

CHAPTER

4

TRANSPORTATION  
ELEMENT

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The Transportation Element provides policies and actions to maintain and improve Albany's transportation network. The Element establishes policies to expand transportation choices, improve traffic safety, and make transportation more sustainable. These policies complement those in other elements on land use, air quality, greenhouse gas reduction, and public health. Recognizing the interplay between transportation and these topics is critical to improving mobility for all Albany residents.

Requirements for the Transportation Element are established by Government Code Section 65302(b). The Element must identify the general location and extent of existing and proposed thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, airports and ports, and it must be correlated with the Land Use Element. Since 2011, the Government Code has required the element to consider the needs of all users of roads and highways, rather than just motor vehicles. This change is part of a nationwide movement to plan for "complete streets" which balance the needs of motorists with those of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and persons with limited mobility.

Most of Albany's street system was laid out just before the automobile became the dominant mode of travel in the Bay Area. The legacy of this design is that Albany is more pedestrian-friendly than many cities in the region, with a connected grid of streets that supports walking, bicycling, and public transit use. As the region has grown, Albany has faced the dual challenge of responding to higher rates of vehicle ownership among its own residents and large increases in pass-through traffic with origins and destinations in other cities. Albany is criss-crossed by freeways and arterials serving local, regional, and even interstate traffic, including some of the busiest and most congested routes in California. Traffic management is not just a mobility issue—it is an environmental issue, an economic issue, and a quality of life issue.



Photo: Doug Davidson

*Ohlone Greenway bicycle path, with BART overhead*

The Transportation Element of the General Plan is organized in five parts. It begins with a “mobility profile” of Albany residents based on census data on commuting and vehicle ownership. This is followed by an overview of Albany’s circulation system, organized by travel mode. The next section includes a discussion of current and projected conditions on City streets. The focus is on future improvements that will expand the capacity for “active” transportation (e.g., bicycling and walking) and public transit, while recognizing that steps also must be taken to manage motor vehicle flow. A variety of transportation issues are then discussed, including traffic calming, transportation safety, parking, and technology. The final section presents goals, policies, and actions for transportation

## B. MOBILITY PROFILE

### Regional Context

Albany is connected to the region by a complex network of freeways, highways, bridges, railroads, rapid transit lines, trails, and paths. The planning, development, operation, and funding of these facilities is overseen by multiple agencies. The US Department of Transportation (DOT) ensures the safety and efficiency of the nation’s highways, airports, rail lines, and ports. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages more than 45,000 miles of highway and freeway lanes as well as other transportation facilities across the state. At the regional level, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning and financing agency for the Bay Area. Other agencies providing regional transportation services include Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and the Alameda Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit).

At the County level, the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) manages the County's transportation information and funding systems. ACTC was created in 2010 through the merger of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority. The combined agency manages the County's half-cent sales tax, distributes funds to local governments and other agencies, and performs countywide transportation modeling and planning. At the local level, transportation planning is conducted by the Albany Community Development Department while operations and maintenance are handled by the Public Works Department.

Albany is located along the Interstate 80 (Eastshore Freeway) corridor. The section of freeway passing through the city is one of the busiest in the state, carrying an average of nearly 270,000 vehicles per day in 2013. Interstate 80 provides access to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, six miles to the south and the Carquinez Bridge 15 miles to the north. It continues on to Sacramento 75 miles to the northeast and eastward across the United States. Interstate 580 (I-580) provides access from Albany to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge eight miles to the west.

From Albany southward, I-580 is coterminous with I-80 to the Oakland city limits, where it branches to the east and continues to eastern Alameda County and onward to Interstate 5. From the I-580 Oakland junction (commonly known as the "MacArthur Maze"), Interstate 880 provides access to points south along the East Bay shoreline, extending from Oakland to San Jose some 45 miles to the south.

Albany is 17 miles from Oakland International Airport, 25 miles from San Francisco International Airport, nine miles from the Port of Oakland, and six miles from the Port of Richmond. The City is bisected by BART's Richmond line and AMTRAK's Capitol Corridor commuter rail line, although neither includes a station in Albany. AC Transit provides local and regional service throughout Albany.

Union Pacific operates a freight rail line on the west side of the city, providing access to other west coast cities and to points east. Although located on San Francisco Bay, Albany does not have a boat marina or ferry terminal. The nearest active ferry terminal is at Jack London Square in Oakland, eight miles to the south. Additional ferry terminals are planned to the north in Hercules and to the west at Marina Bay in Richmond.

## Travel Patterns in Albany

According to US Census (American Community Survey) data for 2009-2013, only 15 percent of Albany's employed residents worked within the Albany city limits, while 85 percent commuted to a workplace in another city. The percentage of persons who both live and work in Albany is lower than in nearby cities, in part due to Albany's relatively small employment base and geographic area. The percentage is 48 percent in Berkeley, 22 percent in Richmond, and 21 percent in Emeryville. On the other hand, Albany's figure is slightly higher than El Cerrito (14 percent). Among those residents who both live and work in Albany, about 40 percent worked from home.

Among those commuting out of Albany for work, 62 percent traveled to another destination within Alameda County and 38 percent traveled to another county entirely. Many of those traveling within Alameda County commute to Berkeley and Oakland. Those commuting outside the County included persons traveling to jobs in San Francisco, Marin County, Richmond, Central Contra Costa County, and Silicon Valley, among other places.

Census data indicates that the time of departure for work in Albany is typical of most communities, with more than half of all commutes starting between 7 and 9 AM. About 14 percent of the city's employed residents depart for work before 7 AM, 23 percent depart between 7 and 8 AM, 30 percent depart between 8 and 9 AM, and 32 percent depart after 9 AM. The mean travel time to work was 29.9 minutes. However, 20 percent of the city's employed residents have commutes exceeding 45 minutes in length, including half with commutes with over one hour.

On the other hand, about 19 percent of the city’s residents have commutes of less than 15 minutes. The average commute time in Albany is somewhat longer than in Berkeley (27 minutes) and Oakland (28 minutes) and somewhat shorter than in Richmond (31 minutes) and El Cerrito (32 minutes). Albany’s average is almost the same as it was in 2000, when it was 29.2 minutes.

Albany residents are much more likely to walk, bicycle, or use public transit to get to work than residents in other parts of the East Bay. The Census indicates that 24 percent of the city’s employed residents used public transportation to get to work—the highest percentage of any city in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Approximately five percent of the city’s employed residents walked to work and six percent bicycled. About eight percent carpooled.

Only 49 percent drove alone to work each day, the lowest percentage in the East Bay outside of Berkeley. The percentage of Albany residents driving alone to work has declined from 2000, when it was 54 percent.

Albany households have fewer vehicles on average than households in Alameda County as a whole. Although 96 percent of the city’s households own at least one vehicle, which is the same as the countywide average, only 15 percent have 3 vehicles, compared to 32 percent countywide. Moreover, 38 percent of the city’s households have only one vehicle, compared to 23 percent countywide. About 43 percent have two vehicles, compared to the county average of 40 percent. Information on vehicle ownership can be used to help shape future transportation policy, including possible new parking standards.

Albany’s “transportation demographics” are compared to other East Bay cities in the text box on the next page.

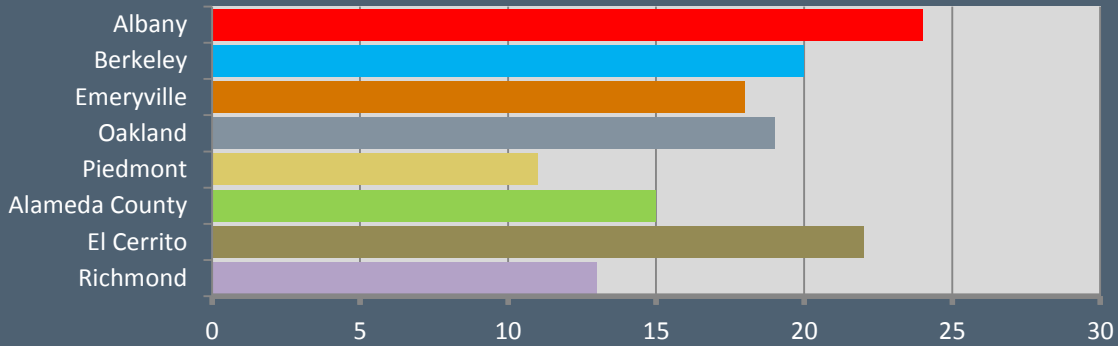


*Intersection of Solano and San Pablo Avenues*

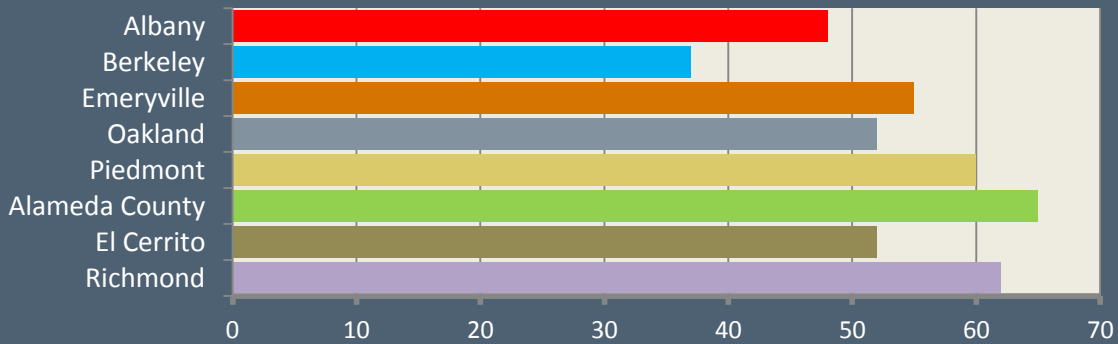
Photo: Doug Donakson

## How Albany Measures Up

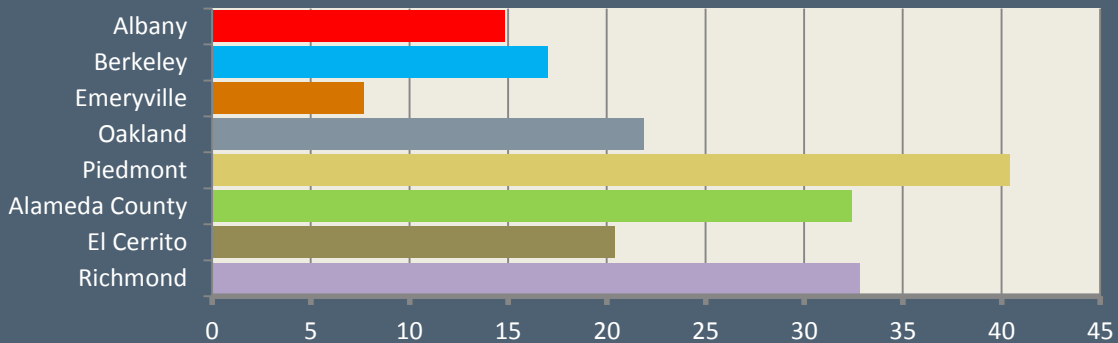
Percentage of Employed Residents Commuting by **Public Transit** **24%**



Percent of Employed Residents Who **Drive Alone to Work** **48%**



Households with **Three or More Vehicles** **14.8%**



Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey

## C. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

### Overview

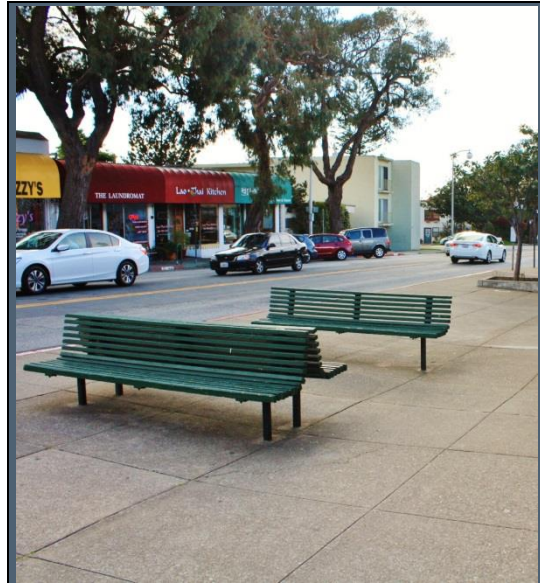
Albany's transportation network is comprised of:

- a roadway system that includes travel lanes for motorized vehicles and bicycles, and sidewalks for pedestrians
- a network of off-road paths designed for use by bicycles and pedestrians
- railroad and elevated rail transit lines that pass through the city but without direct access within Albany.

The roadway system supports a variety of travel modes, including cars, trucks, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians. These modes sometimes operate in separate portions of the right-of-way (for example, sidewalks) and sometimes in the same space (for example, buses and cars).

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, road design in California focused on automobile speed and convenience. During the last 25 years or so, a more balanced approach has been taken, looking at the needs of all travel modes equally. In 2000, Albany adopted a Traffic Management Plan which explicitly stated its intent to provide residents with "rights to an equal share of mobility." The emphasis of that plan was on increasing safety, reducing the effects of traffic on neighborhoods, and improving bicycling, walking, and public transit use.

Albany's current transportation focus is on the creation of "complete streets" (see text box). The basic concept is that streets should be designed for all travel modes, and not just for cars. A complete street is designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable multi-modal access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transport users of all ages and abilities. Design criteria now reflect factors such as safety, environmental quality, greenhouse gas reduction, public health, and access for persons with mobility limitations.



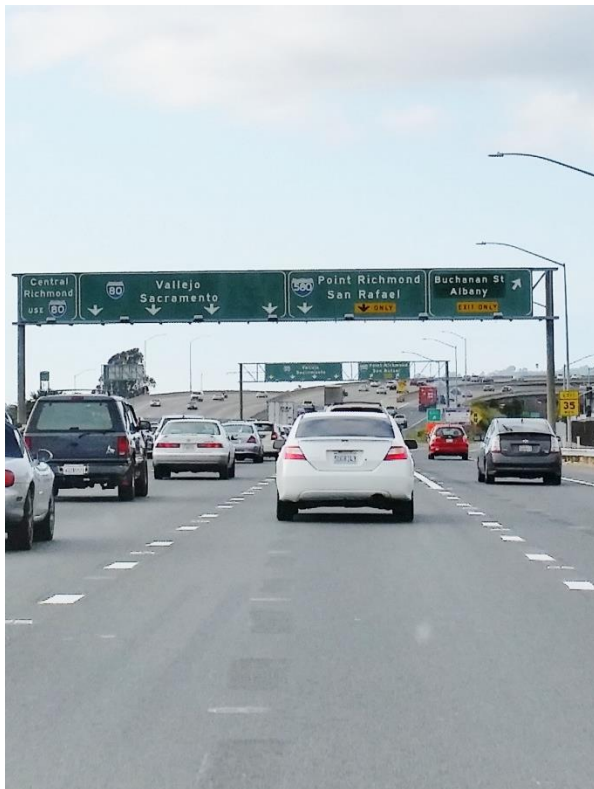
### Complete Streets

In 2013, the City of Albany officially adopted a Complete Streets policy, including a vision to plan and implement all future transportation projects in a manner that provides safe access for walking, bicycling, and public transit facilities. Other components of the policy include context-sensitive design, creating more livable public spaces, and protecting the quality of life.

The Complete Streets policy emphasizes sidewalks, bike lanes, street trees, landscaping, crosswalks, street furniture, better transit stops, and other improvements that make it easier to travel without a car. It further requires that every City department looks for opportunities to humanize the City's streets through its standard operating procedures. The policy also stresses the safety and connectivity of the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Albany’s grid-based network of streets, relatively flat topography and temperate weather make the city well situated for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users. The City has developed an “Active Transportation Plan” that seeks to improve conditions for bicycles, pedestrians, and people with disabilities while maintaining the functionality of the road system for motor vehicles. Active transportation refers to human powered motion, including walking and bicycling. These modes of travel are healthy, enjoyable, environmentally friendly, and free.

Walking is part of most trips a person takes. In Albany, walking and bicycling are often the quickest mode of travel for many trips, such as trips to school, local stores, and transit stops. The Active Transportation Plan includes capital improvement projects to improve walking and bicycling, as well as programmatic changes such as sidewalk maintenance and education. Encouraging these modes of travel is also a central part of the City’s Climate Action Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles.



*Interstate 80 eastbound, approaching Albany*

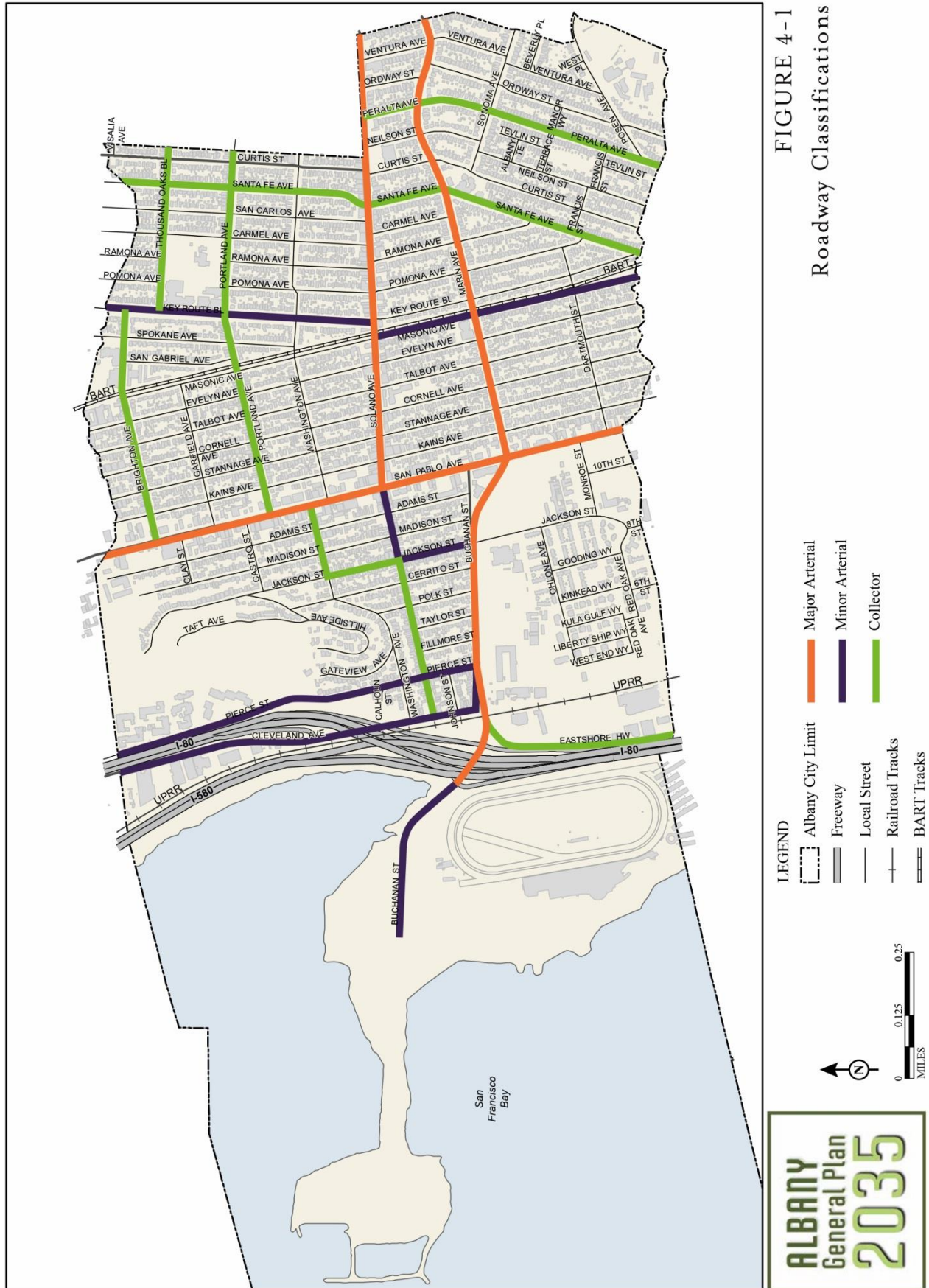
## Road Network

Roads are classified based on their function, design, and the types of trips they carry. Five categories have been identified in Albany: freeways, major arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local streets. Freeways are typically designed for motorized vehicles, while the other roadway types carry vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Figure 4-1 indicates the category assigned to each road in the city.

### *Freeways*

Freeways are designed to carry large traffic volumes over long distances at a high rate of speed. Connections to other roads are provided only through grade-separated interchanges, consisting of ramps and overpasses or underpasses. Center divides are used to separate lanes in opposite directions. Typically only motorized vehicles are permitted to use freeways, although in some instances freeways may include bicycle facilities.

As noted earlier in this chapter, Albany includes two freeways. Interstate 80 is a major commute route in the San Francisco Bay Area. It provides three to six mixed flow lanes and one high occupancy vehicle lane in each direction. Direct access to Albany is provided at the Buchanan Street interchange. According to 2013 Caltrans data, the freeway has an average daily traffic volume of 268,000 vehicles. Interstate 580 connects Highway 101 in Marin County with Interstate 5 in San Joaquin County. West of the junction with I-80, it provides three westbound and two eastbound mixed flow lanes, with an eastbound off-ramp to Buchanan Street. According to Caltrans, I-580 had an average daily traffic volume of 87,000 vehicles at the Albany city limits.







### ***Major Arterials***

Major arterials are designed to carry heavy traffic volumes across town while also providing access to individual properties and cross-streets. They may have medians to control cross traffic. Separate turning lanes are often provided and traffic signals are present at major intersections.

The design of major arterials must balance the competing objectives of accessibility and mobility. Driveways into adjacent parcels may be necessary, but must be located away from intersections and limited to essential access points. These roads also typically have pedestrian and bicycle traffic and serve as primary bus routes. Curb parking is generally allowed, but may be prohibited during peak travel times to provide more capacity. Where there are no parking lanes, bulb outs or turnouts for disabled or temporarily stopped vehicles should be provided.



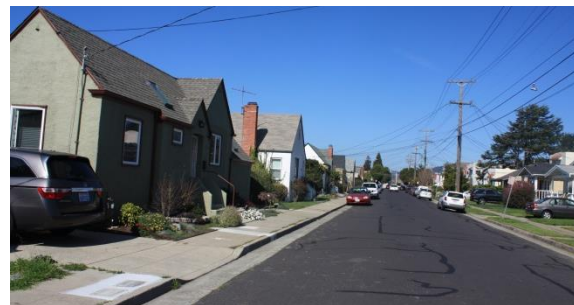
### ***Minor Arterials***

Minor arterials serve large segments of the City but usually do not involve crosstown circulation. Major intersections are signalized but may not have separate turn lanes. These streets serve motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.



### ***Collectors***

Collectors are designed to channel traffic from local streets into the arterial street system and to handle short trips within neighborhoods. Collectors normally have two lanes and curb parking. They may include traffic signals and turning lanes at major intersections. Collectors serve motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.



### ***Local Streets***

Local streets carry low traffic volumes at relatively low speeds. They provide access to individual residences, usually via driveways and curb cuts. Most of the streets in Albany are classified as local streets. Average daily traffic volumes are usually below 2,000 vehicles. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrians, while bicycles typically share the road with vehicles.



*Evening traffic on Solano Avenue*

## Complete Streets Improvements

As noted above, much of the focus of Albany’s transportation planning in the past two decades has been to “humanize” the city’s major arterials. These streets include Solano Avenue, Marin Avenue, Buchanan Street and San Pablo Avenue. The arterials have the highest traffic volumes, the greatest number of bicycle and pedestrian accidents, and the largest number of trip destinations. They also define the image of the city and contribute to Albany’s sense of place. Several projects on these streets that have been completed and others are planned.

### Solano Avenue and Marin Avenue

A streetscape improvement project along Solano Avenue between San Pablo and Masonic Avenues has resulted in wider sidewalks, benches, decorative street lights, new seating areas, and other amenities which make the Avenue more welcoming for pedestrians and bicycles. The initial redesign was completed in 1995.

More recent improvement projects have added curb bulbouts and crosswalks and included pavement resurfacing, ramps, landscaping, and other design changes to further enhance the street. A subsequent phase will extend these improvements eastward to Tulare Avenue near the Berkeley border.

Marin Avenue was redesigned in 2005. A lane re-configuration project reduced the number of travel lanes from four to two and added bicycle lanes and a center turn lane along most of the street. Traffic volumes and average vehicle speeds have decreased since that time, although further improvements are needed to improve the safety of pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

In 2011 and 2013, the City received “Safe Routes to School” grants for pedestrian improvements at the Marin/Santa Fe and Marin/Curtis intersections, adjacent to Marin School. Bulb outs, speed humps, high visibility crosswalks, signal improvements, bicycle racks, and a pedestrian beacon were included.

### San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street

San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Streets are Albany’s busiest streets. Their width, volume, and design contribute to the perception of these streets as “dividing” Albany into quadrants. Planned design changes should change that perception, to the point where the streets become a unifying element and a place where the city comes together.

For over three decades, the City has endeavored to make San Pablo Avenue a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly street, starting with an Urban Design Concept Plan in the late 1980s. In 2001, a Streetscape Plan for the Avenue proposed new gateways, redesigned sidewalks and crosswalks, upgraded lighting, street trees, and a plaza at Marin Avenue. Some of these improvements were implemented and others were not. Among the challenges to redesigning the Avenue are its dual function as a State Highway, its high vehicle volumes, and the regional nature of much of its traffic.

A “Complete Streets Plan” for San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street was adopted in 2013. The Plan carries forward some of the concepts in the 2001 Streetscape Plan, but goes a step further to redesign the travel lanes, parking lanes, and bus pullouts. The more recent plan also proposes a redesign of Buchanan Street, incorporating the recently completed bicycle and pedestrian path along the south side of the street and the new bike lane on the north side.

The proposed Plan for San Pablo and Buchanan responds to a strong community interest in improving connections to the waterfront, providing protected bicycle lanes, slowing down motor vehicle traffic, and enhancing the appearance of the “public realm” on both streets through landscaping, tree planting, outdoor seating, and street furniture. Planned improvements will help foster economic success, promote community identity, and create a stronger sense of place. Importantly, the improvements will also facilitate travel by bicycles, pedestrians and public transit users without reducing capacity for motorists.



*Buchanan Street bicycle and pedestrian path*

Design recommendations for San Pablo Avenue include:

- Narrowing the travel lanes from 12 feet to 11 feet
- Adding a combination of bicycle lanes and shared lane markings to facilitate bicycle travel
- Curb extensions and improved crosswalks
- Raised medians with pedestrian waiting areas (“refuges”) and street trees
- Enhanced gateways at the northern and southern city limits
- Intersection geometry changes to improve safety and usability by bicycles and pedestrians
- Improvements to crosswalks such as flashing beacons
- Other streetscape design elements such as enhanced sidewalk paving, pedestrian-scaled streetlights, and tree grates.

Specific changes to the Solano/San Pablo intersection are recommended to improve its functionality and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and motor vehicles. Changes also are recommended at Dartmouth and Monroe and at the staggered Washington Avenue intersections to facilitate east-west bicycle traffic across San Pablo Avenue. Mid-block crosswalks are recommended at key locations, making it easier for pedestrians to cross the street. Relocation of transit stops and removal of some curbside parking will be required as these changes are carried out.

The proposed design will help create a more active, mixed-use neighborhood. It will complement the City's efforts to promote higher quality architecture and a mix of ground floor uses that enliven the street and encourage pedestrian travel. Private development along the street will incorporate plazas, courtyards, and entries which complement the public spaces.

On Buchanan Street, the intent of the design proposals is to strengthen the street's function as a neighborhood parkway rather than as a high speed freeway connector. Among the recommended changes is the reconfiguration of the Buchanan/Marin/Madison intersection on the west side of the Fire Station, creating a pocket park and making it easier for pedestrians to access City Hall. Other improvements along Buchanan include the installation of a pedestrian beacon at Taylor and gateway improvements at the Buchanan Bridge overcrossing.

## Bicycle Network

The bicycle network utilizes the roadway network described above along with off-road bike paths. Expansion of the bicycle network in the coming years will improve safety and make it easier to reach residences, employment centers, schools, parks, and transit facilities. The City has set a goal of implementing 90 percent of its planned bicycle network by 2020. It also has set a goal of having 15 percent of all commute trips made by bicycle or walking by 2020—an increase from 11 percent in 2014.

The text box on the following page identifies the four categories used to describe bicycle facilities. These categories are consistent with the Caltrans Highway Design Manual and the standards used in other communities. The existing and proposed bicycle network is shown in Figure 4-2. Bicycle facilities are categorized as Class I (off-street bike paths), Class II (striped bicycle lanes), Class III (bike routes), and Class IV (cycle tracks).

Currently, Albany's off-street (Class I) bike path network includes a segment of the Bay Trail, the Ohlone Greenway, and paths along Codornices and Cerrito Creek. The Ohlone Greenway is the primary regional bicycling corridor through the city, extending from Ohlone Park in Berkeley to the El Cerrito Plaza and El Cerrito Del Norte BART stations and onward to San Pablo Avenue in Richmond. The Buchanan-Marin Bikeway (Bike Trail connector) also recently opened along the south side of Buchanan Street, connecting the Bay Trail west of I-80 to University Village and other Albany neighborhoods.

The 2012 Active Transportation Plan proposes new bicycle facilities to create a more complete and functional bicycle network. Bicycle boulevards—streets that are redesigned to make cycling safer and easier—are proposed for Kains Avenue, Adams Street, Dartmouth Street, segments of Jackson Street and Spokane Avenue, and a portion of Washington Avenue. Striped bicycle lanes are proposed on San Pablo Avenue, Posen Street and on parts of Washington Avenue and Jackson Street. Class III bike route designations are planned for a number of streets, and new off-street paths are planned along Pierce Street, in University Village, on the Key Route median, and in the Eastshore State Park.

## Bicycle Facility Types

### Class I

Class I bike paths consist of completely separate rights of way and are designed for the exclusive use of bicyclists and pedestrians. Vehicle cross flow is minimized. Bike paths provide a safe environment for younger or less experienced cyclists who do not want to ride alongside traffic.



### Class II

Class II bike lanes provide a restricted right of way and are designated for the use of bicyclists with a striped lane on a street or highway. Bicycle lanes are generally five feet wide. Vehicle parking and vehicle/pedestrian cross-flow are permitted. An examples is the Marin Avenue bicycle lane.



### Class III

Class III bicycling routes provide a right-of-way designated by signs or pavement markings for shared use with motor vehicles. Bicycles travel in the same lanes as motor vehicles on such routes. While a basic Class III route may simply have signs, a bicycle boulevard is a special type of shared route that has been designed to make it easier to travel by bicycle. Class III routes also may be marked by “sharrows” or pavement markings which indicate that bicycles may use the vehicle travel lanes.



### Class IV

Class IV lanes, or “cycletracks” are dedicated bike lanes separated from vehicle traffic by bollards, raised medians, or dividers. They are located on the curb side of parking lanes, offering a higher level of protection to cyclists.



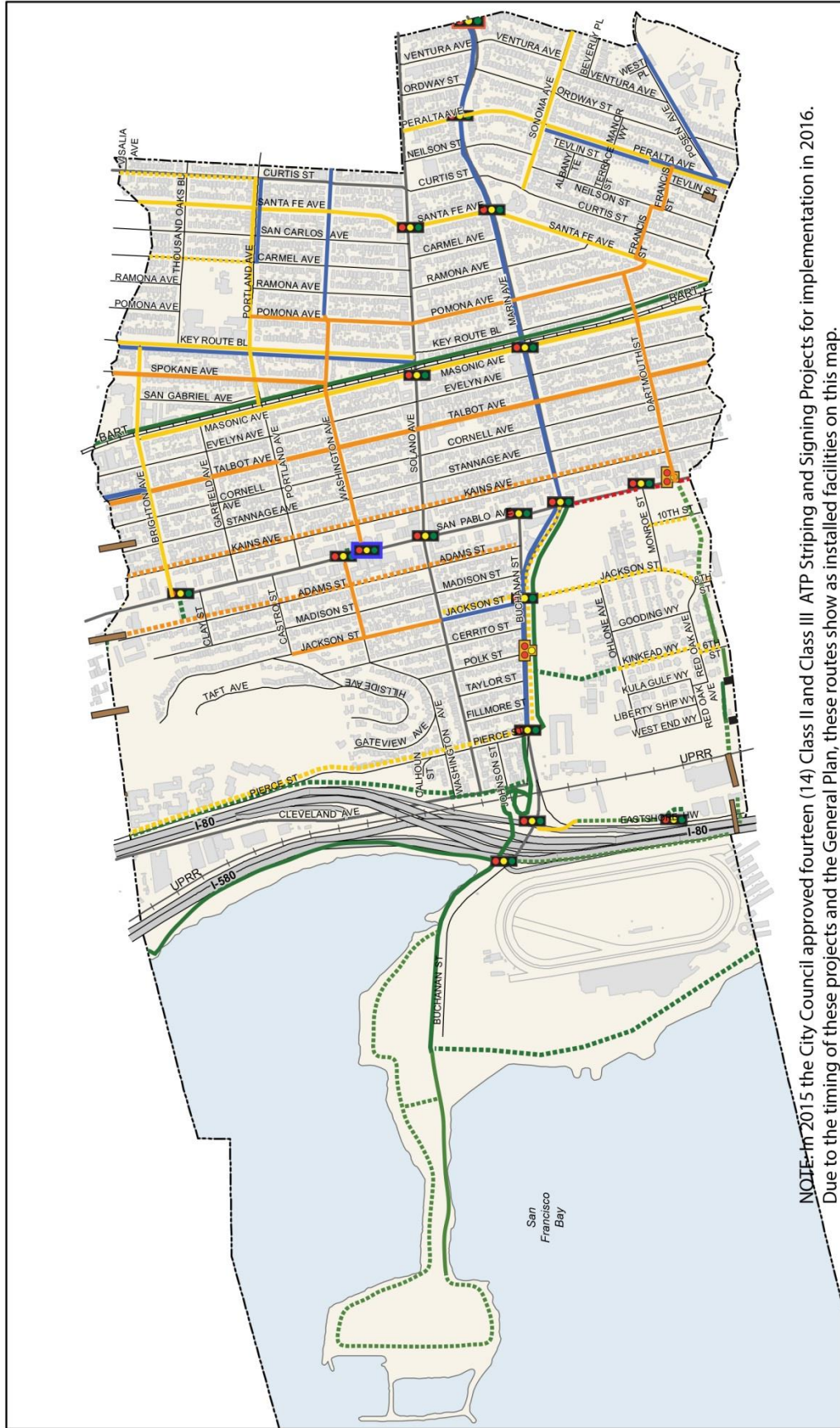
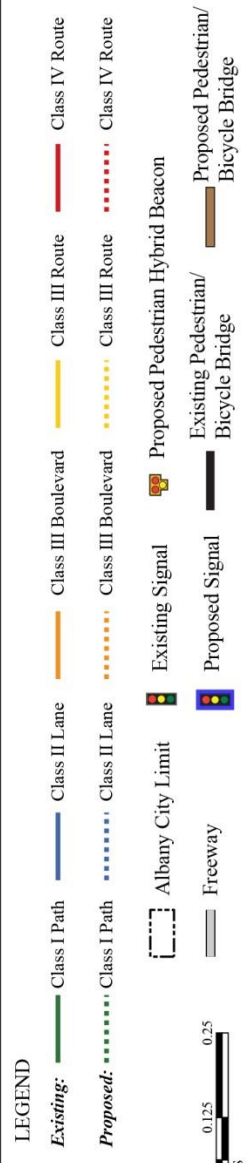


FIGURE 4-2  
Bicycle Network



SOURCE: Fehr & Peers, 2015.  
ALBANY 1301 Albany GP/fruress/General Plan/Fig. 4-2 Bicycle Network at (3/8/16)

Buffered Class II bike lanes are proposed for the extension of the Marin Avenue bike lanes between Cornell and San Pablo Avenues. In addition, the 2014 Complete Streets Plan for San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street designated San Pablo Avenue as a primary “rapid” cycling route through the city. The “rapid” designation suggests the route would primarily be used by more experienced cyclists for commuting. Other routes, with lower motor vehicle volumes, have been identified as preferable for “relaxed” cycling by less experienced or more leisure-oriented cyclists.

On San Pablo Avenue, a Class IV lane or “cycle track,” is proposed along the University Village frontage of San Pablo Avenue. A cycle track is a dedicated bike lane that is protected from vehicle flow by removable bollards, a permanent barrier, or a grade separation.

The proposed system includes 7.2 miles of Class I bicycle paths, 3.5 miles of striped bike lanes, 2.75 miles of bicycle boulevard, and 6.75 miles of signed and marked bike routes. Less than half of this system is in place as of 2015. The new facilities include some bikeways designed for “slow” travel and others designed for “fast” travel, recognizing the different skill levels of bicyclists, and the different characteristics of recreational bike trips and commute trips. The Active Transportation Plan also raises the possibility of someday building a bicycle and pedestrian bridge or tunnel from University Village to the waterfront, spanning I-80 and the Union Pacific Railroad.

While new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure can increase the percentage of trips taken using these modes of travel, additional steps are needed to fully achieve the city’s active transportation goals. This includes a robust education program aimed at residents of all ages, but particularly at school-aged children. Local community organizations such as Albany Strollers and Rollers work to augment City-led efforts and advocate for greater awareness of bicycle and pedestrian issues. The School District is another important partner and works with the City to implement Safe Routes to School programs.

The City has prepared brochures, bumper stickers, and banners promoting safe cycling. Among the educational initiatives the City may continue in the future are public service announcements, educational signs, bicycle training programs, and additional bike rodeos and demonstration programs. The City is also exploring options for increased enforcement, such as increased fines and red light ticketing. In addition to enforcement, the City is also committed to ongoing maintenance of its bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including cleaning, resurfacing, and restriping paths, removing trash, and landscaping. Participation in regional bike share programs also may be explored, if and when services are expanded to the East Bay.

Providing convenient, secure bicycle parking is also an important part of increasing bicycle ridership. Bicycle parking in Albany can be found throughout the City in community parks, schools, workplaces, shopping districts, and housing developments. A 2010 inventory of bike parking in the City found that Albany has bicycle racks that can accommodate over 600 bikes. Additional bicycle parking is planned. Bicycle parking is also required in new development with 10 or more parking spaces.



*Bicyclists on Madison Street*



Photo: Peggy McQuaid

Bicycle "Rodeo" event

## Pedestrian Network

The 2012 Albany Active Transportation Plan (ATP) includes a detailed strategy to encourage pedestrian travel throughout the City. A key part of this strategy is improving the safety and convenience of pedestrian facilities. These facilities include not only sidewalks, but also crosswalks, off-road paths and walkways, curb ramps, and other infrastructure which facilitates travel on foot.

Most Albany streets include a sidewalk on one or both sides; a five-foot sidewalk standard has been adopted. Curb ramps exist at many intersections. However, some areas have no ramps or are in need of upgrades to comply with the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Major intersections along commercial corridors, such as those on San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue, have ADA compliant ramps. On Solano Avenue, the ramps are compliant in some locations but require improvement in others. Many of the intersections along commercial streets are uncontrolled (e.g., no traffic signal or stop signs) and lack a median refuge, making it difficult to cross the street on foot.

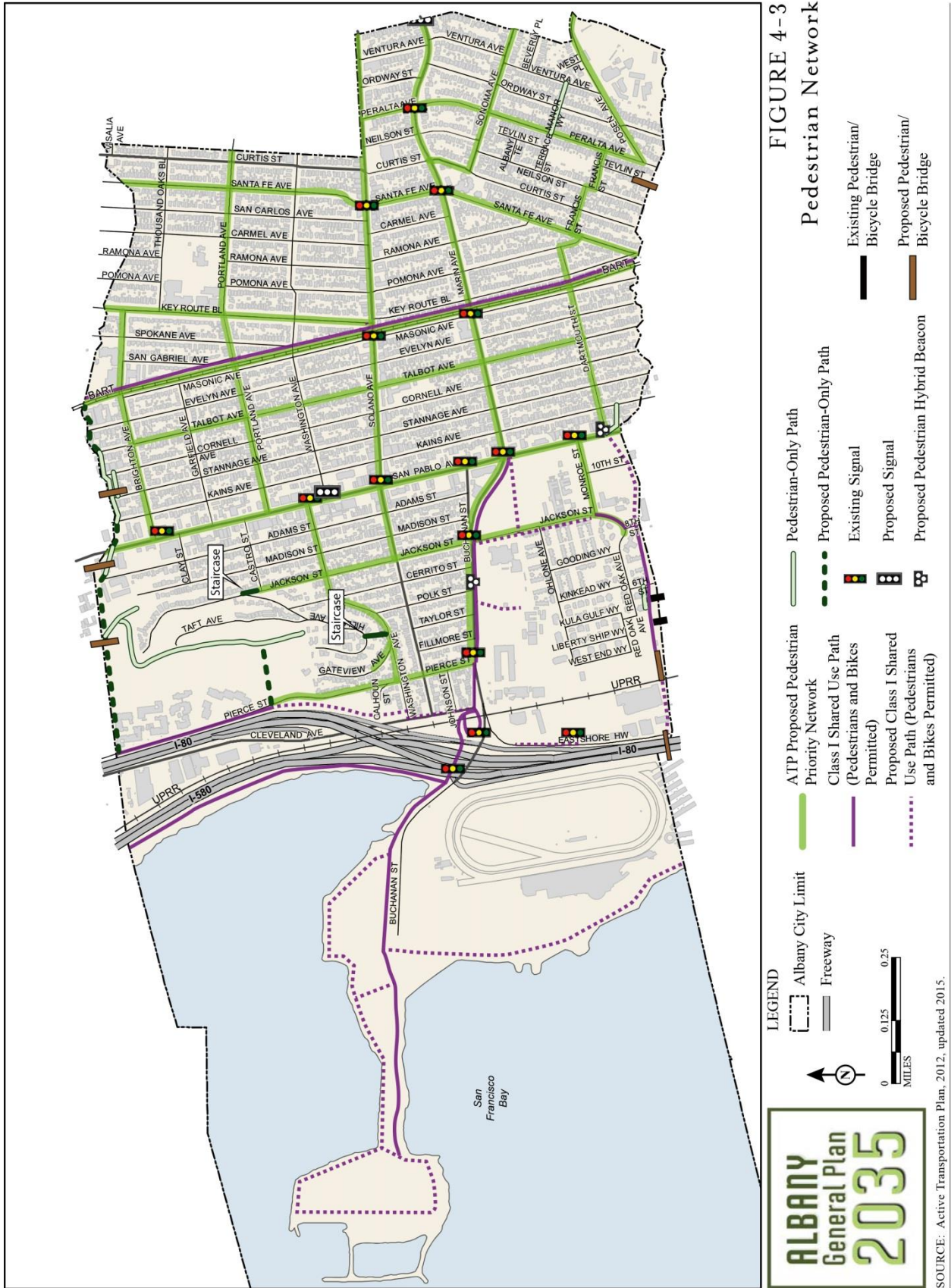
There are several off-street multi-use trails in the city, each serving bicycles as well as pedestrians. The Ohlone Greenway is located along the BART tracks and connects to El Cerrito and Richmond in the north and Berkeley in the south. The Bay Trail is located along the shoreline and connects to trails in Berkeley and Richmond, as well as the Albany Bulb and Point Isabel. Trails have also been developed along Cerrito and Codornices Creeks, although these trails are incomplete and provide limited connectivity. The Buchanan Street bikeway was recently opened between Pierce Street and San Pablo Avenue. There are also informal pedestrian trails, primarily recreational in nature, on Albany Hill and along the waterfront.

Albany also has a number of mid-block pedestrian paths and stairways. These include Manor Walk, which connects Ventura Avenue to Peralta Avenue, and Catherine's Walk between Hillside and Gateview Avenues.

The city's proposed pedestrian network is shown graphically in Figure 4-3. Most components of this network are already in place, but other components will require capital improvements and other enhancements in the coming years. The network includes designated "priority walking corridors" on 19 streets, comprised primarily of sidewalks and painted crosswalks. The corridors provide an interconnected network of sidewalks and paths that will facilitate safe, accessible walking between destinations in the city.

The Safe Routes to School Program will continue to be an important component of the City's pedestrian and bicycle planning. In addition to capital improvements to improve student safety, the program includes components such as International Walk and Bike to School Day, the Golden Sneaker Contest, and Bike to School Day. The City also conducts a Roll and Walk to School Day on the first Wednesday of the month during the school year.







*AC Transit's 18 Bus on Solano Avenue*

## Public Transportation

Nearly one-quarter of Albany's residents use public transit to commute to work each day. Many residents also use transit for non-work trips, including trips to school, shopping, recreational destinations, appointments, and errands. Albany's relatively high densities and initial development as a "streetcar suburb" have created a long tradition of transit use. Nearly all of the city's residents live within 800 feet of a bus stop, or about a three or four minute walk.

The City strongly supports public transit and other modes that reduce reliance on the automobile as the primary means of transportation. While there is no BART Station in Albany, bus routes link with both the El Cerrito Plaza and North Berkeley BART stations.

## Buses

The Alameda Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) is the primary bus service provider in Albany. AC Transit serves 13 cities and adjacent unincorporated communities in the East Bay. It is the third largest bus system in California, serving 196,000 riders on an average day. Approximately 1.5 million residents live in the service area.

While the transit system includes 151 different bus lines, AC Transit indicates that nine corridors carry over 50 percent of the passenger traffic. Two of those corridors, including San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue, pass through Albany. The District is currently preparing a Major Corridors Study to improve service in these areas.

San Pablo Avenue is a Rapid Bus Corridor and is served by AC Transit Route 72 Rapid. The 72 line extends from Downtown Oakland north through Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, and Albany, and onward to El Cerrito and Richmond.

Some 4,300 transit customers pass through the Solano/San Pablo intersection each day, with buses running as frequently as once every six minutes during the peak hours. All signalized intersections along the San Pablo Corridor have transit signal priority, reducing congestion-related bus delays. Albany's San Pablo-Buchanan Complete Streets Plan recommends working with AC Transit to provide real-time information to riders, improve route signage and connections, and enhance bus stops.

The other high volume bus corridor in Albany is Solano Avenue, which is served by AC Transit Route 18. The 18 line connects Albany to Downtown Berkeley and Downtown Oakland, continuing on to the Montclair district in Oakland. Buses run at a headway of about once every 15 minutes during the commute hours. More than 8,000 riders a day use the 18 Bus, with nearly 1,000 boardings in Albany alone.

Both the 18 and 72 buses run from the early morning into the late evening. Other AC Transit lines in the city include the 52, which connects University Village to the University of California campus in Berkeley, and the 25, which runs in a loop configuration from El Cerrito Plaza to Downtown Berkeley using Pierce Street, Buchanan Street, and Jackson Street on the Albany portion of the loop.

AC Transit also operates limited stop services such as Route 800 which operates late nights, and Transbay Routes G, L, and Z, which serve the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco during peak commute periods. These routes include San Pablo Avenue, Solano Avenue, and Pierce Street, and use the Bay Bridge to transport riders to San Francisco.

Transbay service is also provided by Golden Gate Transit. In 2015, Golden Gate Transit began providing commuter bus service between Emeryville and San Rafael in the morning, and between San Rafael and Emeryville in the evening. The route includes a stop at Buchanan and Jackson in Albany.

Table 4-1 summarizes the hours of operation, headways and average weekday ridership for each route serving Albany. Figure 4-4 shows the location of these routes.

Albany has adopted a Transit Preference Policy that advocates for public transit use and improvements that increase ridership and service frequency. The policy covers such improvements as transit-only lanes, signal pre-emption devices, bus stop improvements, and optimization of bus stop locations. The Transit Preference policy also supports resolving conflicts between public transit and single occupancy vehicles in favor of the mode that provides the greatest mobility.

The City has also worked with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to designate the San Pablo and Solano corridors as "Priority Development Areas" (PDAs). One of the criteria for this designation is the frequency of transit service. A PDA designation indicates a city's intent to focus its future development in an area, thus making public transit more viable in the future. The PDA designation also improves access to grants for capital improvements that support bus service, such as bus shelters, pullouts, and signal upgrades.

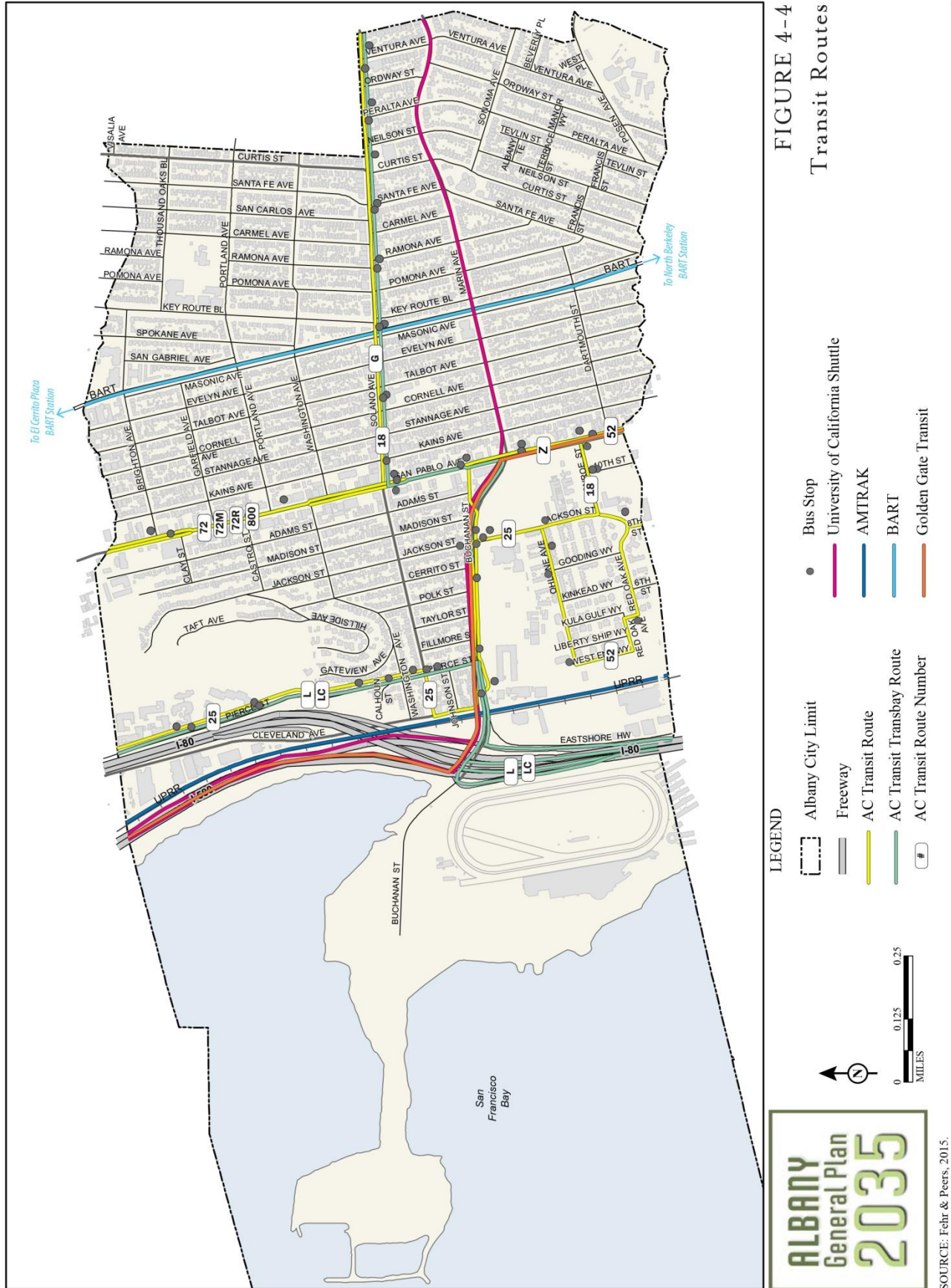
While transit-oriented development in the Bay Area is usually associated with BART stations, it is also a valid designation along high-frequency bus corridors. Approximately 70 percent of the 2015-2035 housing growth and a majority of the employment growth envisioned by the Albany General Plan is associated with sites along San Pablo and Solano Avenues. Clustering development in these areas will only achieve the desired outcome—reducing greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels—if transit service is sustained at or above its current levels. The City will continue to work with AC Transit and other agencies to improve bus service and ensure that transit remains a safe, affordable, convenient travel mode. During the next 20 years, improvements such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and even light rail may be considered along the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

Table 4-1: Bus Routes Serving Albany-2015

Route	From	To	Headways (Minutes) <sup>1</sup>				Total Daily Boardings <sup>2</sup>	Total Daily Boardings in Albany
			Weekdays		Weekends			
			Peak	Non-Peak	Peak	Non-Peak		
18	Mountain Blvd & Moraga Av in Oakland	San Pablo & Monroe Street	15	30	20		8,300	940
25	El Cerrito Plaza BART	El Cerrito Plaza BART, via Downtown Berkeley (loop route)	40		60		900	71
52	Bancroft Way & Telegraph Av in Berkeley	Monroe St & San Pablo Av	15	30	35		3,000	604
72	2 <sup>nd</sup> & Harrison St in Berkeley	Hilltop Mall in Richmond	30	40	30	40	4,500	124
72M	2 <sup>nd</sup> & Harrison St in Berkeley	Tewksbury Av & Castro St. in Richmond	20	40	30	40	4,200	122
72R	2 <sup>nd</sup> & Clay Streets in Oakland	Contra Costa College in San Pablo	12		No Weekend Service		7,000	174
800	Market St. & Van Ness in San Francisco	Richmond BART	60		30		400	3
G	Transbay Terminal in San Francisco	Potrero Av & Richmond St. in El Cerrito	30	60	No Weekend Service		350	75
L	Transbay Terminal in San Francisco	San Pablo Dam Rd in San Pablo	15	60	No Weekend Service		700	93
Z	Transbay Terminal in San Francisco	Buchanan St. & Pierce St. in Albany	60		No Weekend Service		100	2
580	Hollis & 58 <sup>th</sup> in Emeryville	Anderson & Jacoby in San Rafael	30		No Weekend Service		N/A	N/A

Source: AC Transit, March 2014. Golden Gate Transit, 2016

Notes: (1) Headways are defined as the time interval between two transit vehicles traveling in the same direction over the same route; (2) Weekday boardings from AC Transit, received March 2014.



### Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)

BART provides regional rail rapid transit throughout the East Bay and across the Bay to San Francisco and the Peninsula. The system operates five routes on 104 miles of line with 44 stations. BART's average weekday ridership is over 422,000 passengers, making it the fifth busiest heavy rail rapid transit system in the United States.

BART does not provide direct service within Albany. The system's Richmond line passes through Albany on an elevated fixed guideway for a distance of just over a mile. This line currently terminates three stations to the north in Richmond, about five miles away.

El Cerrito Plaza station lies approximately 0.25 miles north of the Albany city limits. North Berkeley station lies 0.7 miles south of the Albany city limits. Both stations have monthly reserved, daily fee, extended weekend, and airport/long term parking, as well as bike racks and bike lockers. Average weekday boardings in 2013 were 4,540 riders at El Cerrito Plaza and 4,350 riders at North Berkeley.

Albany is well connected to these stations by the Ohlone Greenway, a linear park developed in the BART right-of-way beneath the elevated track. The Greenway provides bicycle and pedestrian connections to both stations from Albany. The northernmost blocks of Central Albany—principally the area east of San Pablo Avenue and north of Brighton Avenue—are within a one-half mile radius of El Cerrito Plaza and meet the ABAG/MTC criteria for transit-oriented development.

BART's long range plans include extensions on most of its lines, including an extension to San Jose now under construction on the Fremont line. A northern extension of the Richmond line to Hercules has been in discussion for many years, but decisions on route alignment and station locations continue to be debated. Funding for an extension continues to be a major constraint.

Consideration has also been given to an “infill” station midway between the El Cerrito Plaza and North Berkeley stations. Such a station would likely be positioned above Solano Avenue in Albany, and would potentially be constructed without off-street parking. The City supports further consideration of this stop, subject to extensive community discussion and environmental assessment.

### Paratransit

Albany uses Measure B sales tax funds to provide paratransit services to adults with disabilities. It participates in the East Bay Paratransit Program, along with AC Transit, BART, and other cities, to provide service to anyone who cannot use conventional mass transit because of a mobility limitation. A taxi program is also available, enabling seniors over 80 and persons with disabilities to be reimbursed for taxi rides. In addition, the Senior Community Center operates a shuttle service which picks up seniors and persons with disabilities at their homes for short trips to the grocery store. A variety of low cost recreational trips also are provided using the shuttle vehicle. The City also participates in the 511 toll-free phone and web service that provides real-time details on traffic, public transportation routes and fares, carpool and vanpool referrals, bicycling, trip planning airport access, City Car Share, FasTrak and more.

### Other Bus and Rail Services

The University of California operates a shuttle connecting the main University campus and the Richmond Field Station (RFS) with a stop in Albany serving University Village. The Shuttle operates from 6:45 a.m. to 6:10 p.m. with 60 minutes headways for most of the day.

Albany is located on the Capitol Corridor, a commuter train operated by Amtrak. Trains run from San Jose to Sacramento using the Union Pacific right-of-way through Albany. The closest stations are in Berkeley and Richmond.

### Commercial Transportation

Commercial vehicle traffic in Albany consists of trucks using the I-80 and I-580 freeways and city streets. Truck traffic is regulated by Section 9.15 of the Municipal Code. The Code limits the movement of vehicles exceeding a gross weight of five tons to specifically listed truck routes. These routes are Cleveland Avenue, Buchanan Street, and Solano Avenue east of San Pablo. Trucks may use other streets only for the purpose of making pick-ups and deliveries. Based on Caltrans data, trucks represent about two percent of the volume on San Pablo Avenue and Interstate 80. The municipal code also regulates loading zones and the parking of oversized vehicles, including trucks, on city streets.



*Albany's Senior Center shuttle assists persons with mobility limitations*

## D. CURRENT AND FUTURE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

### Moving Beyond “Level of Service”

This section of the Transportation Element includes data on current motor vehicle traffic volumes on Albany’s major streets. The data provides the basis for conclusions about the performance of the system under current conditions, and its likely future performance as growth in Albany and surrounding communities takes place. Average daily traffic counts were taken in April 2014 as part of the General Plan Update. These counts are supplemented by those taken by Caltrans and through other monitoring programs during the last few years.

The traditional metric for evaluating the performance of a roadway network is “Level of Service” or LOS. LOS uses a lettered grade system (from A to F) to describe the extent of delay experienced along road segments and at intersections. LOS A indicates free flow conditions with little or no delay experienced. LOS E usually represents “at-capacity” operations. LOS F indicates very congested conditions where traffic demand exceeds capacity and results in long delays.

Because LOS focuses on motor vehicles rather than other modes of travel, it is not always a valid indicator of where improvements are needed. Some degree of motor vehicle congestion may be acceptable where other objectives are being achieved, such as increased volumes of bicycles and pedestrians and higher transit usage. Moreover, the remedy to vehicle congestion in many communities has been to simply widen the roadway. This is neither practical nor desirable in Albany given the built out character of the city and the character of existing development. A more practical solution is to improve the efficiency of the existing system and to increase capacity for alternative modes of travel.

In 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 743 into law. This legislation will eventually eliminate the use of auto delay (as measured by LOS) as a metric for determining the significance of an impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The change was deemed necessary to balance the goal of congestion management with other goals related to climate change, public health, and infill development. The planning of transportation facilities is beginning to rely more heavily on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the basis for evaluating future conditions. Cities are shifting their focus to reducing VMT rather than simply reducing motor vehicle delays and increasing auto speed. This shift is consistent with Albany’s emphasis on more sustainable, less auto-centric development. The City fully supports the VMT metric as part of its efforts to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions.

Albany currently does not have adopted standards for roadway and intersection operations. In the past, traffic studies prepared for the City have used LOS as an indicator of potential “hot spots” when new development is proposed, especially along major arterials. The tables in this Transportation Element include references to LOS to provide such a benchmark. The fact that an intersection or road segment is at or near its capacity for motor vehicles does not mean that the road should be widened or that no further development should occur. Rather it is an indicator of where new approaches are needed to manage traffic and better balance the needs of all modes of travel. Changes to specific intersections or road segments may be necessary to accommodate individual development projects in the future, subject to more detailed project-level traffic studies.



## Existing Roadway and Intersection Analysis

Albany's roadways were analyzed by comparing the actual daily traffic volumes on various road segments with generalized data on roadway and lane capacity. This comparison was used to develop a rough estimate of LOS along road segments.

Table 4-2 indicates the outcome of the analysis. The table indicates that the I-80 and 580 freeways are both operating beyond their design capacity based on their average daily volumes. All segments of the local street system are operating within their design capacities.

The General Plan analysis also included a review of conditions at intersections in Albany based on data from traffic reports completed during the last several years. These analyses consider conditions during the AM and PM peak commute hours, rather than average daily conditions. Most intersections were found to be operating within their design capacity. However, the capacity of the Marin/San Pablo intersection is exceeded during the afternoon peak hour. This is consistent with traffic studies dating back to the 1990s, which also highlighted this intersection as the most congested in the city.

Delays also occur at some of the two-way stop-sign controlled intersections along Marin Avenue, and on the Buchanan Street off-ramp from Interstate 80. The Solano/San Pablo intersection is performing at acceptable service levels, with moderate delays during the AM and PM peak hours.

**Table 4-2: Motorized Vehicle Volumes and Levels of Service on Albany Roads, 2014**

Road Segment	Road Type	Volume <sup>1</sup>	LOS <sup>2</sup>
I-580 north of the I-80 interchange	Freeway	87,000	F
I-80 south of the I-580 interchange	Freeway	268,000	F
I-80 north of the I-580 interchange	Freeway	172,000	F
Cleveland Avenue north of Washington Avenue	2-Lane Undivided Arterial	6,600	C
Pierce Street north of Washington Avenue	2-Lane Collector	4,060	C
Eastshore Highway south of Buchanan Street	2-Lane Collector	5,500	C
Buchanan Street between Fillmore and Taylor Streets	4-Lane Divided Arterial	29,640	D
Jackson Street between Portland Avenue and Castro Street	2-Lane Collector	3,920	B
San Pablo Avenue between Buchanan Street and Solano Avenue	4-Lane Undivided Arterial	24,720	D
San Pablo Avenue between Buchanan Street and Solano Avenue	4-Lane Undivided Arterial	23,500	D
San Pablo Avenue between Monroe and Dartmouth Streets	4-Lane Undivided Arterial	23,520	D
Brighton Avenue between Stannage and Cornell Avenues	2-Lane Collector	3,540	B
Solano Avenue between Stannage and Cornell Avenues	2-Lane Undivided Arterial	10,390	D
Marin Avenue between Stannage and Cornell Avenues	3-Lane Arterial (TWLTL) <sup>3</sup>	19,030	D
Masonic Avenue between Dartmouth Street and Marin Avenue	2-Lane Undivided Arterial	3,830	C
Key Route Boulevard between Portland Avenue and Thousand Oaks	2-Lane Divided Arterial	5,160	C
Solano Avenue between Santa Fe Avenue and Curtis Street	2-Lane Undivided Arterial	9,670	D
Marin Avenue between Santa Fe Avenue and Curtis Street	3-Lane Arterial (TWLTL) <sup>3</sup>	17,580	D

Source: *Fehr and Peers, 2014*

Notes: (1) Average daily traffic based on April 2014 counts. Freeway volumes based on Caltrans data; (2) LOS=Level of Service; (3) TWLTL=two-way left turn lane

## Projected Future Conditions

The Albany General Plan analysis included an evaluation of projected conditions in the Year 2040 using the Alameda County Transportation Commission traffic model.<sup>1</sup> The model considers expected increases in traffic due to population and employment growth in the region, development in each community, funded improvements to the transportation system, and changes in travel behavior. The model “assigns” vehicle traffic to each roadway in the network based on data on trip origins and destinations, providing an estimate of potential traffic volumes in 25 years. The model outputs may be used to identify likely areas of future congestion.

The traffic model does not consider the specific effects of any one individual project. Rather, it considers the cumulative effects of all projects in all communities that have been approved, plus additional growth that could happen under all local General Plans. This means that even if no growth occurs in Albany during the next 25 years, traffic volumes will increase as a result of development in surrounding cities.

Between 2010 and 2040, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties are projected to gain 248,000 households, 375,000 jobs, and 764,000 residents. The Bay Area as a whole is expected to add more than two million people. Albany’s projected growth represents about three-tenths of one percent of the East Bay’s growth and less than one-tenth of one percent of the Bay Area’s growth. Projected growth rates are higher in nearby communities such as El Cerrito, Richmond, and Berkeley than they are in Albany. Thus, on major arterials such as San Pablo Avenue, a growing share of the traffic will be non-local—in other words, the vehicles will begin and end their trips in other cities and pass through Albany on the way.

<sup>1</sup> Although the Albany General Plan has a horizon year of 2035, the year 2040 was used for forecasting purposes to align with the countywide model. Thus the General Plan forecasts are more conservative (e.g., about 15-20 percent higher) than the actual forecasts that would be expected by 2035.

The initial model results for Albany indicated very large projected increases in daily traffic volumes along Buchanan Street, San Pablo Avenue, Eastshore Highway, and Cleveland Avenue. Most of the increase is a result of the model “assigning” I-80 freeway traffic to alternate routes to bypass congestion on the freeway itself. While the model overstates the “spillover” effect, it is clear that congestion will get worse on Buchanan Street and San Pablo Avenue due to “pass-through” traffic. It is also likely that peak hour conditions will occur for longer periods in the mornings and evenings as commuters modify their behavior to travel at less congested times. Average vehicle speeds on Buchanan Street and San Pablo Avenue will continue to decline and delays will become longer. These changes will occur with or without future growth in Albany.

The planned “Complete Streets” redesign of these streets will make it easier and safer to travel along the Buchanan and San Pablo corridors on foot, by bicycle, and by public transportation. As a result, these “alternative” modes will constitute a growing percentage of the City’s trips in the future.

Table 4-3 indicates the existing and projected vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and mode share for Albany in 2014 and 2040. The table shows a total increase of 10 percent in VMT, which is slightly less than the projected increase in “service population” (the sum of all persons either living or working in Albany) during this same period.

The total number of trips generated in Albany is projected to increase by 2040, but a larger share of those trips will be made using modes other than private automobiles. The percent of trips made using “active” modes such as walking and bicycling is projected to increase from one-quarter of all trips in 2014 to about one-third of all trips by 2040.

**Table 4-3: Vehicle Miles Traveled and Mode Share, 2014 and 2040**

Variable	2014	2040	Percent Change
Total Motor Vehicle Miles Traveled Per Day in Albany	226,400	249,600	10.2%
Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita <sup>1</sup>	9.6	9.3	-3.1%
<b>Mode Share (for all trips)</b>			
<i>Drive</i>	68%	59%	--
<i>Transit</i>	7%	8%	--
<i>Bicycle and Pedestrian</i>	25%	33%	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	--

Source: Febr and Peers, 2015

Notes: (1) based on service population, which is the sum of residents and local jobs. (2) 2014 mode shares based on the 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for work trips and the 2012 California Household Transportation Survey for non-work trips. 2040 mode shares assume an increase in transit service, and the completion of the City's proposed pedestrian and bicycle network, and is estimated using the Alameda CTC Travel Demand Model.

Although the transportation planning focus is shifting to other modes of travel, it is still likely that most trips in the city will continue to be made by motorized vehicles. For these trips, the focus will be on improving transportation efficiency. Projects such as traffic signal synchronization, signal interconnects, electronic messaging signs, and directional signage improvements can improve vehicle flow and direct traffic more efficiently.

Managing transportation demand is also an important part of reducing congestion. Albany has a Trip Reduction Ordinance to promote carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, and walking as commute modes, and to encourage telecommuting and flextime to reduce peak hour trips. Establishments with more than 50 employees are required to provide information to their employees on commute alternatives. Potential incentives for employees include transit fare subsidies, preferential parking for carpool vehicles, BART shuttles, on-site child care facilities, and guaranteed ride home programs for persons working late. Incentives for walking or bicycling to work include bicycle storage facilities, and workplace showers and changing areas. The City also supports infrastructure improvements that make telecommuting more viable, such as expanded fiber optics cabling and cellular facilities.

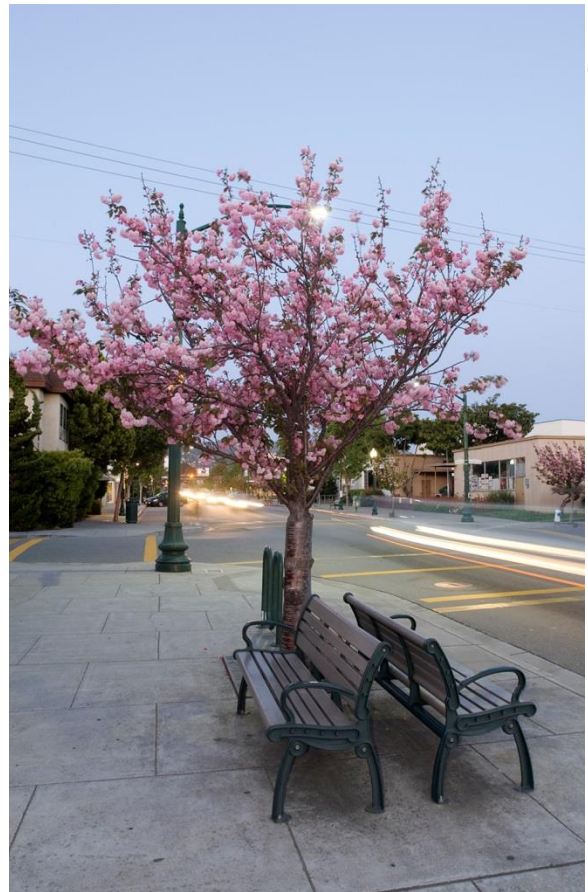


Photo: Doug Davidson

*Streetscape improvements along Solano Avenue*



*Safety banner at Cornell Elementary School*

## E. SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

### Traffic Safety

For the past 30 years, Albany has redesigned roadways, installed traffic signals and stop signs, and established speed limits to reduce hazards and the potential for collisions. Traffic safety hazards disproportionately affect pedestrians and bicyclists. The City regularly monitors collision data to identify potential hazards and develop new traffic control solutions. It also sponsors educational events to encourage awareness of hazards and traffic laws, as well as responsible cycling and walking.

The Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) is the most readily available source for collision data. Table 4-4 summarizes the street segments where most accidents took place between 2008 and 2012. Not surprisingly, collisions are most frequent on the corridors with the highest volumes, particularly San Pablo Avenue, Solano Avenue, Buchanan Street, and Marin Avenue.

One of the City's top priorities is to improve the safety of students walking to and from school. Albany participates in the national Safe Routes to School program, which funds projects such as improved crosswalks and signage. A continuing effort must be made to enforce speeding laws, continue the school crossing guard program, and ensure the safety of students at street crossings and along bike routes.

Speeding presents a hazard for all modes of travel. Many drivers routinely exceed the posted speed limits. Moreover, some intersections have inadequate sight distances or confusing design elements which increase the risk of accidents. Other streets may require lighting improvements to address visibility and safety issues. Policies in this General Plan express a strong commitment to work toward improved traffic safety.

Table 4-4: Top Collision Locations, 2008-2012

Vehicle-Vehicle Collisions		Bicycle-Vehicle Collisions		Pedestrian-Vehicle Collisions	
Location	Number of Reported Accidents	Location	Number of Reported Accidents	Location	Number of Reported Accidents
San Pablo Avenue	144	Solano Avenue	16	San Pablo Avenue	15
Marin Avenue	112	San Pablo Avenue	6	Solano Avenue	8
Solano Avenue	78	Buchanan Street	6	Washington Avenue	5
Buchanan Street	46	Portland Avenue	5	Key Route Blvd	4
Washington Avenue	22	Marin Avenue	5	Pierce Street	2
Cleveland Avenue	19	Masonic Avenue	3	Marin Avenue	2
Brighton Avenue	13	Key Route Blvd	2		
Kains Avenue	13	Kains Avenue	2		
Cornell Avenue	12	Jackson Avenue	2		
Jackson Avenue	9	Dartmouth Street	2		
Masonic Avenue	9	Brighton Avenue	2		
Pierce Street	9				
Santa Fe Avenue	9				
Stannage Avenue	9				

Source: SWIRTS data, Febr and Peers, 2014

## Parking

Parking has been an issue in Albany for many years. The city has a large inventory of homes and apartments with no garages or garages that are too small for the number of vehicles owned by residents. Some households use their garages for storage or work space rather than parking. As noted earlier, 58 percent of the city's households have two or more cars—many households park at least one car on the street. Most lots in the City lots are not large enough to add off-street parking spaces, resulting in high on-street parking demand.

In commercial areas, particularly along Solano Avenue, there are only a few parcels large enough for off-street parking. Business patrons often park on residential side streets, competing with residents for available spaces. Businesses on San Pablo Avenue are more likely to have off-street parking lots, but face competing parking demand from multi-family uses along Adams Street and Kains Avenue. Where off-street parking lots do exist, they often detract from the character and aesthetics of the street.

In 1978, Albany voters approved an initiative called “Measure D” that among other things, required that residential uses provide two parking spaces per dwelling unit. This measure has been incorporated into the Planning and Zoning Code. Current practice is to require new residential units, regardless of size, number of bedrooms, or type of housing, to provide two off-street parking spaces. In addition, implementation of the measure requires that parking be provided when additions are made to single-family structures that increase the original floor space by more than 25 percent or 240 square feet (whichever is less).

The Planning and Zoning Code allows a reduction to 1.5 spaces per unit where the Planning and Zoning Commission finds that sufficient on-street parking is available. It also allows the Commission to grant exceptions to the requirement for a second space where certain findings are made. Under state law, reductions are also available for senior housing and affordable housing.

In 2013, the City Council created a Working Group to evaluate Measure D, and explore the possibility of a ballot measure to amend current requirements. The Working Group presented their findings in May 2014, including a recommendation for a 2016 ballot measure.

Short-term recommendations included allowing tandem parking for second units, promotion of car sharing, reducing parking in areas within one-half mile of a BART station, and “unbundling” parking spaces in multi-family projects (giving a tenant or condominium buyer the choice to pay for their parking space separately). Changes to the residential permit parking system and the idea of paid public parking on Solano Avenue also were explored. Other considerations such as requirements for electric vehicle charging stations in multi-family and commercial development will likely be included as zero-emission vehicles become more common and affordable.

If a City-sponsored ballot measure or voter initiative is successful, current parking requirements would likely be replaced with new requirements that are more context sensitive, and which balance other policy objectives such as housing affordability and greenhouse gas reduction. At minimum, parking requirements should be scaled to reflect the number of bedrooms, the proximity to public transit, and target occupancy groups. Greater emphasis on shared parking, spaces for shared cars and bicycles, and new technologies such as mechanical stacked parking, may be incorporated.

In commercial areas, there should be a continued focus on managing the use of existing parking rather than simply increasing the number of spaces. In 2014, the City received a grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission to study parking supply, demand, and use patterns in the city. This is likely to lead to new parking management recommendations, and potentially to adjustments in the parking requirements for different commercial activities.

## Transportation and Neighborhood Livability

Given the large volumes of traffic on Albany’s arterials and the grid configuration of the City streets, motorists sometimes divert from arterials on to local streets to bypass congestion. The City’s transportation policies and implementation programs support keeping through-traffic on arterial streets to the greatest extent possible. Like other cities, Albany has developed a “traffic calming” strategy to reduce the incidence of speeding on local streets and to encourage through-traffic to remain on arterials. Traffic calming can reduce negative effects such as noise, while keeping local streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. It can also improve the quality of the street as a public space and place for interaction between neighbors.



*Traffic calming “island” at Posen Avenue and Ordway Street*

The City has adopted specific guidelines for traffic calming, including a speed hump policy. The City has set up a multi-step process through which a neighborhood can petition for a speed hump on an individual block. The traffic calming guidelines strongly discourage complete closure of a street as a remedy, given the spillover effect this has on nearby streets and the secondary effects on vehicle miles traveled and fuel consumption.

Other solutions to slow down traffic include speed tables, the creation of planter “islands” in intersections, chicanes and curb extensions, tree planting and landscaping, signage, and pavement markings. A number of these measures are planned for the north-south streets between Brighton Avenue and El Cerrito Plaza to discourage “cut-through” trips in and out of El Cerrito on residential streets.

In 2015, the City modified its traffic calming policy to allow “soft” traffic calming options for streets that do not qualify for major changes. Such measures include edge striping, crosswalks, signage, and crosshatch areas which simulate bulbouts or chicanes. The City is currently developing a “toolbox” of traffic calming measures.



*Speed humps are one of several traffic calming strategies*

## Emerging Technology

During the 20-year horizon of this General Plan, technology will continue to reshape the way we travel. Smart phone apps have already revolutionized transportation, with real-time information on traffic conditions and on-demand access to car-sharing, ride-sharing and private taxi services. GPS systems and collision warning systems provide aid to motorists and increased security for vehicle owners. “Intelligent” highways and smart cards have improved roadway efficiency and traffic flow, even as volumes have increased. Vehicles themselves are evolving, with electric buses and cars in mass production and new prototypes such as driverless cars and personal transport vehicles in development. In the last few decades, new technologies have been applied to address air pollution, congestion, safety, speed, security, reliability, energy, and environmental impacts.

In 2015, it is difficult to anticipate the transportation landscape of 2035. Transportation has always been a technology-intensive industry, heavily influenced by advances in science. Continuing research may offer dramatically expanded possibilities. Ultimately, technology may alter travel patterns, travel behavior, and travel choices in ways that cannot be fully understood at present. Albany’s challenge—and the challenge of all cities—will be to monitor emerging patterns and trends, and be prepared to adapt and change. City staff and decision makers must remain aware of coming technological changes so that they can be integrated into local planning.

## F. GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

### GOAL T-1: COMPLETE STREETS

Create and maintain a street network that accommodates all modes of travel, meets the mobility needs of all travelers, and enhances Albany's sense of place.

#### POLICIES

##### **Policy T-1.1: Balancing the Needs of All Users**

Create and maintain “complete streets” that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, movers of commercial goods, emergency responders, persons with disabilities, seniors, children, youth, and families.

##### **Policy T-1.2: Context-Sensitive Design**

Require City departments and other agencies responsible for the design and operation of the street system to be sensitive to the needs of nearby residents, businesses, and institutions. The design of the street network should respect the local physical context, improve the safety of all travelers, and contribute to the city's identity.

##### **Policy T-1.3: Complete Streets Operating Procedures**

Incorporate Complete Streets practices as a routine part of City operations. The planning, design, funding, and implementation of any construction, reconstruction, maintenance, alteration, or repair of the transportation network should consider ways to make streets safer and easier to navigate for all users. Exceptions to this policy may be considered, consistent with the Complete Streets Resolution adopted by the City Council in January 2013.

##### **Policy T-1.4: Complete Streets Design**

Follow locally adopted policies and standards in the design of City streets, including the Active Transportation Plan and the Climate Action Plan, as well as the General Plan. All roadway planning, design, and maintenance projects should be consistent with local bicycle, pedestrian, and transit plans. National, state, or other recognized standards may also be used if the outcome is improved safety, health, vitality, sense of place, and a more balanced transportation system.

##### **Policy T-1.5: Connecting the City**

Ensure that the design of streets and other transportation features helps to connect the city, enhance neighborhood livability, and facilitate safer and more convenient travel between Albany and surrounding communities.

##### **Policy T-1.6: Accessibility**

Improve access throughout the City for persons with disabilities, seniors, and others with mobility limitations. Repairs or improvements to City streets, sidewalks, pathways and trails should include curb cuts, accessible signal buttons, and other improvements which remove barriers to mobility.

##### **Policy T-1.7: Development Review**

Require that future development projects address bicycling and walking access in their project plans, and include provisions to accommodate access by all modes of travel.

*See also Policy T-4.3 and T-6.6 on pavement management and Goals 4, 5 and 6 on safety, traffic management, and other traffic-related issues*



## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

### Action T-1.A: NACTO Standards

Revise the City's street design standards to incorporate the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) recommendations for complete streets, thereby ensuring that road improvements accommodate the needs of all travelers.

### Action T-1.B: Review Process

Continue to provide a public process, including regular meetings of the Albany Traffic and Safety Commission, to solicit public input on the implementation of Complete Streets policies.

### Action T-1.C: Data Collection

Perform periodic evaluations of how well Albany's transportation network is serving each category of users. Baseline data should be collected and periodically monitored so that progress may be measured.

### Action T-1.D: Exceptions to Complete Streets Requirements.

Develop a process for approving exceptions to Complete Streets procedures, including who is allowed to sign off on such exceptions. Written findings for exceptions must be documented in a publicly available memorandum explaining why accommodations for all modes and users were not included.

## GOAL T-2: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

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**Reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources and the emission of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants related to transportation.**

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## POLICIES

### Policy T-2.1: Transit-Oriented Development

Encourage land use patterns and public space designs that support walking, bicycling, and public transit use, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel consumption. Future land use and development choices should maximize opportunities to travel without a car by focusing new growth along walkable, transit-served corridors such as Solano and San Pablo Avenues, and in areas within ½ mile of the El Cerrito Plaza BART station.

*See also Land Use Element policies on achieving a jobs-housing balance and promoting mixed use development combining commercial and residential uses.*

### Policy T-2.2: Connectivity

Improve the ability to travel within Albany and between Albany and other cities using multiple modes of travel (e.g., bicycle and bus, walking and BART, etc.). Barriers to non-auto travel in the City should be reduced and the ability to easily transfer between modes should be improved.

### Policy T-2.3: Low-Emission Vehicles

Encourage the use of low emission or zero emission vehicles, along with the infrastructure to support such vehicles, such as electric vehicle charging stations.

### Policy T-2.4: Carpools, Vanpools, and Shuttles

Encourage measures to reduce single passenger auto travel, such as carpools and vanpools, BART shuttles or circulators, and transit passes for City employees.

### Policy T-2.5: Carsharing and Bike Sharing

Support car sharing and bike sharing programs and consider incentives for establishing and expanding such programs in Albany. \

### Policy T-2.6: Reducing Peak Hour Traffic

Reduce peak-hour traffic through such measures as flex-time by local employers, safe routes to school programs for local students, allowances for home-based business and telecommuting, support for shared offices and incubators, and creating opportunities for residents to work and shop near their homes.

**Policy T-2.7: Evaluating Air Emissions**

Evaluate transportation-related air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions associated with development proposals. Work with applicants to reduce such emissions while supporting infill development.

**Policy T-2.8: Public Health**

Recognize the benefits of a more balanced transportation system, especially more convenient walking and bicycling, for the health and wellness of Albany residents.

**Policy T-2.9: Proactive Role**

Take a proactive role in working with other agencies and jurisdictions regarding sustainable transportation improvements and initiatives to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

**Policy T-2.10: Funding Commitment**

Maintain reliable and sustained funding sources to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system, including funding for enforcement of motor vehicle and cycling laws and the maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities.

**IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS****Action T-2.A: Grant Applications**

Pursue grants and other funding sources which support multi-modal transportation improvements and other measures to reduce transportation emissions.

**Action T-2.B: Outreach and Education**

Develop community outreach and education programs which inform residents of ways they can reduce greenhouse gas emissions through their transportation choices. This should include the use of social media and other internet networking platforms to encourage community participation in carpools, vanpools, ridesharing, bicycling, and other alternative travel modes.

**Action T-2.C: Trip Reduction Ordinance**

Update the City's Trip Reduction Ordinance to reflect current conditions. Consistent with the Ordinance, continue to develop programs and incentives for the use of carpools, staggered work hours, bicycling, walking, and increased use of public transit.

**Action T-2.D: TDM Ordinance**

Create and implement a transportation demand management (TDM) ordinance to reduce peak commute trips and encourage alternatives to solo passenger driving.

**Action T-2.E: City Vehicle Fleet**

Improve the fuel efficiency of the City's vehicle fleet by purchasing low or zero emissions vehicles as gasoline-engine vehicles are retired from service.

**Action T-2.F: 511.org Program**

Continue to support the "511.org" program and other regional initiatives that help residents and workers find carpools, rides home from work, and other alternatives to driving alone. A link to 511.org should be included on the City's website.

**Action T-2.G: Transportation Management Association**

Facilitate the establishment of an Albany Transportation Management Association (TMA) for local employers.

*See also Action T-3.E on funding for sidewalk repair*

**Action T-2.H: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure**

Consider opportunities for on-street, curbside electric vehicle charging stations in future streetscape improvement projects.

**Action T-2.I: Multi-Modal Levels of Service**

Establish multi-modal level of service (MMLOS) standards for arterial streets, and apply these standards in the evaluation of future development proposals and planning studies. In support of the City's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, service standards should utilize vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the primary metric, rather than the total number of trips generated or projected motor vehicle delays.

## GOAL T-3: TRANSPORTATION CHOICE

**Provide the opportunity to safely and conveniently travel through Albany using a variety of travel modes, including walking, bicycling, and public transportation as well as driving.**

### POLICIES

#### Policy T-3.1: Bikeway System

Support development of a bikeway system that meets the needs of commuters and recreation users, reduces vehicle trips, and links residential neighborhoods with BART and regional destinations. Bicycling in Albany should be a viable alternative to driving for most short-distance trips.

#### Policy T-3.2: Designated Bike Network and Improvements

Designate a network of bike paths, lanes, and routes as the primary system for bicyclists traveling through Albany. Improvements to this system, such as bike lanes and signage, should be made in accordance with an official plan for the Albany bicycle system.

#### Policy T-3.3: Intergovernmental Coordination

Coordinate development of Albany's bike network with plans for adjacent cities in order to improve the functionality of the system and create seamless connections across jurisdictional lines.

#### Policy T-3.4: Bike Route Maintenance

Regularly maintain bicycle routes and paths through sweeping, pavement repairs, and vegetation trimming. Encourage public reporting of facilities needing repair or clean-up.

#### Policy T-3.5: Bicycle Parking

Install additional bike racks and bike parking facilities in commercial and civic areas and in other locations where such facilities would help support bicycle use. The need for bicycle parking facilities should be periodically evaluated and at minimum should include locations along Solano and San Pablo Avenues and at high activity bus stops.



*Directional signage on the Ohlone Greenway bike path*

#### Policy T-3.6: Sidewalks and Paths

Improve Albany's network of sidewalks and paths to make the city safer and easier to travel on foot. Sidewalks should be present on all Albany streets, although their design and location may vary based on topography and other factors. Priority walking corridors should be identified and targeted for improvements such as wider sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, curb ramp upgrades, sidewalk parking enforcement, and routine maintenance.

**Policy T-3.7: Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Open Space**

Maintain and enhance trails through open space areas, including the Bay Trail along the shoreline, recreational trails on Albany Hill, trails along Cerrito and Codornices Creeks, and the Ohlone Greenway Trail in the BART Right-of-Way. Where appropriate, developers should be required to dedicate public access easements for trails through designated open space areas.

*See the Recreation and Open Space Element for additional policies on recreational trails*

**Policy T-3.8: Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity**

Improve the connectivity of Albany's pedestrian and bicycle networks by removing obstacles to pedestrian travel and linking major pathways such as the Ohlone Greenway and the Bay Trail to each other and to community facilities.



*Stairway and crosswalk at Jackson Street near Castro Street*

**Policy T-3.9: Bicycle Programs**

Continue to undertake programs and activities to encourage bicycle use and bicycle safety in the city, including bicycle “rodeos,” “Bike to Work Day” events, and programs which stress the health benefits of bicycling.

*Bicycle programs should increase awareness of “rules of the road” for cyclists as well as motorists, and should encourage lawful cycling behavior while also improving the safety of cyclists.*

**Policy T-3.10: Public Transit Service**

Improve public transportation service and transit amenities in Albany so that transit becomes a more reliable alternative to driving. The City will work with AC Transit to provide safe, accessible, convenient bus stops that can be easily accessed on foot or by bicycle. The City will also encourage investment in exclusive transit lanes, limiting parking and curb cuts on major transit routes, synchronization of traffic signals, signal pre-emption devices, curb extensions for bus stops, enforcement of parking rules in bus stops, posting of route information at bus stops, and other measures which increase the attractiveness and comfort of public transportation.

**Policy T-3.11: Transit and Streetscapes**

Incorporate provisions for public transit when undertaking streetscape improvements, including bike lanes, curb extensions, landscaping, benches, and crosswalks.

**Policy T-3.12: Monitoring Transit Needs**

Work with AC Transit to monitor and periodically adjust transit service and bus stop locations. A particular emphasis should be placed on feeder service between Albany and the BART stations at North Berkeley and El Cerrito Plaza.

**Policy T-3.13: UC Village Service**

Encourage AC Transit to continue to provide a route that connects University Village family student housing and the UC Campus.

**Policy T-3.14: Paratransit**

Support the provision of para-transit services for seniors and persons with disabilities, and others with special needs.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

### **Action T-3.A: Active Transportation Plan**

Implement the pedestrian and bicycle projects in the Active Transportation Plan through the City's Capital Improvements Program, specific transportation funding sources, and the General Fund budget for maintenance and operations.

### **Action T-3.B: Bike Parking Ordinance**

Adopt an ordinance that requires new development to provide adequate bike parking for tenants and customers and requires businesses with more than 50 employees to provide end of trip facilities, including showers, lockers, and bike storage facilities. Encourage existing establishments to add such facilities in order to make bicycling a more convenient alternative to driving.

### **Action T-3.C: Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to the Waterfront**

Pursue the long-term development of a grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Union Pacific Railroad and Interstate 80 to better connect Albany to its waterfront. Such a project could be collaboratively funded by multiple jurisdictions. Also, work with the City of Berkeley and Caltrans to facilitate access to the waterfront via Gilman Street.

### **Action T-3.D: Signage System**

Implement the City of Albany Wayfinding Plan for Pedestrians and Bicyclists adopted by the City Council in 2013. The Plan provides coordinated signage for the pedestrian and bicycle network.

### **Action T-3.E: Sidewalk Improvements**

Implement the City sidewalk policy adopted on December 21, 2015. The policy allocates funds for priority repairs, and establishes criteria for allocating future City funds to sidewalks with significant uprooting from street trees, tripping hazards, vertical faults of more than one inch, cracking or deterioration where pedestrian walkability is severely affected, and locations along safe routes to school or priority pedestrian routes. The sidewalk policy will be regularly evaluated to ensure easy, safe pedestrian travel across the city, and a reliable, consistent and equitable funding stream for sidewalk repair. Sidewalk repair should not be solely dependent on construction on adjacent properties or provided only in response to sidewalk damage.

### **Action T-3.F: Bike-Ped Coordinator**

As funding allows, hire a part-time Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator to manage all non-motorized transportation projects and ongoing route maintenance programs.

### **Action T-3.G: Transit Corridors**

Support the official designation of San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue as "major transit corridors" in County and regional transportation plans, and AC Transit service plans. Funding for transit improvements and increased service along these corridors should be strongly supported.

### **Action T-3.H: Transit Gap Study**

Conduct a public transit gap study that evaluates local transit needs, analyzes strategies for increasing transit use, and identifies funding sources for transit improvements. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of a local circulator that connects destinations within Albany to nearby BART stations.

**Action T-3.I: Bus Stop Improvements**

Work with AC Transit to ensure that bus waiting areas are located in appropriate locations and are designed to maximize rider comfort and safety. Waiting areas should be improved and relocated as needed, especially in high activity locations such as San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue. Additional investment should be made in bus shelters in these locations, providing transit riders with shade, weather protection, seating, lighting, bike parking, route information, and a clean place to wait.

**Action T-3.J: Bus to BART**

Work with AC Transit and BART to reduce the waiting time associated with transferring from AC Transit buses to BART, and vice versa, and to make trips using the two systems as seamless as possible.

**Action T-3.K: Active Transportation Plan Updates**

Update the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) every five years, as required by Caltrans, to reflect new policies and ensure eligibility for funding. Changes to the designations of bicycle and pedestrian routes made through the ATP do not require an amendment to the General Plan, but should be incorporated in future General Plan updates or amendments.

**Action T-3.L: Bike Sharing**

Position Albany for funding and participation in the next segment of the regional bikeshare system.

**GOAL T-4: TRAFFIC SAFETY**

**Improve the safety of all modes of travel, taking particular care to reduce the rate of injury accidents for bicycles and pedestrians.**

**POLICIES****Policy T-4.1: Accident Data**

Collect, analyze, and periodically report out on data on traffic accidents. When prioritizing capital improvement projects, place the highest priority on those that would reduce the potential for such accidents, particularly those involving pedestrians or bicycles.

**Policy T-4.2: Enforcement**

Strictly enforce traffic safety and speed laws for all modes of travel, taking special care to protect the rights of pedestrians and bicyclists on local streets.

**Policy T-4.3: Preventive Maintenance**

Continue to undertake preventive maintenance activities on sidewalks, streets, paths, and bike routes and ensure that such facilities are kept in a condition that minimizes accident risks. This should include trimming of trees and other vegetation along local streets to address visibility constraints.

**Policy T-4.4: Crosswalks**

Designate, stripe, and maintain a system of pedestrian crosswalks, and take appropriate street lighting, signage, and enforcement measures to ensure the safety of persons using these crosswalks

**Policy T-4.5: Education on Safety Laws**

Provide educational opportunities for Albany staff and residents to better understand the legal rights and responsibilities of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Policy T-4.6: School Safety**

Work with the Albany Unified School District to identify key improvements and initiatives that would facilitate safer walking and bicycling to school.

**Policy T-4.7: Pedestrian-Vehicle Interface**

Design the pedestrian circulation system to minimize the number of times that walkers, runners, and other modes of active transportation need to stop for cross traffic.

**Policy T-4.8: Personal Safety**

Enhance personal safety for pedestrians by providing adequate lighting along sidewalks and other walkways, keeping vegetation properly trimmed, and taking other measures to reduce the potential for street crime.

**Policy T-4.9: Street Lighting**

Periodically assess street lighting needs and maintenance of street light facilities to ensure a high level of visibility for all travelers. Funds for new and replacement street lights should be set aside as part of the Capital Improvement Program.

**Policy T-4.10: Emergency Vehicles**

Provide adequate access for emergency vehicles as development takes place and as road modifications are completed. The Albany Police and Fire Departments should participate in development review and transportation planning to ensure that adequate access is provided.

*Painted curbs should be used as needed to limit parking in areas where emergency vehicle access is needed or where vehicle parking would impede traveler safety.*

**IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS****Action T-4.A: Annual Safety Report**

Annually evaluate collision data to determine trends and potential improvements. Produce an annual report that summarizes the data, identifies “hot spots,” and includes recommendations to improve safety.

**Action T-4.B: Parking on Sidewalks**

Enforce ordinances prohibiting the parking of vehicles on sidewalks.

**Action T-4.C: Safety Education**

Work with the school district, parents, businesses, and other community institutions to enhance awareness of pedestrian safety laws and modify driver behavior.

**Action T-4.D: School Pick-Up and Drop-Off**

Continue to study and implement programs which reduce conflicts associated with drop off/ pick-up of children at local schools, including private schools and child care facilities as well as public schools.

**Action T-4.E: Safe Routes to School**

Pursue continued funding for Safe Routes to School programs and projects.

**Action T-4.F: Pedestrian Crossings**

Consider funding and implementation of new pedestrian crossing treatments on San Pablo Avenue, Solano Avenue, and Marin Avenue/Buchanan Street

**Action T-4.G: Streetlight Intensity**

Adjust street lighting levels on priority pedestrian routes and transit corridors to ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Energy conservation and “dark sky” objectives should be balanced with the objective of encouraging safe travel and good visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

**GOAL T-5: MANAGING TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS****Minimize the adverse effects of vehicle traffic on Albany's neighborhoods.****POLICIES****Policy T-5.1: Residential Arterials**

Recognize the dual function of arterial streets such as Buchanan Street and Marin Avenue to carry relatively high traffic volumes while also providing access to individual homes. Use landscaping, speed controls, and other streetscape improvements to create a more attractive environment, facilitate pedestrian crossings, and mitigate the impacts of vehicle traffic in such locations.

**Policy T-5.2: Kains and Adams Access**

Ensure that development along the San Pablo Avenue corridor is designed to minimize adverse traffic, parking, and circulation impacts on Kains Avenue and Adams Street.

*See also Land Use Policy 2.7 regarding access limitations from Kains Avenue and Adams Street to non-residential uses.*

**Policy T-5.3: Regional Traffic on Local Streets**

Support measures to reduce and better manage traffic resulting from vehicles using Albany surface streets to avoid freeway congestion. Encourage traffic to and from major employment centers such as the University of California and Downtown Berkeley to stay on Interstate 80 to the appropriate exit.

**Policy T-5.4: Managing Through-Traffic**

Focus motor vehicle through-traffic on arterial and collector streets rather than on local streets. Traffic calming measures may be used to encourage drivers to use arterials and collectors, and to discourage aggressive driving, disproportionately high volumes, and excessive speed on local streets. As appropriate and as a last resort, street closures to motor vehicles may be considered as a means of directing traffic to designated arterial and collector streets.

**Policy T-5.5: Streetscape Improvements**

Undertake streetscape improvement programs to beautify the city and reduce the degree to which major streets create real or perceived barriers within the community.

**Policy T-5.6: Traffic Calming**

Consider the use of road features such as speed humps, speed trailers, traffic diverters, traffic circles, medians, and other methods to limit through-traffic and reduce speeds on residential streets. Implementation of such measures should be subject to a public process and should consider the potential impacts to adjacent streets due to changed travel patterns.

*Thresholds such as decreases in vehicle traffic volume and increases in pedestrian and bicycle volumes should be used to evaluate appropriate traffic calming measures.*

**Policy T-5.7: Truck Routes**

Limit the intrusion of truck traffic into residential areas by designating and signing specific streets as truck routes and enforcing weight limits on all City streets.

**Policy T-5.8: Sidewalk Cafes**

Maintain Municipal Code provisions allowing outdoor seating on public sidewalks, provided that seating does not interfere with pedestrian movement and that the approval is subject to a revocable encroachment permit and applicable zoning clearance requirements.

**Policy T-5.9: Hillside Sidewalks**

On streets that traverse the slopes of Albany Hill, allow variations from conventional sidewalk standards which reduce the need for grading but still support continuous pedestrian circulation.





*Pedestrian walkway at University Village*

#### **Policy T-5.10: UC Village Circulation**

Provide a safe, pedestrian-oriented circulation system within UC Village that emphasizes walking, bicycling, and transit use; decreases internal vehicle traffic, accommodates recreational trips, reinforces a sense of community, and is seamlessly integrated with Albany's transportation system.

### **IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS**

#### **Action T-5.A: Traffic Calming Procedures**

Maintain and periodically update a formal process for residents to initiate traffic calming requests for local streets. The process should include a series of steps which include evaluation of the street against specific physical design criteria, consultation with the Traffic and Safety Commission, volume and speed surveys, resident petitions, and post-improvement evaluations

#### **Action T-5.B: Washington Avenue Traffic**

Evaluate the degree to which vehicles from areas east of San Pablo Avenue are using Washington Avenue as a "short-cut" to the Buchanan/I-80 interchange, and take steps to reduce speeding and other traffic violations on this route.

#### **Action T-5.C: Traffic Calming in Area South of El Cerrito Plaza**

As appropriate, undertake a series of traffic calming measures on the 400 blocks of Kains, Stannage, Cornell, Talbot, and Avenues, and on Brighton Avenue between San Pablo Avenue and Key Route Boulevard. The intent of these measures is to reduce speeds, improve safety, create a welcoming environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users of the street, and appropriately direct traffic associated with development in the El Cerrito Plaza area and North Central Albany to arterial and collector streets.

#### **Action T-5.D: Truck Route Signage**

Install truck route signs as needed to identify designated truck routes in the city. Provide information on designated truck routes to major employers and to delivery and trucking companies using Albany streets.

#### **Action T-5.E: Code Amendment for Hillside Sidewalks**

Amend Municipal Code 20.24.040(F)(10) to eliminate provisions discouraging sidewalks on hillside streets.

#### **Action T-5.F: Projects in Nearby Cities**

Monitor planned and newly constructed transportation projects in nearby cities to evaluate impacts and determine the need for mitigation in Albany.

#### **Action T-5.G: Development Impact Fees**

Update development impact fees for capital facilities, including transportation. The feasibility of a separate transportation impact fee may be considered through this process. Revenue from such a fee could be used for multi-modal improvements, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, complete streets, and motorized vehicle flow projects.

## GOAL T-6: MOTORIZED VEHICLE FLOW

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**Provide for the safe and efficient flow of motor vehicle traffic.**

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### POLICIES

#### **Policy T-6.1: Road Hierarchy**

Maintain a network of arterial, collector, and local streets that safely and efficiently moves motorized and non-motorized vehicle traffic through Albany. Engineering and design standards for each road type should reflect function, road volumes, and the characteristics of adjacent uses, and should be consistent with the Complete Streets policies in Goal T-1 and the bicycle and pedestrian policies in Goal T-3.

#### **Policy T-6.2: Monitoring Road Performance**

Monitor critical road segments and intersections to determine where traffic improvements may be needed. When such locations are identified, develop plans to address them and incorporate them into the City's Capital Improvement Program.

#### **Policy T-6.3: Transportation Efficiency**

Undertake improvements which manage lane capacity more efficiently and avoid the need to widen roads or add lanes. Examples of such projects include signal interconnect projects, directional signage, and "intelligent transportation systems" providing real-time information on congestion and travel conditions.

#### **Policy T-6.4: Interstate Improvements**

Coordinate with Caltrans on future planning, construction, repair, maintenance, and mitigation activities along I-80, I-580, around the Buchanan Street interchange, and along San Pablo Avenue (SR 123).

#### **Policy T-6.5: Development-Related Improvements**

Require the completion of traffic studies to address the effects of new development, including the improvements needed to accommodate increased traffic or changes in traffic patterns. Based on the findings, collect the appropriate fees needed to complete the improvements and maintain satisfactory operating conditions.

#### **Policy T-6.6: Maintenance**

Provide adequate funding to maintain pavement, curbs, signage, signals, and other transportation facilities in good operating condition.

#### **Policy T-6.7: Signal Timing and Lane Configurations**

Consider modifications to signal timing and turning lanes as necessary to maintain traffic flow through Albany's signalized intersections.

#### **Policy T-6.8: Construction Traffic**

Require traffic management plans for major construction projects, and ensure that those plans address bicyclists and pedestrians.

#### **Policy T-6.9: Levels of Service**

On major corridors such as San Pablo Avenue and Solano Avenue, evaluate the performance of the transportation network using metrics that not only consider automobile speed and delay but other factors, such as vehicle miles traveled and the volume of transit passengers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

#### **Policy T-6.10: Coordination with Berkeley, Richmond, and El Cerrito**

Coordinate traffic planning and road improvements with the cities of Berkeley, Richmond, and El Cerrito. Work collaboratively to manage congestion that may impact Albany streets as a result of development in these cities.

#### **Policy T-6.11: Regional Improvements**

As appropriate and in partnership with other jurisdictions, participate in the funding and development of regional transportation improvements proportional to the demand associated with Albany residents and businesses.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

### Action T-6.A: Integrated Corridor Mobility

Participate in the I-80 Integrated Corridor Mobility Project, which includes ramp metering and signal coordination in Albany.

### Action T-6.B: San Pablo Avenue Jurisdiction

Consider the feasibility of transferring responsibility for San Pablo Avenue from Caltrans to the City of Albany, taking into considerations the potential costs and benefits to the City.

## GOAL T-7: PARKING

**Balance the need for vehicle parking with the goal of reducing auto dependence and achieving more sustainable development.**

## POLICIES

### Policy T-7.1: Parking Management

Develop comprehensive parking management strategies which maximize the efficient use of available on-street and off-street parking spaces.

### Policy T-7.2: Balancing Supply and Demand

Consider timed parking limits, residential parking permits, parking benefit districts, paid public parking, more stringent parking enforcement, and other methods to address parking in locations where demand exceeds supply during all or part of the day. When modifying parking regulations, consider the potential impact on adjacent residential streets.

### Policy T-7.3: Parking Standards

Adopt residential parking standards which consider factors such as the number of bedrooms in the unit, proximity to transit, the availability of on-street parking, and the characteristics of occupants (e.g., seniors, families, etc.), rather than applying a “one-size-fits-all” standard.

### Policy T-7.4: Shared Parking

Encourage shared parking agreements so that adjacent or nearby uses with different demand characteristics can utilize the same parking spaces.

### Policy T-7.5: Mechanical Lifts

Allow innovative methods of accommodating parking demand such as mechanical parking lifts.

### Policy T-7.6: Car-Share and Bike-Share Parking

Consider incentives or requirements to include parking for car-share vehicles and shared bicycles in new mixed use development. Also consider preferential parking or dedicated curbside spaces for shared vehicles and shared ride services.

### Policy T-7.7: Design of Surface Parking

On larger development sites where off-street surface parking lots are required, parking should be located to the rear or side of the building rather than between the building and the street. Site plans in which surface parking dominates the site or the street frontage are strongly discouraged.

### Policy T-7.8: Unbundling

Allow unbundled multi-family parking, so that owners or buyers of multi-family units may opt out of having their own parking space and pay a lower rent or sales price in exchange.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

### Action T-7.A: Citywide Parking Analysis

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of parking supply and demand in Albany. This analysis should become the foundation for new parking standards which are more responsive to actual conditions and needs.

*The City initiated a parking study in 2015 and expects to have a set of recommendations in place by early 2016. The analysis should also be used to inform future decisions about parking, such as the feasibility of residential permit parking in specific locations, and changes to the way parking is priced and managed.*

### Action T-7.B: Parking Ballot Measure

Support and advance a ballot measure to modify Albany Measure D so that parking standards are consistent with other City goals, including the goal of reducing carbon footprints and increasing housing affordability. A variety of options for modifying the parking standards should be considered, based on public opinion and data collection on parking supply and demand.

*See the Housing Element for policies on the use of State Density Bonus parking standards for affordable housing development.*

### Action T-7.C: Measure D Working Group

Consider additional recommendations of the Measure D Working Group regarding parking, including the possibility of a fee for parking exceptions and waivers, allowing parklets in commercial areas, and the use of metered or time-restricted parking in high demand areas.

### Action T-7.D: Commercial Parking Standards

Evaluate Albany's commercial parking requirements relative to best practices around the country and determine whether changes to these requirements should be considered.

*The evaluation should consider the dimensional requirements for parking spaces and aisles as well as the number of spaces required. Parking strategies which are market-driven and consider the true cost of parking should be considered.*

### Action T-7.E: Solano Avenue Parking Management

Develop a parking management plan for the Solano Avenue commercial district which includes provisions for patron parking, employee parking, and parking for persons living on or near Solano Avenue.

*Among the options that should be considered are additional angled parking spaces in lieu of parallel parking on side streets, parking time limits on side streets, and the designation of employee parking in lower demand areas, and a partnership with AUSD and Solano Avenue businesses to use the Cornell School parking lot on weekends. Parking management should also consider the possibility for development of municipal parking, funded through creation of a parking district or incorporated in future mixed use development.*

### Action T-7.F: Second Units

Consider creating a category of second units in which occupancy is deed-restricted to tenants without cars (or with shared car subscriptions) as a way to permit additional second units without providing off-street parking.