

**San Mateo County Transit District
Staff Report**

To: Strategic, Planning, Development and Sustainability Committee

Through: April Chan, General Manager/CEO

From: Joshua Mello, Chief Planning Officer

Subject: **Reimagine Dumbarton Busway Feasibility Study – Project Update**

Action

This report is for information only. No Board action is required.

Significance

The purpose of this presentation is to provide the San Mateo County Transit District (District or SamTrans) Board of Directors (Board) with an informational update on the Reimagine Dumbarton Busway Feasibility Study (Study). Staff will provide an overview of the project, summarize findings from the first phase of stakeholder and community engagement, introduce the concept designs, and discuss upcoming public outreach activities and next steps.

Project Overview

The Study is evaluating opportunities to transform the approximately-five-mile-long inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor on the Peninsula into a high-quality transit and active transportation corridor. The Study assesses the feasibility of implementing a dedicated busway along with new bicycle and pedestrian facilities that improve mobility while preserving flexibility for potential future rail service. Depending upon the results of the Study, the District may decide to proceed with the environmental review of alternatives to develop the transportation corridor.

The project responds to long-standing community and regional transportation goals by improving connections between communities in southeast San Mateo County, reducing mobility barriers, enhancing access to regional transit, and providing a cost-effective transportation investment that can be implemented sooner than traditional rail alternatives.

Project Progress

Since launching the project in Summer 2025, the consultant team and District staff have completed major project milestones, including:

- Existing conditions analysis and technical data collection
- Creation and convening of technical and stakeholder working groups
- Phase I community engagement activities

- Development of draft design concept alternatives, including:
 - Busway configurations along the right of way
 - Alternative western alignments into the Redwood City Transit Center
 - Preliminary station locations and service concepts
 - Opportunities for enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access and crossings

The project team is currently conducting ridership forecasting and travel time analysis, developing preliminary capital cost estimates, refining project designs, and preparing materials for upcoming public outreach and stakeholder engagement.

Phase I Community Engagement

The first phase of public outreach was conducted in January to March 2026 to introduce the project, build awareness, and better understand community priorities before developing alternative designs.

Outreach activities included:

- Eleven community pop-up events with more than 475 participant interactions
- Two community meetings
- One online survey which received over 1,000 responses
- Technical and Stakeholder Working Group meetings
- More than fifteen presentations to local agencies, community organizations, and partner groups

Public input consistently identified several key priorities:

- Better regional transit connections, particularly to Caltrain, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), and the East Bay
- Faster and more reliable transit service
- Improved access to more destinations by transit
- Safe and convenient walking and bicycling connections
- Additional recreational opportunities and open space
- Addressing the existing inactive rail corridor as a barrier between neighborhoods

Community members also expressed concerns and asked that focus be placed on how to address potential regarding noise, privacy, and potential future land use impacts.

Draft Design Concepts

The alternatives explore different approaches for utilizing the existing rail corridor, including concepts that maximize opportunities for dedicated transit, active transportation, landscaping/open space, and community amenities. Alternatives have also been developed that preserve space for potential future freight rail operations consistent with the existing trackage rights agreement with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). SamTrans is engaged in productive discussions with UPRR toward a regulatory path forward that allows SamTrans to advance a project utilizing the full width of the right-of-way for new transportation options and other community purposes.

In addition, several alternatives are being evaluated for connecting the corridor into the Redwood City Transit Center west of Middlefield Road. These concepts vary in travel time, operational performance, implementation complexity, coordination requirements, and anticipated ridership. The alternatives are currently undergoing detailed technical evaluation using ridership modeling, travel time analysis, engineering review, and preliminary cost estimating.

No preferred alternative has been identified at this time.

Upcoming Community Engagement

The next phase of outreach is anticipated to occur during Fall 2026. During this phase of outreach, staff will present design concepts, gather feedback on trade-offs and design choices as well as the community's desired locations for other community amenities.

Input received during this phase will be incorporated into the refinement of alternatives and the development of a recommended preferred concept for consideration in the final feasibility study.

Meetings dates, survey links and other materials will be available at the project website (www.samtrans.com/dumbarton) in late August 2026.

Budget Impact

There is no budget impact associated with this informational item.

The Study is funded through previously authorized local transportation sales tax funds provided by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority together with Regional Measure 3 funds administered through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Future funding requests for environmental review, design, right-of-way, or construction will be presented to the Board through future Capital Improvement Program and annual budget processes as appropriate. Staff will continue to seek regional, state, and federal funds for future phases.

Background

The Dumbarton Rail Corridor has remained largely inactive since rail operations ceased decades ago and today serves as a physical barrier between neighborhoods and destinations in southeast San Mateo County.

Previous planning studies and community outreach have consistently identified the need for improved transit connections, safer bicycle and pedestrian facilities, enhanced access to regional transportation services, and practical near-term mobility improvements.

In response, SamTrans initiated the Reimagine Dumbarton Busway Feasibility Study to evaluate whether the corridor can support a dedicated busway together with new active transportation facilities that improve mobility, advance equity, support environmental sustainability, and position the project for future regional, state, and federal funding opportunities.

The feasibility study will culminate in a recommended preferred concept and implementation strategy that can guide future environmental review, engineering, and project delivery.

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REIMAGINE DUMBARTON

SamTrans Board of Directors
August 5, 2026

In Partnership with

Kimley»Horn

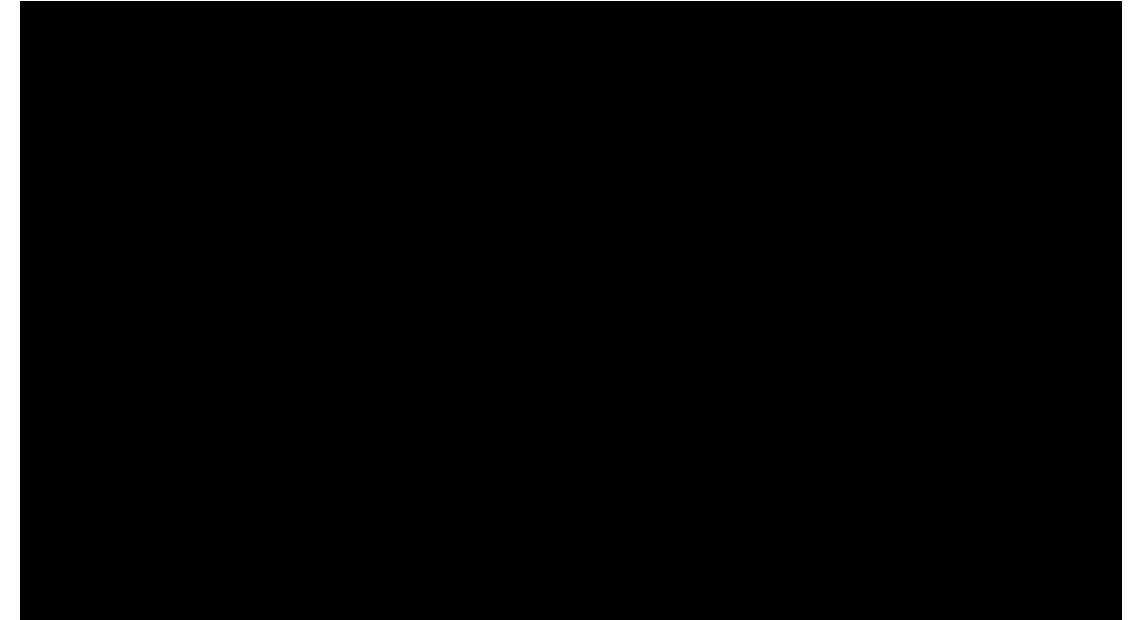
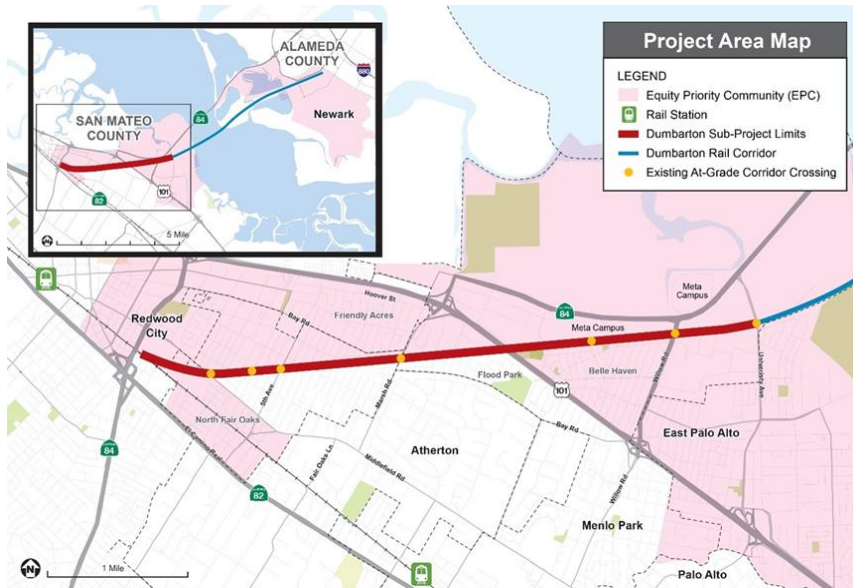
Agenda

- Project Overview and Progress Update
- Findings from Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement
- Design Concepts
- Upcoming Public Outreach

Project Overview

Project Background

- The Dumbarton Rail Corridor (Peninsula side) is a 5-mile inactive rail corridor that creates a barrier between communities
- Unused freight rail corridor acquired by SamTrans in the mid 1990s



Project Overview and Study Area

Reimagine Dumbarton envisions converting the Dumbarton rail corridor into a bus rapid transit line, with new pedestrian & bicycle connections.

Project purpose:

- Assess feasibility and community interest in vision
- Refine vision to address community needs and technical constraints
- Develop a project to move into environmental, design and construction phases

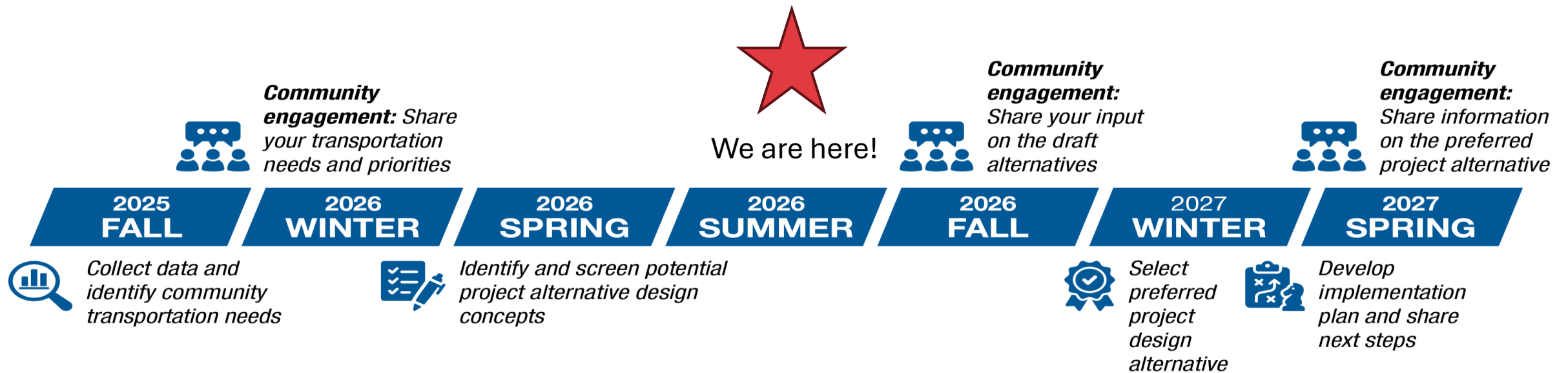


Why this Project?

- Fast, Reliable Transit Service
- Improves Connections and Advances Equity
- Potential for Near-Term Implementation
- Flexible and Compatible with Multimodal Projects
- Environmentally Sustainable
- Meets Needs of Growth
- Funding and Partnership Readiness



Project Schedule



Outreach Round 1 Summary

Outreach Activities

	Phase	Timing	Purpose
✓	Phase 0 – Pre-Engagement	Fall 2025	- Establish working groups with stakeholders and partners - Develop key messages, project branding, and website
✓	Phase I – Broad Engagement	Winter 2026	Raise awareness and confirm community needs and priorities - Use input to shape evaluation criteria and initial alternatives
	Phase II – Deep Engagement	Fall 2026	Present and refine draft design alternatives - Gather detailed feedback on trade-offs and preferences
	Phase III – Information Sharing	Early 2027	Share final Feasibility Study and preferred alternative - Close the loop with communities and decision-makers

Outreach Round 1 Activities – Winter 2026

- 11 pop-up events (475+ interactions)
- 2 community meetings
- Online survey (1,093 responses)
- Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
- 15+ Roadshow presentations

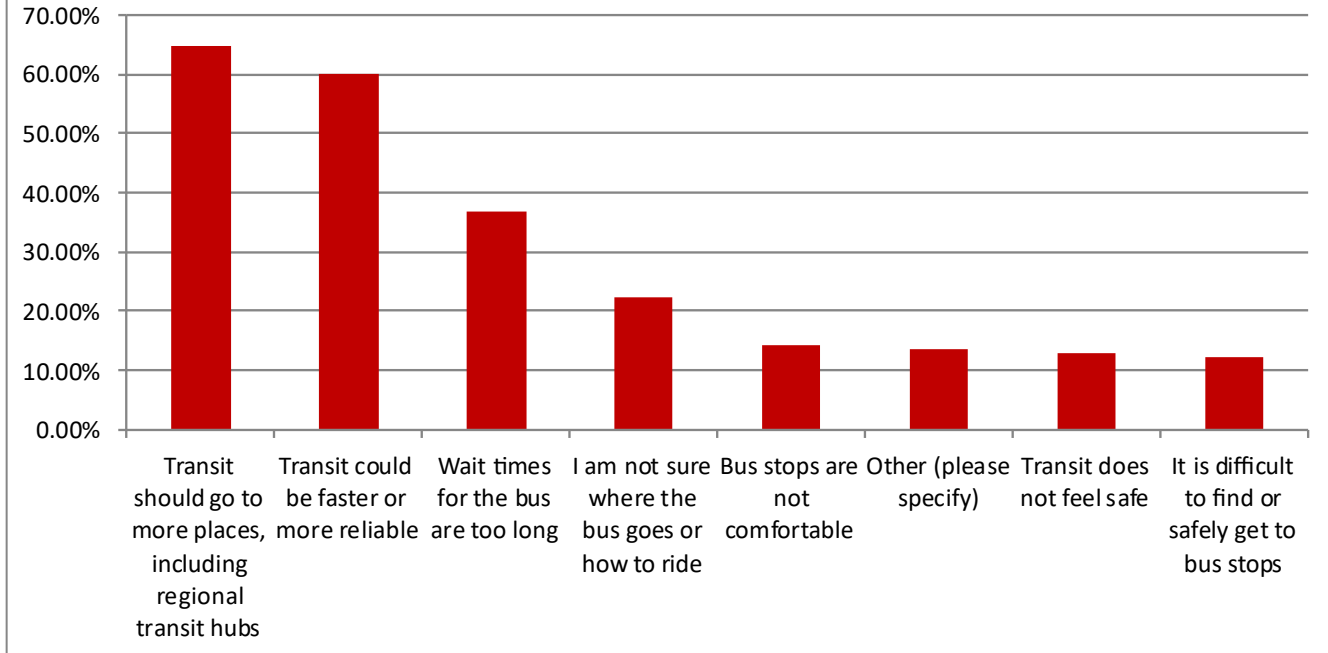


When asked about **improving transit**, survey respondents want:

- Transit to more places, including a focus on regional hubs
- Transit that is faster and more reliable

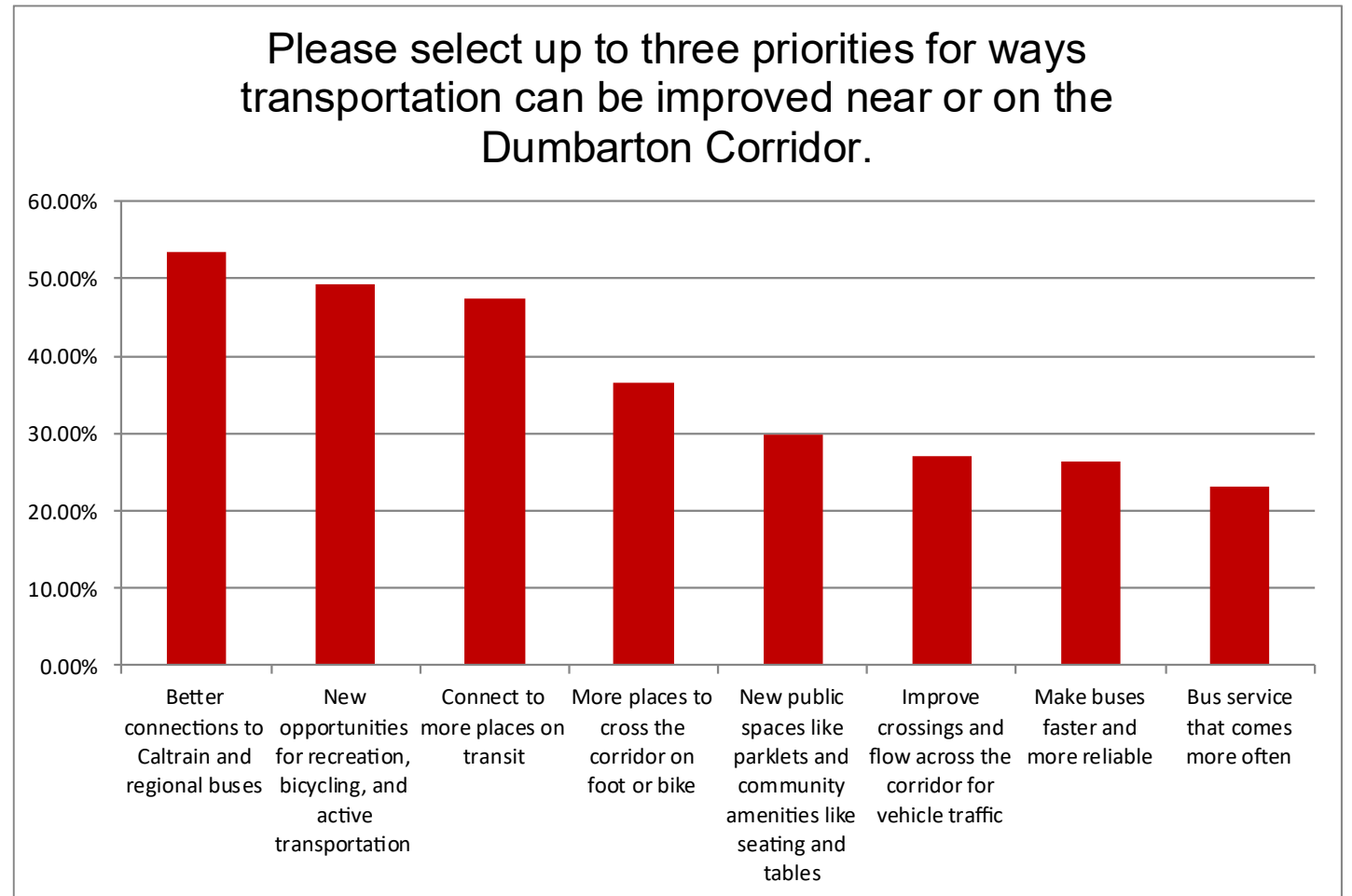
Safety on transit and access to transit stops were lower priority areas of improvement.

Please select up to three priorities for ways transit can be improved in the area near the Dumbarton Corridor.



When asked about **overall transportation improvements** on/near Dumbarton, survey respondents prioritized:

- Better connections to Caltrain and regional buses
- Recreation, bicycling and active transportation
- Connecting to more places on transit

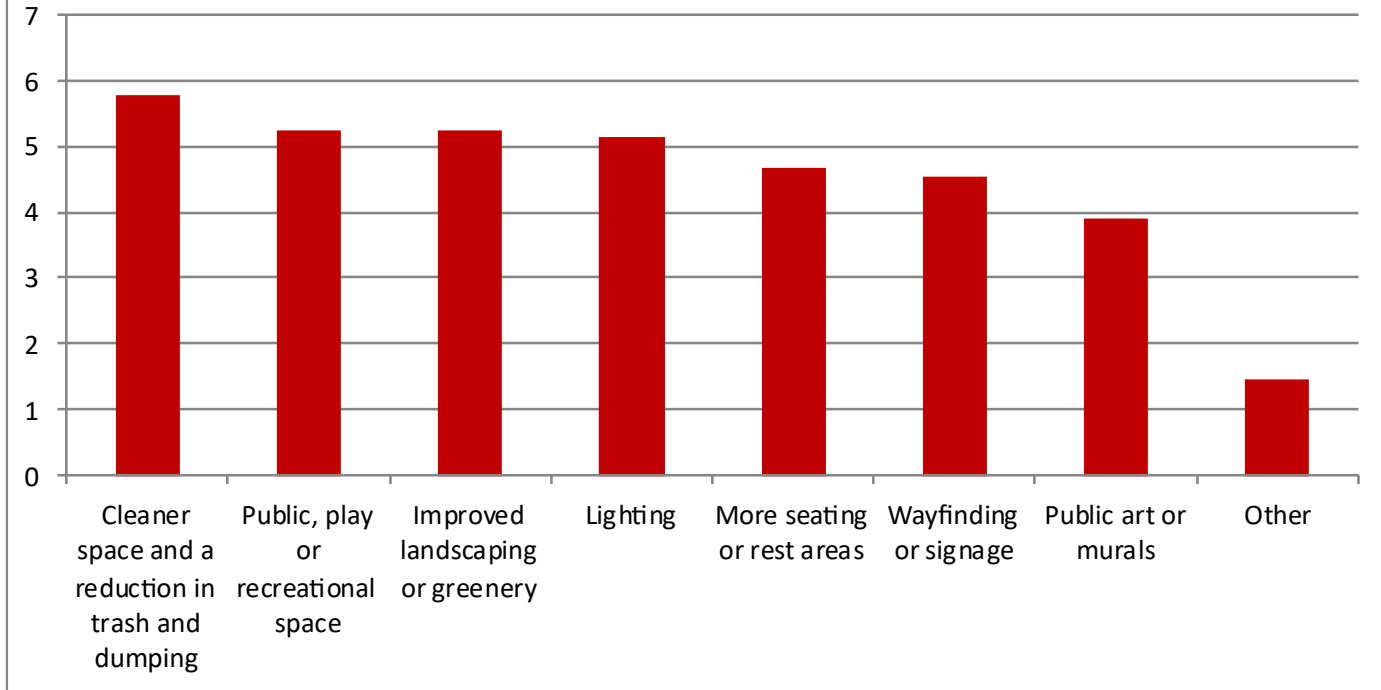


When asked about **improvements other than transportation**, survey respondents prioritized:

- Cleaner space and reduction in dumping
- Public, play or recreational spaces
- Improved landscaping/greenery

Public arts and murals were ranked lower than other ideas.

In addition to transportation improvements, what amenities would you like to see on the corridor? Rank the options below.

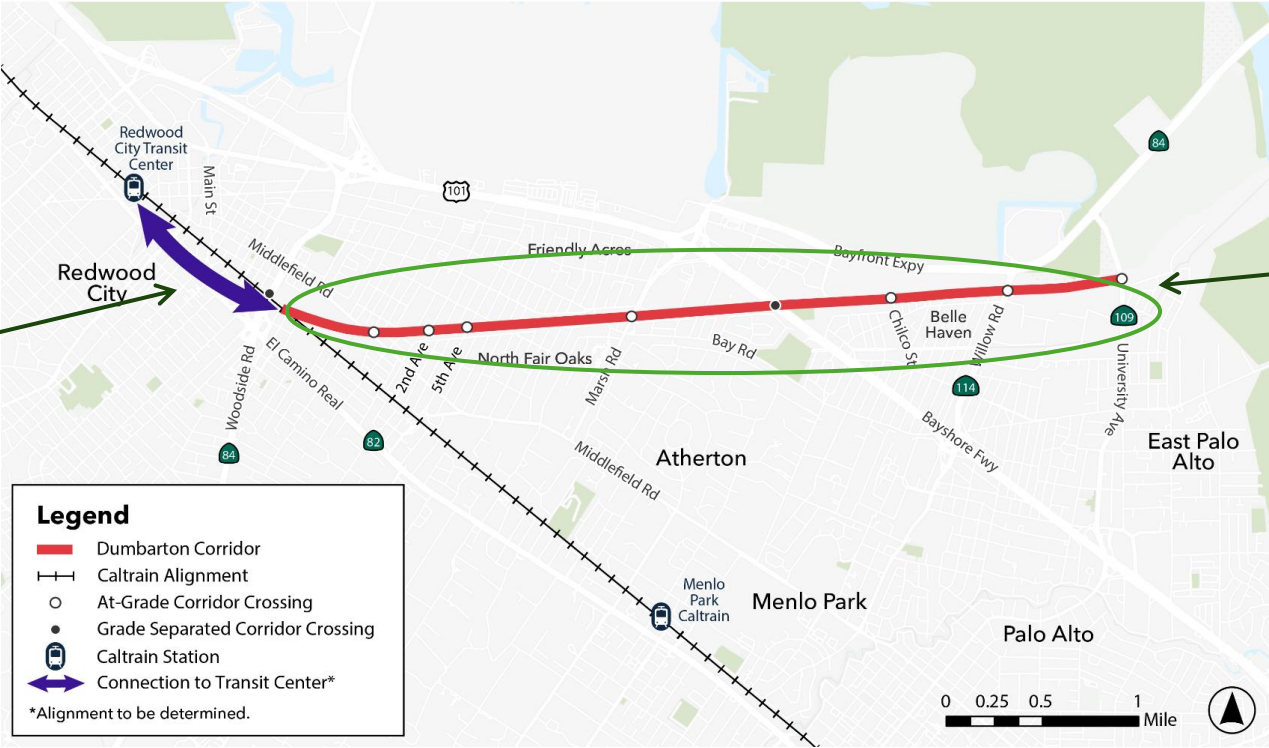


**The higher scores indicate the highest ranking on average*

- Community priorities:
 - Better regional connectivity, particularly to Caltrain, BART and the East Bay
 - Increased transit access to more places
 - Improvements to transit speed and reliability
 - New opportunities for biking and walking along the corridor, as well as access to new greenspaces
- Existing rail corridor is a barrier
- Opportunity to address existing issues associated with underutilized rail corridor
- Concerns related to noise, privacy, upzoning

Overview of Design Concepts

Status of Alternatives Development

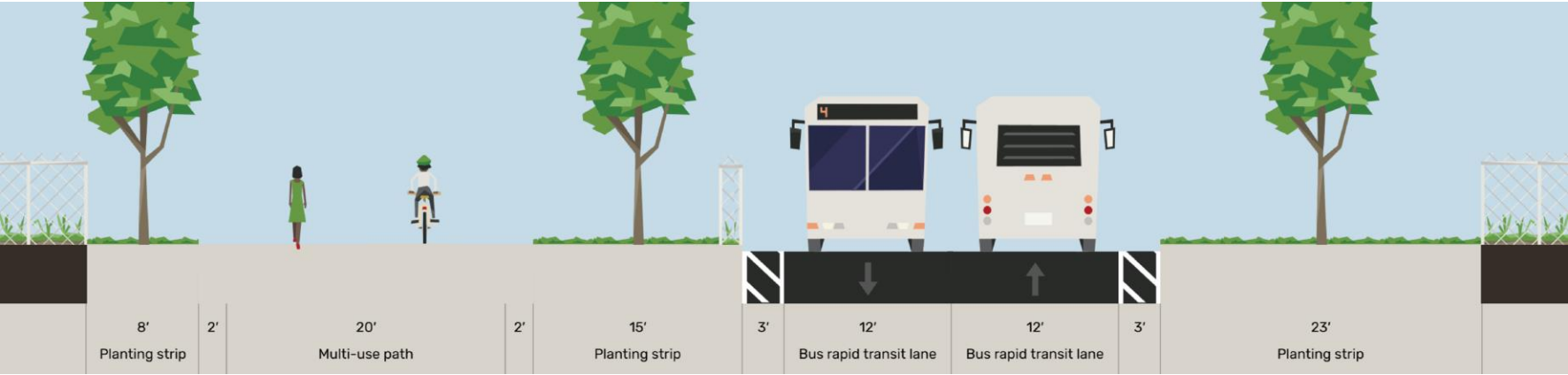


Alternatives still in technical development

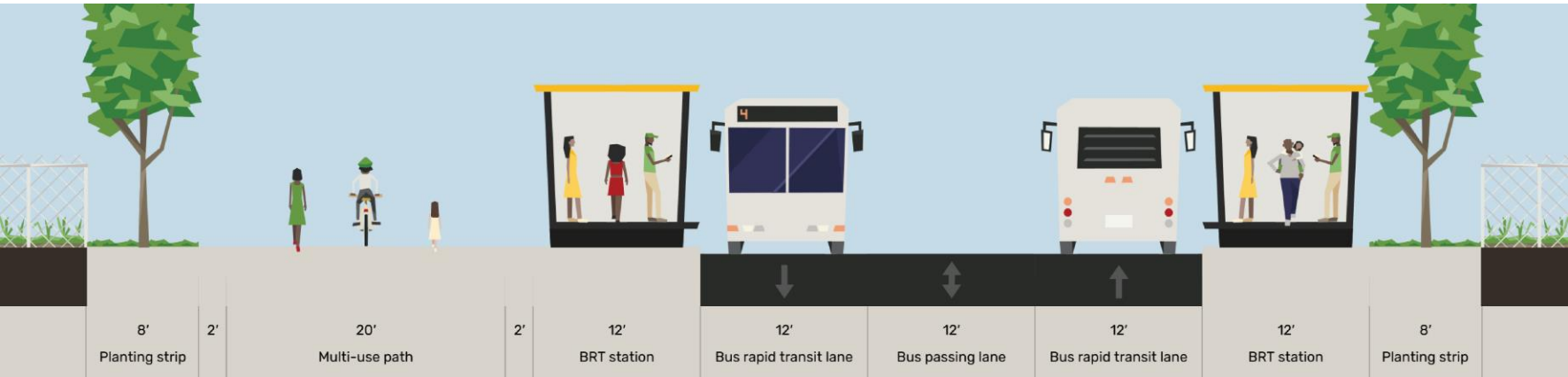
Designs ready for public input

East Segment Design Concepts

Proposed Mid-Block



Proposed At Stations



All cross sections are facing east

East Segment – Early Renderings



Aerial View – Willow Road Station



Aerial View – US-101 Crossing



Potential parks/open space uses



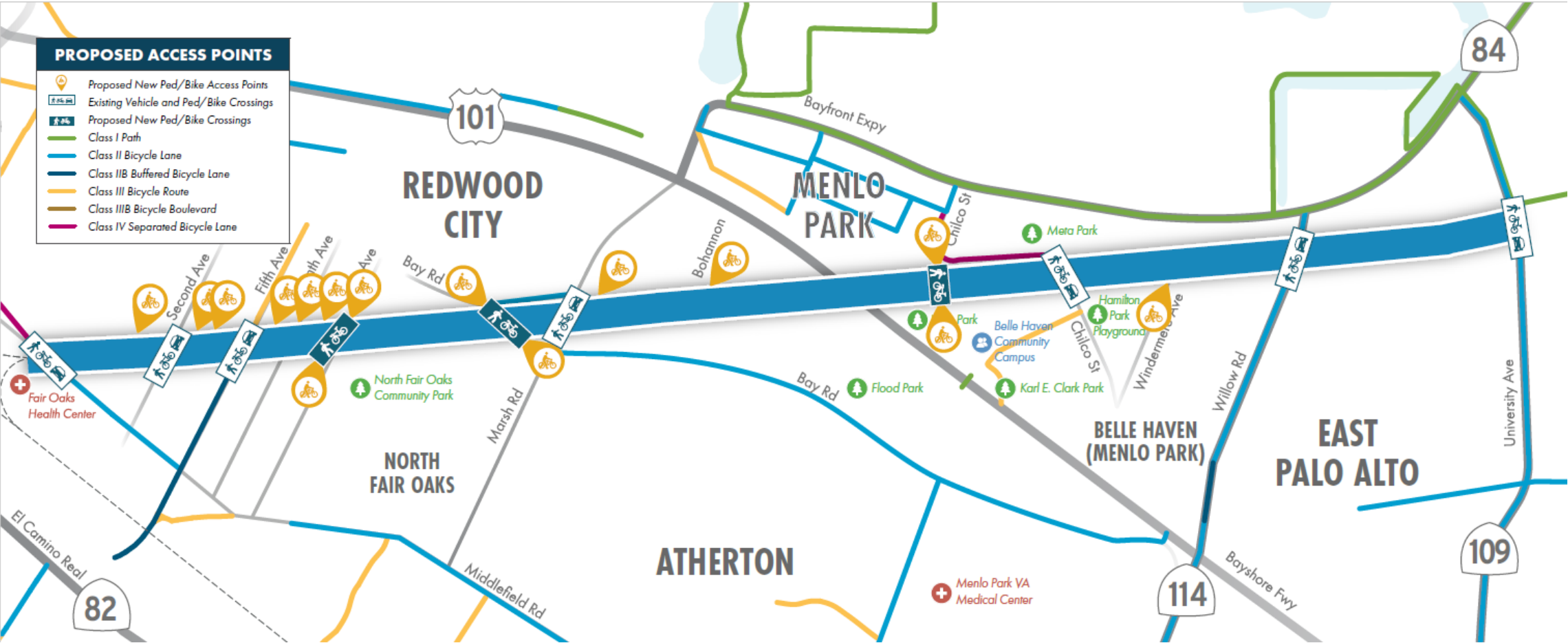
Street View – Belle Haven Community
Campus



Proposed Bus Stops



Enhanced Connections Across and to Corridor



Public Engagement

Upcoming Public Engagement

- Community engagement: September-October 2026
- SamTrans is seeking input on:
 - Design choices like whether to separate bicycling and walking on the trail
 - What type of community amenities are important and where
 - What projects are needed to enhance access to the corridor
 - How, where and for what purposes you would use the new busway and trail
- Check www.samtrans.com/Dumbarton in late August for information on:
 - Taking our next online survey
 - Participating in a community meeting
 - Finding us at a roadshow and pop-up event near the project area
- Reach the project team: dumbarton@samtrans.com



Thank You!