

City of Albany

405 KAINS AVENUE • ALBANY, CALIFORNIA 94706

September 30, 2009

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CITY COUNCIL

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FAX (510) 524-8940
- Teen Center
PH. (510) 525-0576

AC Transit Board Director
1600 Franklin Street,
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Board of Directors,

As Mayor of the City of Albany, I am writing on behalf of the members of my community who are transit users and who would be impacted by the proposed service adjustments that AC Transit is considering implementing in the near future.

On September 3, 2009 the Traffic and Safety Commission held a Special Meeting to discuss the proposed service adjustments that your agency is considering. While we thoroughly understand the budgetary pressures every public agency in California is going through at these times, we also have to seek the fulfillment of the basic transit needs of our community, particularly those in the senior population residing along Pierce Street. In most cases, these residents have given up driving and rely on AC Transit to go about their daily living. They often attend events at the Senior Center or at the Albany Library, or just do their daily shopping at grocery stores on Solano Avenue.

AC Transit has proposed to split Line 18 and introduce Line 10, which would serve Albany to downtown Oakland via Solano Avenue. A goal of Albany residents along Pierce Street is to travel to destinations along Solano Avenue without the burden of a transfer. In the proposal, they have to transfer at UC Village to go to destinations along Solano Avenue, sometimes less than a mile away. The City recommends shorter transit trips, which connect residents with shopping areas, be maintained primarily because such trips made by car deteriorate air quality. Many of these riders are senior citizens who are unable to travel by foot over the hilly topography of the areas surrounding Albany Hill. Transferring buses is a deterrent to these residents who wish to shop and conduct their daily social interactions, particularly during winter months when it gets dark early in the evening, and is often wet and windy.

One option to accomplish a direct trip to Solano Avenue from Pierce Street is to have every other bus on the proposed Line 10 deviate to Pierce Street, El Cerrito Plaza and Solano Avenue. By doing so, the desired connection is established at least every 30 minutes. Another proposed change involves a split of Line 52L

The City of Albany is dedicated to maintaining its small town ambience, responding to the needs of the community, and providing a safe, healthy environment now and in the future.



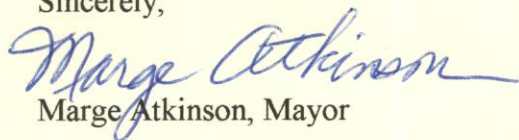
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with the introduction of a new Line 25. This new line would serve Pierce Street in Albany, El Cerrito Plaza and Downtown Berkeley BART. If the option for Route 10 presented above is feasible, Line 25 could be discontinued in the Albany area thereby achieving a savings to AC Transit.

Finally, the elimination of weekend transit service along important destinations in Albany, such as UC Village and Pierce Street, is detrimental to our community. This proposal would also affect local merchants whose businesses depend on local patrons, as well as those coming from neighboring cities. Again, if the change to the proposed Line 10 can be accomplished, service to Pierce Street, El Cerrito Plaza BART and Solano Avenue could be maintained during the weekends, even at the proposed reduced frequency of 20 minutes, which means that every 40 minutes, one bus would deviate to West Albany, El Cerrito Plaza BART Station, and continue to Solano Avenue.

I urge you to please consider implementing the modifications to the proposed Line 10 described above to provide the transit connection between West Albany (Pierce Street), Solano Avenue and the shopping districts in Berkeley through one bus line and to keep the some level of transit service for the weekends. Albany riders are more likely to adjust to less frequent transit service than to a new route alignment that does not respond to the transit needs of our community. Our City enjoys economic vitality thanks in part to the high level of transit service your agency provides. Keep the synergy going!

Sincerely,



Marge Atkinson, Mayor