



# SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

**TO:** Edward D. Reiskin  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Ryan Russo  
Director, Department of  
Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Improvements to Telegraph Avenue  
from 20<sup>th</sup> Street to 29<sup>th</sup> Street

**DATE:** June 14, 2021

City Administrator Approval 

Date: Jun 16, 2021

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution To Modify Telegraph Avenue From 20<sup>th</sup> Street To 29<sup>th</sup> Street With Enhanced Buffered Bike Lanes With Curb Management And Adopt California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Findings.**

## **REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL**

Staff was requested to clarify community support for improvements on Telegraph Avenue and to refine the transit operational impacts of the bike lane.

### ***Community support***

Telegraph Avenue serves several constituencies, including people who walk and bike along the corridor, people who live in Koreatown-Northgate, business owners and workers, transit operators, people driving to and along Telegraph Avenue, and people gathering for Oakland First Fridays. Representatives of each of these stakeholders appear unanimous in their support for a bike facility along Telegraph Avenue between 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 29<sup>th</sup> Street but disagree whether a protected bike lane or buffered bike lane best serves this segment of Telegraph Avenue.

Since the installation of the interim protected bike lane project in 2016, staff has received feedback and information from stakeholders via user intercept surveys, business surveys, Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission meetings, AC Transit meetings, KONO Business Improvement District meetings, City Council meetings, Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities meetings, community meetings, a pop-up survey, phone calls, emails, and informal stakeholder interviews. Common themes include:

- People continuing to drive and park in the interim protected bike lane
- People parking in the painted pedestrian safety zones compromising visibility, especially at intersections and driveways
- Pedestrian and bicyclist safety concerns, especially at intersections
- ADA access and parking concerns
- Anecdotal reports of near-miss collisions

- Maintenance challenges
- Aesthetic concerns
- People feeling safer in the interim protected bike lane than in the pre-project condition
- People feeling less safe in the interim protected bike lane than before the interim project
- Negative business impacts
- Positive business impacts
- Oakland First Fridays operations
- Frustrations with the delivery schedule of the permanent protected bike lane project

Since 2016, the Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) has also heard updates and shared feedback on the protected bike lanes on Telegraph Avenue. The BPAC discussed Telegraph Avenue in [June 2016](#), [February 2017](#), [November 2018](#), and [April 2019](#), and hosted a public form on the project in [August 2020](#). The minutes of these five BPAC meetings reflect mixed reactions to the interim protected bike lane project. Some BPAC Commissioners highlighted pedestrian visibility concerns, obstacles in the bike lane, bike lane sweeping and maintenance, and vehicle parking issues. Some BPAC commissioners also voiced support for interim protected bike lanes, especially given the increased number of people walking and biking on Telegraph and the reduction in vehicle speeds. In November 2018, six commissioners voted on a motion to formally oppose the protected bike lane design on Telegraph Avenue between 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, after experiencing the interim protected bike lane project between 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 29<sup>th</sup> Street. The motion was not adopted as three of six commissioners voted in favor of the motion while three commissioners abstained.

Most recently, the December 2020 online survey showed 80% of 647 respondents preferred a protected bike lane to a buffered bike lane. Unlike previous outreach efforts, this survey asked six demographic questions to understand who the survey reached. Comparing the demographics of respondents to the December 2020 online survey with the demographics of adjacent census tracts, we can tell that the survey results do not reflect the surrounding neighborhood. Survey respondents were over twice as likely to be white and ten times more likely to be under 65 than the surrounding neighborhood. Self-selection bias and survey fatigue—not to mention a number of pressing local, regional, and national crises in the fall/winter of 2020—may have also impacted the reach and representation of the survey. The expertise of hyper-local community leaders, specifically the KONO Business Improvement District and Northgate Neighborhood Council, may better represent the interests of the KONO neighborhood and business community. These community representatives have expressed their communities' strong and growing preference for buffered bike lanes.

Across outreach efforts since 2016, staff does not see an overwhelming consensus of community support for a single bicycle facility design. As a result, staff have rated the community support for both the options with buffered bike lanes and the protected bike lane option equally. See Figure 1 in the Improvements to Telegraph Avenue from 20<sup>th</sup> Street to 29<sup>th</sup> Street Agenda Report.

### ***Transit operations***

City of Oakland staff—working closely with community leaders from Walk Oakland Bike Oakland, Bike East Bay, the KONO Business Improvement District, and the Northgate Neighborhood Council—developed and refined a 10 criteria framework for evaluating each design option. One of the criteria included how well each design option facilitated transit

operations and access. Staff initially did not draw a distinction between the transit operational benefits of the two buffered bike lane options and the protected bike lane option as each option provides similar transit-specific amenities, including concrete bus boarding islands to eliminate curbside conflicts at bus stops. However, AC Transit staff have since clarified that protected bike lanes are better for transit operations as they physically separate people biking from the travel lane. AC Transit staff indicated that illegal double-parking in the buffered bike lane could lead to bikes unexpectedly swerving into the travel lane used by buses. On the other hand, with protected bike lanes, vehicles making parallel parking maneuvers also block travel lanes used by buses.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution To Modify Telegraph Avenue From 20<sup>th</sup> Street To 29<sup>th</sup> Street With Enhanced Buffered Bike Lanes With Curb Management And Adopt California Environmental Quality Act Findings.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Emily Ehlers, Senior Transportation Planner, at 510-238-2259.

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan Russo  
Director, Department of Transportation

Reviewed by:  
Fred Kelley, T.E.  
Assistant Director  
Department of Transportation

Mohamed Alaoui, P.E.  
Great Streets Division Manager  
Department of Transportation

Prepared by:  
Emily Ehlers  
Planning & Project Development Section Lead  
Great Streets Division  
Department of Transportation

