</p> <p>Pursue funding for improvements in the Nodes, such as grants for streetscape improvements, Alameda CTC improvement funding, other state and federal grants and funding.</p> <p>As city-wide multimodal transportation plans are updated, take this Plan's prioritization of future improvements into account. See also T-P.13 <i>Prioritizing Multimodal Safety Improvements</i> and T-P.17 <i>Prioritize Connection with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts</i>.</p>	PW, PLNG	OED, MTC, and Alameda CTC	On-going	TBD

Table 6.4 Street Implementation Actions

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
Transportation				
<p>Retire San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan (2004)</p> <p>The San Pablo Specific Plan replaces the street design policies and standards of the Public Improvement Plan and the retirement of that Plan is an action taken with the adoption of the San Pablo Specific Plan.</p> <p>Implemented with adoption of the San Pablo Specific Plan.</p>	OED	PLNG, PW, and PRW	Immediate	Specific Plan General Fund (staff time)

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>T-P.1 Improve mobility, access, and safety for all people</p> <p>Implement the goals for the city's Complete Streets Policy by designing all street and transportation improvements within the Plan Area to enhance mobility, access and, safety for all people of all abilities who are walking, biking, taking transit, and driving while providing for deliveries, freight, emergency response, evacuation and maintenance access.</p>	PW Trans	Alameda CTC Caltrans AC Transit	On-going	No direct budget impact
<p>T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue</p> <p>Coordinate with Alameda CTC, AC Transit, Caltrans, and City of Albany to initiate and complete Multimodal Complete Streets Study of San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley and Albany to determine a preferred design concept for redesign of the street and work together towards construction of the preferred concept. This study will address the feasibility of dedicated bus lanes and separated bikeways on San Pablo Avenue north of the Ashby Avenue and Heinz Street intersections. In addition, assess the benefits of the other two multimodal projects after their construction.</p> <p>This process includes the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess operations and benefits of Alameda CTC's Bus-Bike Lanes Project on San Pablo Avenue (Downtown Oakland to Ashby/Heinz) following construction, completion currently anticipated in 2028 with analysis of project expected to occur x years after construction. Prepare to initiate multimodal complete streets study of San Pablo Avenue north of Heinz Street by coordinating with partner agencies to define scope and funding; study to be led by Alameda CTC. Scoping of study to be informed by assessment of initial Bus-Bike Project and needs within the study area at that time. 	PW Trans	Alameda CTC Caltrans AC Transit City of Albany	<p>Assessment of initial Bus-Bike Lanes Project should occur at least 6 months after construction is complete.</p> <p>Initiate study for improvement in Berkeley following assessment of initial project with timing to be determined.</p>	<p>General Fund (staff time),</p> <p>Alameda CTC funding for post construction analysis</p> <p>County, Regional, State, and Federal Grants</p> <p>Alameda CTC CIP</p>
<p>Supportive Implementation Action: Assess the Benefits of the Safety Enhancement and Parallel Bike Routes Projects</p> <p>Coordinate with Alameda CTC to conduct a follow-up safety study after completion of the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Corridor Safety Enhancements and Parallel Bike Routes Projects to evaluate the</p>	PW Trans and PRW	Alameda CTC, AC Transit, Caltrans, PLNG	2-4 years	

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>effectiveness of improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. Construction expected to be complete in 2026.</p> <p>Also see implementation steps for Policy <i>T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update list of intersection improvements. As part of the follow-up safety study, review, update and implement improvements identified in Figure 5.8 and Appendix D. Use this updated list to guide future implementation, reflecting current conditions, safety need and community input. • Assess Bulb-Out Extensions for Public Use. After completion of the ACTC San Pablo Avenue Corridor Safety Enhancements assess opportunities to enhance constructed bus bulb-out extensions on San Pablo Avenue for general public and transit rider benefit, such as seating, additional trees, other landscaping, bicycle racks, pedestrian-scale lighting, or other public amenities. 				
<p>T-P.3 Maintain and improve bus service in collaboration with Alameda CTC and AC Transit</p> <p>Coordinate with partners to align service levels to meet demand and plan for and implement infrastructure upgrades in alignment with the Transit First Policy Implementation Plan. Monitor progress, needs, and implementation through the AC Transit/City of Berkeley Interagency Liaison Committee.</p> <p>Also see implementation steps for Policy <i>T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue</i>.</p>	PW Trans	AC Transit, ACTC, Caltrans, PLNG	On-going	Staff participation in Liaison Committee is already funded.
<p>T-P.4 Implement signal timing and transit signal priority (TSP)</p> <p>Coordinate with partner agencies to assess bus transit reliability resulting from existing TSP improvements and Safety Enhancement project bus stop improvements. It is assumed that Safety Enhancement improvements will be complete by end of 2026. Following assessment identify funding for design and construction of any recommended additional improvements.</p>	PW Trans	Alameda CTC, Caltrans AC Transit City of Albany	2-5 years	County, Regional, and state grants

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>T-P.5 Create an active parking and loading management program for the Specific Plan Area</p> <p>Reach out to businesses and property owners within the Specific Plan Area to identify a location to pilot an active parking and loading management program. Likely locations include the University Avenue, Cedar Street, and Dwight Way nodes. The pilot should include discussion with businesses and surrounding neighborhoods regarding their interest in opting into the Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) program; however, these areas are not currently eligible to join the program. Council approval would be needed to make these areas eligible for the RPP program.</p>	PW Trans	OED	~3 years	General Fund
<p>T-P.6 Implement Mobility Hub features in the University Avenue Node</p> <p>Gauge level of interest and support from partner agencies and organizations (MTC, AC Transit, and Bay Wheels) to study and then implement Mobility Hub features.</p>	PW Trans	MTC, AC Transit, and Bay Wheels	3-5 years	General Fund
<p>Identify funding for study and design of Mobility Hub and undertake study, including business, transit rider, and general community outreach to identify types of improvements, their locations and cost to implement. Also identify funding sources and timeline.</p>	PW Trans	MTC, AC Transit, and Bay Wheels	3-5 years	General Fund and potential grant funding
<p>Implement Mobility Hub features in the University Avenue Node – this action will require a combination of coordination with partner agencies and organizations, City work crews, and possibly work by construction contractors to install Mobility Hub features and make associated improvements.</p>	PW	MTC, AC Transit, and Bay Wheels	5-6 years	General Fund and potential grant funding
<p>T-P.7 Evaluate other locations for some Mobility Hub features</p> <p>As development occurs in the Specific Plan Area and mobility needs change, evaluate needs for potential improvements in other nodes.</p>	PW Trans	MTC, AC Transit, and Bay Wheels	6-8 years	General Fund

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>T-P.8 Lower Speed Limit on San Pablo Avenue</p> <p>Evaluate Potential to Lower Speed Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) to evaluate the feasibility of reducing speed limits along San Pablo Avenue. Study should identify need and identify potential for traffic calming improvements including signal timing and physical improvements. E&TS should not be done until Alameda CTC Safety Enhancement Project has been constructed and operated for at least one year. If the E&TS supports lower speed limit, request Caltrans approval and prepare plans to implement improvements, such as signal timing changes and replace speed limit signs. Implement improvements. 	PW Trans	Caltrans, AC Transit, and Alameda CTC	~ 3 years (at least 6 months after construction is complete)	General Fund
<p>T-S.1 San Pablo Avenue Pedestrian Crossing Frequency Improvements</p> <p>Monitor safety at the five long San Pablo Avenue blocks within the Specific Plan Area as part of collision data and other transportation safety studies that are performed. If safety monitoring indicates the need for mid-block crossings of San Pablo Avenue along any of these long blocks, prioritize improvements, design, and implement improvements based on safety and available funding.</p>	PW Trans	Caltrans, PLNG	On-going	General Fund, State Affordable Housing Sustainability Grants, Developer Funding
<p>Improve Multimodal Safety at Intersection and Along San Pablo Avenue</p> <p>T-P.9 Pedestrian Crossing Design. Monitor safety at the pedestrian crossings that have been identified for additional improvements.</p> <p>T-P.10 Intersection Improvements. Monitor multimodal safety at intersections within the Specific Plan Area and identify improvements as needed.</p> <p>T-P.11 Minor Side-Street Intersection Improvements. Same actions as for T-P.10, above.</p>	PW Trans	Caltrans, PLNG	On-Going	General Fund, State Affordable Housing Sustainability Grants, Developer Funding Include in other planned public improvement project

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
Prioritize, design, and implement improvements based on safety and available funding. Monitoring safety and updating prioritization and types of improvements are addressed in T-P.18 <i>Monitor Changing Multimodal Needs and Conditions</i> .				
T-P.12 Make Safety Improvements at Driveways Monitor development and other improvement projects with driveways on major streets and require that safety improvements are made as needed as part of proposed projects.	PW Trans and PLNG	Caltrans	On-Going	Funded by owner/developer.
T-P.13 Prioritizing Multimodal Safety Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none">As multimodal safety, access, and comfort issues are identified through on-going review of collision data and transportation safety studies are performed in the Plan Area, continue to identify and prioritize multimodal safety improvements at these locations. Those with particular modal priorities would be implementing T-P.14, T-P.15, and T-P17 below	PW Trans	Caltrans and Alameda CTC	On-going, address other improvements as identified	State, Regional, or Alameda CTC CIP or grant funding
Improve Connections with Surrounding Community T-P.14 Transit Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to coordinate AC Transit service through on-going staff communication and the AC Transit/City of Berkeley Interagency Liaison Committee to best serve the needs of Specific Plan Area residents, businesses, workers, and visitors.Coordinate with partner agencies to set a timeline for achieving Transit First Policy 18 to complete University Avenue transit corridor study by 2029; or as possible given funding constraints. This could be done as part of a University Avenue Specific Plan process to update the 1996 University Avenue Area Plan.	PW Trans and PLNG	AC Transit, BART, and Capitol Corridor	Service Coordination: on-going University Avenue Transit Study: 2-6 years	General Funds from City and partner agencies Coordinate with partner agencies for County, Regional, and State grant funding

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>T-P.15 Bicycle Improvements –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell Street and Heinz Street intersection improvements – these intersections and San Pablo Avenue between them are being planned for bicycle and pedestrian improvements as part of the Alameda CTC Bus Land and Bike Lane Project. Should this become delayed, the City should consider working with Caltrans and Alameda CTC to complete these improvements as an independent project. • Prioritize bicycle improvements to best serve the needs of Specific Plan Area residents, businesses, workers, and visitors. Work to design and construct priority improvements. 	PW Trans	Caltrans and Alameda CTC	Russell and Heinz Street improvement to be determined On-going, address other improvements as identified	Prioritization: General Fund Design and Construct: Measure FF State, Regional, or Alameda CTC CIP or grant funding
<p>T-P.16 Pedestrian Improvements</p> <p>Prioritize pedestrian improvements to best serve the needs of Specific Plan Area residents, businesses, workers, and visitors. Work to design and construct priority improvements.</p>	PW Trans	Caltrans and Alameda CTC	On-going, address other improvements as identified	Prioritization: General Fund Design and Construct: Measure FF State, Regional, or Alameda CTC CIP or grant funding
<p>T-P.17 Prioritize Connection with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts</p> <p>Review and update priorities for future residents' needs for multimodal connections with the surround community, and take these priorities into consideration in future updates to the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan, the Bicycle Plan, and the Transit First Policy Implementation Plan</p>	PW Trans	Partner agencies	Per timing of updates to modal plans	General fund and grant funding
<p>T-P.18 Monitor Changing Multimodal Needs and Conditions</p> <p>Work with partner agencies to undertake periodic safety assessments and assess multimodal needs within the Plan Area and the safety record of streets in the Plan Area. This could include a review and update of priorities and needed improvements. Use this updated list to guide future implementation, reflecting current conditions, safety need and community input.</p>	PW Trans	Partner agencies	Periodically as needed Coordinate with updates to modal plans	General Fund for City staff time

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
Public Realm				
<p>PR-P.1 Sidewalk Zones</p> <p>Implement the flexible design approach of the Plan’s sidewalk zone standards through public improvement projects and private improvements, sidewalk easements, and private improvements in the public right of way associated with development projects.</p> <p>Overtime as public improvements are made to San Pablo Avenue and new development occurs projects and planning approvals should reestablish the public right of way where adjacent landscape or other elements have reduced it.</p> <p>Related standards include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU-S.1 <i>Sidewalk Expansion Incentive</i> • PR-S.1 <i>Sidewalk Zone Standards</i> • PR-S.2 <i>Reestablish Sidewalk Width</i> 	PW and PLNG	Partner agencies, private development, and businesses	On-going	Funding through other public and private projects
<p>PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements</p> <p>Facilitate the use of the sidewalk expansion incentive as developments propose easements to widen the sidewalk and improve the public realm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU-S.2 <i>Sidewalk Expansion Incentive</i> 	PW and PLNG	Development projects	On-going	Planning review fees
<p>PR-P.3 Improve Street Lighting for the Safety and Comfort of All Users</p> <p>Integrate this policies design recommendations into City of Berkeley draft Streetlight Comprehensive Plan and in the interim use the design recommendations to guide street lighting improvements that are made within the Plan Area.</p>	PW	Partner agencies	On-going	General Fund for staff time Planning review fees
<p>PR-P.4 Enhance Tree Health and Expand Tree Canopy</p> <p>The City and developers/property owners shall plant new trees and/or improve conditions for existing trees as part of public improvements made to streets and sidewalks through public projects and as required for new development and major remodeling projects. New tree plantings and</p>	PW Developers or property owners	PR&W, review planned improvements	On-going	General Fund for staff time Potential new Parks and Recreation Fees Grants or General Fund for City improvements

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>improvements shall be made in compliance with the following Specific Plan standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR-S.3 <i>San Pablo Avenue Tree Standards</i> PR-S.4 <i>University Avenue Tree Standards</i> PR-S.5 <i>Other Side-Street Trees</i> 				Developer or property owners for private improvements
<p>PR-P.5 Enhance and Expand Other Landscaping</p> <p>The City and developers/property owners shall plant other landscaping as part of public improvements made to streets and sidewalks through public projects, as required for new development and major remodeling projects, and in tandem with other improvements that property owners, businesses and residents may make along sidewalks adjacent to their properties. New landscape plantings and improvements shall made in compliance with the following Specific Plan policies and standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR-S.6 <i>Landscaping in tree wells and planters</i> PR-P.6 <i>Near-term Opportunities for Re-landscaping medians</i> PR-P.7 <i>Long-term landscaped median design</i> PR-P.8 <i>Green Infrastructure in Public Projects</i> PR-P.9 <i>Green Infrastructure in Private Development</i> 	PW Developers, property owners, or businesses	PR&W, review planned improvements	On-going	General Fund for staff time Potential new Parks and Recreation Fees Grants or General Fund for City improvements Developers, property owners, businesses, or residents for private improvements
<p>Street Furniture</p> <p>The City and developers/property owners shall install street furniture as part of public improvements made to streets and sidewalks through public projects, as required for new development and major remodeling projects, and in tandem with other improvements that property owners, businesses and residents may make along sidewalks adjacent to their properties. New street furniture installations shall made in compliance with the following Specific Plan policies and standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR-S.7 <i>Public Seating</i> PR-S.8 <i>Trash and Recycling Receptacles</i> PR-S.9 <i>Bicycle Racks</i> PR-S.10 <i>Raised Planters</i> PR-P.11 <i>Other Street Furnishings</i> 	PW and PR&W	Developers, property owners or businesses	On-going	General Fund Grants Developers, property owners, or businesses

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>Bus Stop Improvements</p> <p>The City and AC Transit shall work together to evaluate and improve bus stops in the Specific Plan Area in support of the following Specific Plan policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR-P.11 <i>Continue to Improve Bus Stops</i> 	PW Trans and AC Transit	Caltrans	Following completion of Alameda CTC Safety Enhancement Project and on a 5 year evaluation cycle after	Grants and Measure FF
<p>PR-P.12 Facilitate Wayfinding and Placemaking Programs</p> <p>Identify opportunities to implement wayfinding and placemaking as part of the implementation of the following Economic Development policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ED-P.3. <i>Support and Expand Existing Business Clusters</i> ED-P.4, <i>Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)</i> 	OED	PW and Caltrans	On-going + 0-5 years	General Fund for staff time Support from local businesses Grants
<p>PR-S.11 Public Art in Public Spaces</p> <p>OED/Civic Arts, Public Works, and Parks, Recreation and Waterfront staff are to review public improvement projects within the Specific Plan Area as the move from programming to design and identify opportunities of public art to be integrated into the projects.</p>	OED/Civic Arts and Civic Arts Commission	PW and PR&W	On-going	General Fund for staff time General Fund, grants, and donations for design and installation of art
<p>PR-P.13 Design for People of All Ages and Abilities</p> <p>Design, implement, maintain, and operate the public realm in the Plan Area should use a universal design approach that meets and exceeds compliancy with the Federal Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations by following the guidance of this policy and other best practices of universal design.</p>	PW and PR&W	Partner agencies	On-going	Planning, Design, and Construction – General Fund, Measure FF, and other local, regional, and state funding; and private funding as appropriate. Maintenance and operations – General Fund and private funding as appropriate.

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas</p> <p>Implementation of this policy shall utilize a phased process:</p> <p>In the near-term, City staff will reach out to non-profits, businesses, - neighborhood groups, and other community organizations to identify opportunities for implementing quick-build plazas. If community partners are identified and commit to supporting implementation, funding can be pursued, improvements can be designed and implemented along with an assessment to verify viability of full or partial street access.</p>	PW, OED, and PR&W	Community partners and Caltrans	0-3 years	General Fund for initial staff time Community partner's funds Grants
<p>In the longer-term, City staff and community partners, including potential future BID(s) can pursue design, fund raising, and implementation of permanent side-street plazas.</p>	Community partners	PW, OED, PR&W, and Caltrans	3-6 years and after	Community partner's funds Potential new Parks and Recreation Fees Grants
<p>New development projects may design, build, and provide activation for side-street plazas adjacent to their projects.</p>	Developer	PLNG, PW, PR&W, and Caltrans	As proposed	Developer
<p>PR-P.15 Support Use and Creation of Parklets</p> <p>For first 3 years of Plan implementation wave Outdoor Commerce Use Fee for parklets using free parking spaces and reduce paid parking fee by 75% for parklets using paid parking spaces.</p> <p>After 3 years of implementation review effectiveness of fee reductions and revise as needed.</p>	PLNG and PW	OED	0-3 years 4 years review and revise fee reductions as needed	Reduced fees
<p>PR-S.12 Design and Use of Curb Extensions on Side-Streets</p> <p>When a developer or property owner receives approval for construction and use of a curb extension wave Sidewalk Seating Permit fees for up to 10 years of the first commercial use of the increased sidewalk space.</p> <p>After 3 years of implementation review effectiveness of fee reductions and revise as needed.</p>	PW	OED	0-3 years 4 years review and revise fee reductions as needed	Reduced fees

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<p>PR-P.16 Commercial and other private use of sidewalks and the public realm</p> <p>Short Term Use and Activation – In the near-term, the OED Liaison (see ED-P.5) shall facilitate community, business, and property owner-supported activation of the public realm by informing potential partners about possibilities and supporting them in getting permit approvals for activation and use of public space.</p>	OED and Community partners	PW, PR&W, Caltrans	0-5 years	OED initial staff time Potential new Parks and Recreation Fees Community partner’s funds Grants
<p>Short Term or On-going Use and Activation – potential BIDs or property owners/managers who have implemented side-street plazas, POPOs, or provided sidewalk easements can propose and implement activations that receive permit approval.</p>	BIDs or property owners and managers	PW, PR&W, Caltrans	As proposed	BID or property owner/manager funds
<p>PR-P.17 Purchase underutilized small properties for public open space</p> <p>Assess potential for funding the cost of property acquisition.</p>	PR&W	PLNG	0-3 years	General Fund staff time
<p>Following assessment, if funding can be identified, move forward to purchase, improve, and maintain new public open space.</p>	PR&W	—	3 years and after	Potential new Parks and Recreation Fees Grants
<p>Supportive Action – Nexus Study to Support Citywide Park and Open Space Funding</p> <p>Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department should undertake a citywide nexus study that includes the need for new parks and public open spaces within the Specific Plan Area and to evaluate the legal and financial basis for establishing a development impact fee and/or adjusting the local property tax to support property acquisition, development and maintenance of public park space within the Specific Plan Area and maintenance of parks elsewhere in the city.</p> <p>Related Policy: <i>PR-P.17 Purchase underutilized small properties</i></p>	PW, PLNG, PR&W	—	0-3 years	General Fund

Action Description	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<p>PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces</p> <p>Implement supportive land use policies and standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU-S.2 <i>Privately Owned Public Open Space within the Nodes</i> • LU-S.5 <i>Large Development and High-Rise Public Open Space Requirement</i> 	PLNG and PR&W	Developers	On-going	<p>Permit fees for review and approval</p> <p>General Fund for ongoing review of operations and maintenance</p>
Utilities				
Implementation of infrastructure services and improvements will be achieved through current and on-going policies, programs, and actions.	PW	<p>PLNG (Development Review)</p> <p>Utility provider partners</p>	On-going	Utility and City Development Fees