

South Broadway Complete Streets Project

Public Comments and Responses

A virtual public meeting for the South Broadway Complete Streets Project (EA 01-0K940) was held on February 16, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to share preliminary project design and provide an opportunity for questions and comments from the public. Public comments were accepted from February 16 to March 2, 2023. While a public meeting and public comment period were not required by CEQA, Caltrans values the input from the public, local business owners, local agencies, and other organizations when designing new public facilities.

Responses to comments were developed with input from the Caltrans Project Development Team.

1. McCullen Avenue bus stop

Comment 1-1

From: Tom Fowle

We live on McCullen just off Broadway and make very frequent use of the northbound ETS and RTS stops. This stop allows convenient access to Winco foods, downtown Eureka, the university "Library Circle", and via a transfer to the Green line, access to the St Joseph's medical area. If this stop is moved a block north, we must cross Highland, not only will our trips from and to home be made longer, but we will be forced to cross access driveways to the gas station on the corner of Broadway and Highland as well as avoiding risk from vehicles entering or exiting Broadway and Highland.

As a totally blind traveler, I find crossing gas station entrances/exits to be one of the most hazardous aspects of travel. along with intersections where vehicles turn into and out of the intersecting streets particularly without an audible signal, but dangerous and unacceptable in either case. Also, I have been made aware that there are plans to move the University "library circle" bus stop. I understand the proposed RTS stop maybe as far as a half mile farther from the library and music buildings. Most people using RTS to access the campus will be badly inconvenienced and may have to take an earlier bus to arrive in time for their classes, and to take a later bus to get home.

I strongly protest these planned moves because they will spoil current convenient access to the buses, and will have a negative safety influence on travelers in the Broadway and McCullen area and on and around the University campus.

Response 1-1

Caltrans has carefully considered requests to keep the bus stop locations at McCullen and Broadway. With the help of engineers and our Design team, the team agreed that bus stops will not be substantially moved as a part of this project, which represents a change since the presentation at the public meeting.

Caltrans Design staff and HTA have discussed the bus stop locations further, and the southbound bus stop would remain in its present location, and the northbound bus stop would be moved closer to the McCullen Ave intersection and widened to accommodate

the proposed Class IV bikeway. New bus stops would still be constructed near Pierson's and Tetrault Tire.

The location of bus stops on the Cal Poly Humboldt University campus are outside the scope of this project. However, Humboldt Transit Authority has confirmed that as of March 16, 2023, there are no plans to move the Library Circle bus stop location. Thank you for participating in our public process.

Comment 1-2

From: Susan Fowle

My husband and I have been home owners and residents in Eureka since 2013, live close to McCullen and Broadway, and have used ETS and RTS with gratitude since that time. We do not have a car. We have told friends who ask that the bus system allows us to get to many destinations in this area. Access to the bus stops at McCullen and Broadway (both north- and south- bound) has felt safe for both of us. We are in our mid-70's, and Tom is totally blind and lately has had other medical problems. We use ETS for shopping at Winco, getting to the St Joseph area for appointments, and many other activities. We use RTS for some Old Town area needs and to get to Cal Poly Humboldt, Library Circle, for classes, concerts, etc.

We are therefore deeply concerned about the plan to move the McCullen/Broadway stops: we can walk to the current NB (northbound) stop without crossing any streets. This is especially important for Tom, as a totally blind traveler. I haven't needed to worry about him walking to the bus stop on his own. If the NB stop is moved north, we would have the hazards of getting past the gas stations driveways, with all the car and truck traffic in and out, plus the intersection of Highland (more traffic). As a sighted pedestrian, I need to be very careful about all the traffic, and I would definitely worry about Tom getting to the bus stop by himself safely. We would also need to walk farther carrying heavy grocery loads home.

Most of the other bus patrons we see approaching the NB McCullen/Broadway stop come from south of the stop, so all these people would also need to cross the perilous gas station and Highland traffic. There is an excellent NB bus pull-in lane now, plus a bus shelter. Southbound, we understand the lane would only need to be widened by a foot to allow traffic to pass when the bus is stopped.

Please keep the NB McCullen/Broadway stop where it is. Don't put your bus patrons in greater jeopardy by moving the stop. We also use the SB RTS to get home from Old Town, Humboldt Library, and other points north, and to get to CR (we got some of our covid vaccinations there), etc. Again, moving that stop makes a longer walk for us. For safety's sake, I don't walk home after dark. There will be times I would have to catch an earlier bus to avoid this danger – that shortens the time for activities.

Cal Poly Humboldt Library Circle stop. A bus driver just told me there are plans to move or eliminate the Library Circle stop. This is a disaster for everyone using the RTS to get to or from the campus. The current stop is convenient to get to classes on time, the Library, concerts, etc. Moving the stop a half mile or more away makes it likely the bus passenger will need to catch an earlier bus to get to class, and to take a later bus home.

Tom sometimes takes the RTS to meet me at the campus. Depending on my schedule, he may walk to the music building. I would worry a lot more if he had to walk even farther, that he stands a greater chance of getting lost.

We have greatly appreciated the convenience of the buses, and have expressed that to friends. If the changes to the Broadway/McCullen and Library Circle stops are made, we would be much less likely to be able to express appreciation. We would instead lament the loss, as we currently lament the lack of any Sunday service. Public transit needs the good will and support of patrons and potential users. Your planned moves will have a deleterious effect.

Response 1-2

Please see Response 1-1. Thank you for participating in the public process.

2. Open house

Comment 2-1

From: Rick Knapp

I attended the virtual meeting tonight. I feel strongly that a physical open house should be conducted some time in the future. While Jeff did an excellent job explaining the project and answering questions, clarity of the proposal is seriously impacted by viewing at home. I have a 27" monitor, and once I noticed the zoom feature, I was able to zoom in on layouts, but still ended up with about 8 x 11" layout, very difficult to distinguish features. Before I noticed the zoom feature, I was looking at about 6 x 8" layouts. Most attendees were likely on laptops looking at a layout about 3 x 5". With a physical open house, with large displays, all attendees can get answers to questions and get clarifications. That happens to a very limited degree in the virtual meeting, when displays are shown one after the other and no real opportunity to zero in areas of interest. All questions are raised at the end instead of when one is looking at a particular display at an open house and can ask questions of CT reps.

Response 2-1

Thank you for your comments. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Caltrans District 1 transitioned to holding most public meetings virtually. Virtual meetings have many advantages:

- Virtual meetings tend to have more members of the public attend.
- Virtual meetings are recorded and placed on the project webpage.
- During a virtual meeting, all attendees can hear all questions and answers.

We appreciate your feedback as we are trying to make virtual public meetings more useful and accessible. For example, based on this feedback, layouts shown in future virtual public meetings will be broken into shorter sections of highway, allowing greater magnification, when feasible.

Future project updates will be posted to the project web page at:

<https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-1/d1-projects/d1-south-broadway>

3. Curb islands/Left turn lanes

Comment 3-1

From: Amos, Pure Water Spas

We are not sure we will be able to attend the meeting on this topic, so I am reaching out via email. The biggest concern from Pure Water Spas is the removal of the center turn lane that is used frequently by us, our customers and many of our delivery drivers.

In your previous email the attached plan incorporates a "Raised Curb Island" that extends to the edge of the primary Hilfiker property line. Our store is physically located in the Hilfiker lot to the north of the island, however our customer parking (red box in attached picture) is technically located on the Hilfiker lot to the South of our store. In my opinion the island looks like it was designed with the lot line (blue line in picture) taken into account as the "end of the island", however this location would completely stop all northbound traffic from entering our lot. This would have a large direct impact on our business.

When I looked at the new "final" plan it seems the plan may have been changed to a smaller "Raised Refuge Island", in the diagram this looks to more or less only protect the width of the crosswalk and would not impact our customers as much. I want to reach out and see if we can get clarification on this topic.

I apologize for the rushed picture as a visual aid, but I think it gets the point across. Should I also reach out to cari.williams@dot.ca.gov after Feb 16th when the public comment period starts? Thank you for your time on this matter.

Response 3-1

Thank you for contacting us. Currently, the project design is about 35% complete. Designs will continue to be refined until the project is sent out for construction bids, currently scheduled for mid-2024.

Your concerns have been noted, and Caltrans can confirm that the nearby curb island (designed to be mountable by emergency vehicles) was shifted south of your driveway. This modified curb island location should not significantly impede drivers turning into or out of your business.

4. Papa and Barkley

Comment 4-1

From: Michael Kraft

Hello,

I work for Papa & Barkley, and I sat in on the web briefing on this project last evening. I have a few notes and questions. As background, we own the property at 4325 Broadway, near the southern end of the project area, referred to in the presentation as "the Papa and Barkley intersection."

- We are good with the acceleration/deceleration lanes giving way to bike lanes.

- We may be able to be helpful when it comes to staging at times with this project. That large parking lot at 4325 Broadway proves to be a community asset at times.
- I want to understand how it will work with the proposal to cut the outbound turn lanes from the lot from two to one. The usefulness of the parking lot to the community will potentially be harmed by this. As an example, the key Humboldt County food bank, Food For People, has used that lot for its Thanksgiving food distribution. 400 cars came and went in a few hours and, even with two outbound lanes, it was very difficult to manage the traffic flow. The City of Eureka has proposed events in this lot, such as part of the Street Arts Festival (while the specific event being considered currently will take place prior to project construction, it remains a good example of a heavy use of the parking lot). I don't think we will be able to accommodate some larger events like these after the project, if I understand correctly how the traffic flow out will work. Even though we are moving a couple of new operations into the building, and some additional employees, I don't see this as more than an inconvenience on a regular workday. It is for wider community use where I see potentially unfortunate impacts.
- I would propose that one or more representatives of the project staff meet with 2 or 3 of us from Papa & Barkley at the site in the next couple of weeks and talk more concretely. Honestly, I may be worrying over nothing.

I appreciate your attention.

Response 4-1

Thank you for your comments. Ingress to the business (entering the parking lot) would not be changed by this project. With a shared left or right turn lane, egress (leaving the lot and entering U.S. 101/Broadway) may take slightly longer, but outgoing traffic would not hinder traffic on U.S 101/Broadway. The new configuration should not hinder use of the parking lot for large public events. Permits may help with traffic control for large events. As design progresses, project and permit staff would welcome an informational meeting with you.