



Estuary Crossing Study

creating connections • linking communities

phase one workshop report

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PREPARED BY



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phase one workshop report

In April 2008, the City of Alameda held the first in a series of community meetings to help identify potential alternatives for a bicycle/pedestrian estuary crossing between downtown Oakland and west Alameda.

The meetings, funded by the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA), Caltrans, the City of Alameda, and the City of Oakland, were held on Thursday, April 10 from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center in Oakland and on Saturday, April 12 from 10 am to 12 pm at Pasta Pelican Restaurant in west Alameda.

workshop format

At the April meetings, community members had an opportunity to assess project opportunities and challenges and weigh in on some of the alternatives being considered.

Both meetings began with a brief presentation by the project team on the project background and key issues and opportunities. Participants then had an opportunity to ask any questions they had and participate in a visioning exercise to craft a vision for the future crossing. The meetings closed with an opportunity to visit with project team members

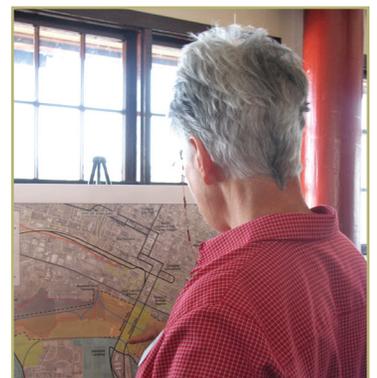
and view maps and other graphic information more closely in an open house format.

The two meetings featured identical content to ensure that all participants received the same information and had the same opportunity to provide feedback. Refreshments were served at both meetings, and a Cantonese interpreter was available at the Oakland meeting.

participant feedback

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

- Suggested crossing alternatives included bridge, water shuttle, loaner boat fleet, and improvements to existing Posey Tube path
- Create a direct route to downtown Oakland
- Minimize air pollution of new estuary crossing
- Address all bicyclist/pedestrian types and trips and potential user conflicts
- Crossing should have a low cost to user—there are many low-income bicyclists and pedestrians
- Create a visually pleasing and pleasant crossing
- Develop a quick, reliable, safe, and convenient solution



Top: Participants confer with one another at the Oakland workshop.

Above: A participant learns more about the project area at the Alameda workshop.

VISION

Overall

- Aspire to become League of American Bicyclist cities
- Scenic, beautiful, inviting to bicyclists
- Family-friendly
- Moving people, not vehicles
- Make it pleasant and enjoyable!
- Inspire exercise

Design

- Elegant, simple, no cars (e.g., Bay Farm)
- Shuttle with multiple stops on both sides
- Urban setting—acknowledge and accommodate
- Paddle boat that accommodates bicycles
- Another dedicated tube (“mystery third tube”)?
- Improved tube
- Lanes to calm/manage cyclists

and pedestrians

- Drawbridge?
- Visual prominence and architectural significance to elevate the status of bicycling and walking
- Design is different for recreational use versus commute use—consider both.
- People movers, bike programs (such as those in Barcelona and Paris), rowboats, etc.—visionary!
- Bike shuttle
- Accommodate motor bikes

Access

- Multi-access with space
- Wheelchair access
- Accommodate people with impaired mobility
- Consider elderly and individuals with disabilities—should be accessible and meet ADA requirements.
- Elevator?
- With a ferry, there should be easy access to ferry landing

Cost

- Free
- Any shuttle should be free or very low-cost—but free may not be the right solution, either.
- If the crossing is free, it could itself become a destination

Frequency

- Quick and reliable—no waiting!
- Frequency is key—multi-stop shuttle shouldn’t compromise this.
- Bridge is 24/7 option—always there

Below: Participants listen to the presentation at the Alameda workshop.



Environmental Impact

- Clean air concerns (zero emission!)
- Air quality in tube
- Option should not harm air quality

Safety/Maintenance

- Maintenance and safety are key!
- Simpler is better—less maintenance

Location

- Direct connection, especially for cyclists
- Bay Trail connection
- Connect to shopping opportunities
- Route for cyclists: continuous, not circuitous, no jogs, etc.
- Need more destinations—little draws people to Jack London Square

Models

- Vancouver water taxi as a model
- Redding pedestrian/bicycle bridge as a model
- Ft. Lauderdale water shuttle

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Capitalize on existing infrastructure (e.g., Ferry Building in Oakland)
- Consider creative financing
- Consider mixed use projects nearby
- Connect highest density to highest density
- Balance negative and positive impacts for businesses along the estuary (e.g., Commodore)—get businesses behind the project!
- Crossing overhead seems infea-



sible—maybe underwater?

- Consider council decision making, funding, etc.—keep it practical!
- A big issue is the I-880 traffic—limited capacity!
- Consider safety—the presence of others
- How much usage will the crossing see? Consider cost versus usage, commuters versus recreational users, etc.
- Questionnaire: would you use a crossing, and for what purpose? Capture users who don't exist now!
- Consider economics
- Transit versus bike/pedestrian: need separation
- Maybe multiple modes for multiple users
- Bus/transit not always best option for cyclists with bags, etc.
- In the future, AC Transit will likely put routes where there are riders



Top: The view of Oakland from the Alameda side of the estuary.

Bottom: Participants' bikes lined the railing outside the Alameda workshop.



Above: A cyclist examines a map at the Oakland workshop.

- Suburban-to-urban transition: how to ease bikers in safely?

QUESTION & ANSWERS

- What is cyclist versus pedestrian priority? *They're equal.*
- Will the project consider integration of existing transportation demand management (TDM) programs and funding? *In the future, yes (in Alameda—not yet in Oakland).*
- Does Oakland have the sense that this is an Alameda issue that Alameda should resolve? *Somewhat, as evidenced by the lawsuit brought by Oakland Chinatown.*
- How do you get people to the crossing? *This is part of the analysis—it's a critical issue.*
- What is the cost structure? *Undetermined.*
- What is the budget? *In feasibility study now—next phase will consider budget, environmental issues, other concerns. Anything*

is possible for now.

- Is the Coast Guard requirement different here than at the other estuary bridge locations? *Yes, boats need to be able to access the Bay quickly.*
- What is the drop on the tubes, as a baseline? *Possibly 45 feet.*
- Do trams need operators? *Not always.*
- What is the next phase? *Scoping, funding.*
- Will project include safe routes to transit? *Will acknowledge existing, but won't create new routes.*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- PowerPoint and committee lists are online
- Umbrella of all project options, including existing tube—will inform operation and maintenance, etc.
- Run project ads in neighborhoods, on 51 bus, and at tube
- Shuttle through tube could be an option.
- Everyone should benefit from TDM programs—new development will create congestion, affect everyone
- In short term, improve what's already there—plan should address this
- Refer to the Jack London Square BART study by MTC
- Continue discussion online
- What is the expected usage of a new crossing? Quantify why—especially with respect to improving existing tube, etc.—and cull data from bike groups, AC Transit, cities, others