

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Plan Area

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### What is the Specific Plan?

A plan that articulates a vision for the future of San Pablo Avenue...

... by defining community-based and context-sensitive regulation and policies within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area

... by identifying improvements and innovative programs that provide more and better opportunities for living, working, and community life along San Pablo Avenue

### Specific Plan Area

Definition of the Specific Plan Area was informed by the Plan Bay Area 2050 (2021) Priority Development Area (PDA). The Plan Area is comprised of individual parcels for which the Plan's policies, standards, and implementation actions will apply. These parcels primarily front onto San Pablo Avenue, as well as some adjacent parcels on side streets and other adjacent areas that have the potential to support new housing and mixed-use development at a similar scale. Along University Avenue, the area covers parcels between Ninth Street and Curtis Street.

### Timeline



### Insights from the Community

Through a series of interviews, community meetings, pop-ups, surveys, and small group conversations, participants expressed the need for responsible growth that respects the historically underserved West Berkeley neighborhoods.



Higher-intensity development, while enhancing the pedestrian experience



Affordable housing for people of all abilities and ranges of incomes, including family-friendly, and senior housing



Public realm improvements, including lighting, greenery, public art, and more space to socialize



Increased safety and comfort for people walking, rolling, taking transit and driving



Activate the ground floors and create an environment for small and local businesses to thrive

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Vision and Desired Results

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### Vision

The community envisions the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area as a mixed-use district that is more connected with surrounding neighborhoods and employment districts. The Plan Area will serve the broad range of existing and new community members and continue to support citywide and regional needs as it has historically.

**“[We need a] Lively corridor where people from all walks of life can enjoy, mingle, and support local businesses. Good mix of housing, restaurants, stores (and grocery stores).”**

– Open House Comment

With a history of demographic diversity and cultural exchange, community members are protective of the area’s heritage, advocating for measures to strengthen its unique character while accommodating Berkeley’s housing needs. Key to this vision is recognizing San Pablo Avenue not only as a major thorough fair, but also as a gathering place for surrounding neighborhoods and a connector between east and west Berkeley.



### Desired Outcomes

How does the **Vision** translate into **Desired Outcomes**? The table below outlines the key outcomes that the Plan aims to achieve for each theme of the community’s vision. It also provides guidance on where to find more detailed information at this community meeting.



#### I. Increased Diversity and Supply of Housing

Revised Development Regulations that Achieve Desired Outcomes (*Land Use | ODS*)

Increased Amount and Range of Affordable Housing (*Land Use*)

Housing Meeting Needs of Diverse Households (*Land Use*)

Buildings with more Engaging Street Frontages (*Land Use | ODS*)

“It is essential to ensure that the Plan addresses the needs of the historically underserved communities around San Pablo Avenue.”

– Community advocate from Beautiful San Pablo Avenue



#### II. Increased Business Activity to Support a Thriving Community

Increased Local Business Vitality and Growth (*Land Use | Economic Development*)

Reduced Vacancy of Ground Floor Space (*Land Use | ODS | Economic Development | Public Realm*)

Identifiable Commercial Areas with Stronger Business Presence (*Land Use | ODS | Economic Development*)

“It is our urban center or spine. Be more for the people that live here. [We are] missing boutiques, groceries, and practical things.”

– Open House #1 Comment



#### III. Enhanced Interaction Between Public and Private Spaces

Increased Amount and Quality of Sidewalk Space (*Land Use | ODS | Public Realm*)

Improved Lighting, Landscape, and Seating along the Sidewalk (*Public Realm*)

More Public Open Space and Community Gathering Spaces (*Land Use | ODS | Public Realm*)

More Public Art in Public Space and on Buildings (*ODS | Public Realm*)

Increased Cultural Programming and other Community Activity in Public Space (*Land Use | Economic Dev. | Public Realm*)



#### IV. Enhanced Local and Citywide Access

Enhanced Safety and Access for People Walking and Biking (*ODS | Transportation | Public Realm*)

Improved Transit Access and Service Reliability (*Transportation | Public Realm*)

Reduced Number and Severity of Collisions (*Transportation*)

Improved Management of On-Street Parking and Loading (*Transportation*)

“San Pablo Avenue is stressful. Just realized it acts as a border, and I hate crossing over it. Increase space for people, less space for cars (i.e. parklets, bulb outs, turn median into park.)”

– Open House Comment Beautiful San Pablo Avenue

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Land Use

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### Development Standards

The Plan makes several changes:

- Establishes the Commercial San Pablo (C-SP) Zone to replace the West Berkeley Commercial (C-W) Zone within the Plan Area
- Establishes a Two-Tiered Node Structure to strategically concentrate higher-intensity development and commercial uses at key intersections
- Increases permitted Height and FAR for mixed-use buildings
- Allows housing at 6 MU-LI zoned parcels for affordable or family-friendly housing

### Legend

Existing Zoning		Proposed Specific Plan Changes	
	C-W		New C-SP Zoning District
	C-U		MU-LI Housing Overlay
	C-N		Specific Plan Area
	C-SA		Specific Plan Designated Nodes
	M		City of Berkeley Boundary
	MM		Southern Pacific Railroad
	MU-LI		
	MU-R		
	MR-D		
	R-1		
	R-2		
	R-2A		
	R-3		
	R-4		
	R-BMU		
	SP		
	U		
	C-W Designated Nodes Area		
	C-U Nodes Area		

### Potential Buildout

#### Housing

New C-SP Zoning increases opportunity for housing.

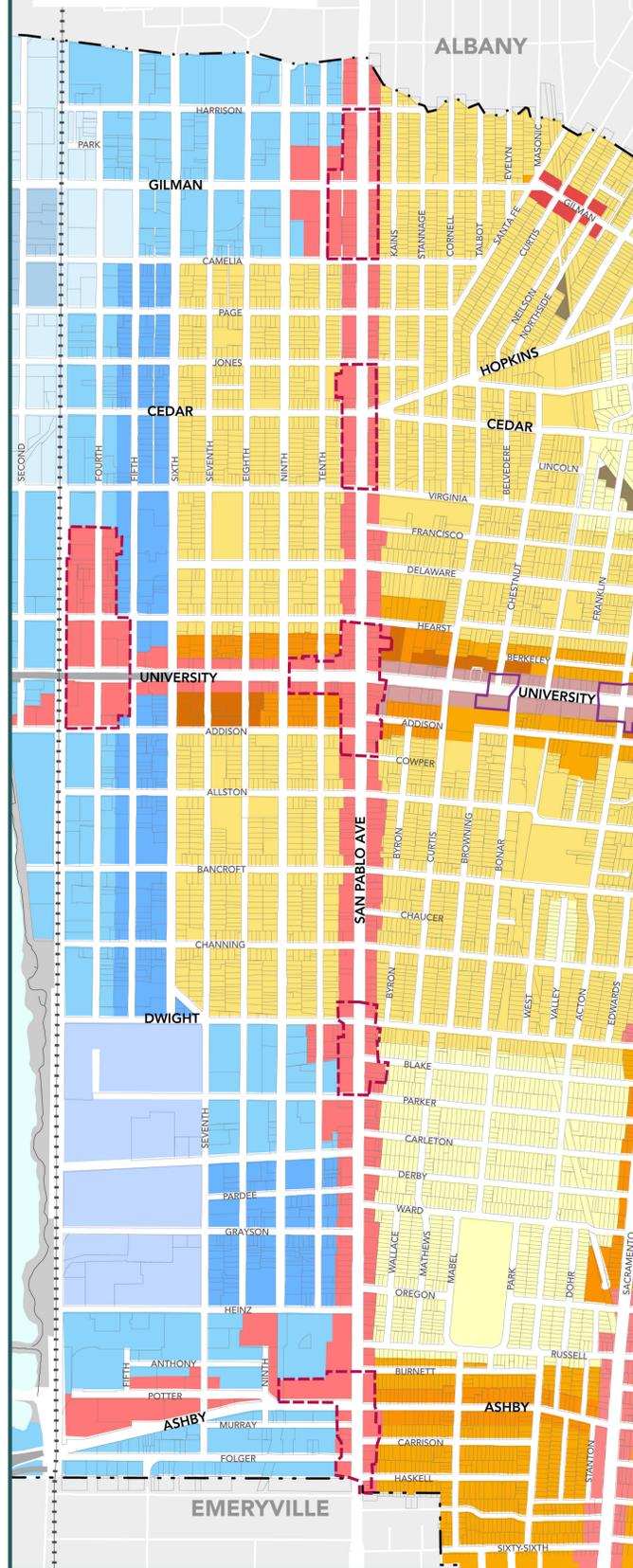
- The Plan Area could accommodate ~6,700 new multi-family homes
- This increases the Housing Element Update estimate by ~3,200 units

#### Commercial

A new commercial in-lieu fee intends to concentrate commercial development in the Nodes where it is most needed.

- Aims to reduce vacant commercial outside the Nodes
- Estimated reduction of ~321,000 sq. ft in commercial space potential as new mixed-use residential buildings replace some existing development

### Existing Zoning

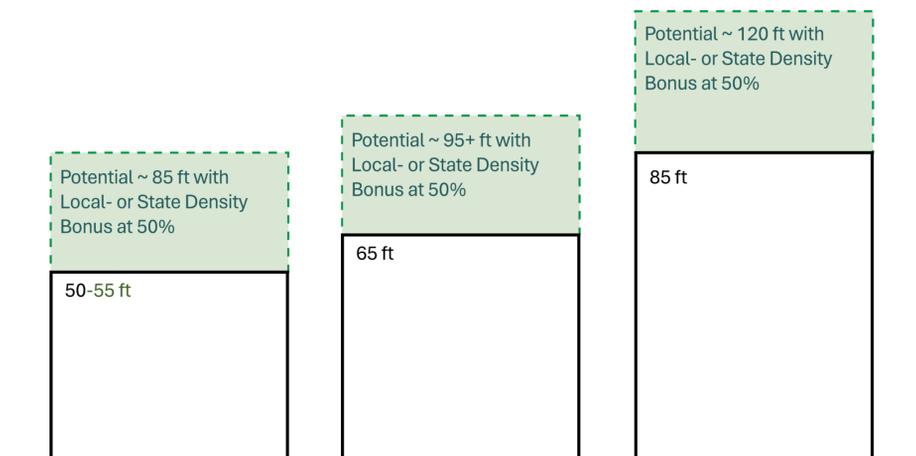


### Proposed Zoning



### Existing and Proposed Development Standards

Zone/Category	Existing C-W		Proposed C-SP				
	Single-Use	Mixed-Use	Outside Nodes		Proposed C-SP Nodes		
			Single-Use	Mixed-Use	Commercial/Light Industrial	Tier 1 Nodes	Tier 2 Nodes
FAR	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.75	3.75
Max Height	40'	50'	40'	55'	40'	85'	65'
Max Storeys	3	4	3	5	3	8	6
Usable Open Space	40 SF/Unit (only applies to residential uses)						
Lot	100%						



Berkeley San Pablo Ave Proposed C-SP development intensity

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Land Use Policies and Standards

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### What We've Heard

#### Affordable Housing and Supportive Services

Community members expressed a desire for more housing, both in quantity of units and diversity of housing types. Several community comments noted that an increase in affordable units should be met with an increase in supportive services.

*"It is essential to ensure that the plan addresses the need for the historically underserved communities around San Pablo Avenue."*  
—Community Advocate

#### Ground Floor Activation and Vacant Storefronts

Across all outreach events, we have heard concerns about high storefront vacancy rates, and reduced activity and vitality. Additionally, the design of ground floor commercial spaces in new developments is currently not suitable for many small businesses. Broadly, community members have expressed support for expanding permitted ground floor uses to include, for instance, temporary events, such as pop-ups, and other programs or incentives to fill vacant ground floor storefronts.

#### Designated Nodes

Overall, community members expressed competing priorities for the Nodes, but agree that the Nodes should be the focus for Plan Area vitality.

*"Taller, denser housing urgently needed to house more people."*  
—Open House Comments

### Policies and Standards Highlights

LU-P.1 Establish the Commercial San Pablo (C-SP) Zoning District

**LU-P.2 Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses**

LU-P.3 MU-LI Housing Overlay District to Allow Affordable and Family Friendly Housing

LU-P.4 Amend the General Plan and Zoning Map

LU-P.5 Planning Approval and Building Permit Streamlining

LU-P.6 Public Space Development Incentives

LU-P.7 Encourage a Mix of Community-Serving Uses

LU-P.8 Expand the list of Allowed Uses and Allowed Temporary Uses

LU-P.9 Define Residential Mixed-Use with On-Site and In-Lieu Options

LU-P.10 Establish Ground Floor Typologies to Promote Pedestrian-Scaled and Flexible Ground Floors

**LU-P.11 Establish a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program**

### LU-P.2 Establish a Tiered Node Structure to Focus Growth and Commercial Uses

The Plan defines a two-tiered Node structure to strategically concentrate higher-intensity mixed-use development and commercial uses at key intersections, including tier-specific development standards to incentivize ground-floor commercial in Nodes:

#### Tier 1 Nodes (University, Ashby, Gilman):

These are the highest intensity areas in the Plan Area, allowing for increased height and FAR to support housing and commercial services near major intersections.



#### Tier 2 Nodes (Cedar, Dwight):

These allow for moderate increases in height and FAR, comparable to standards outside of the Nodes.



### LU-P.3 MU-LI Housing Overlay District to Allow Affordable and Family Friendly Housing

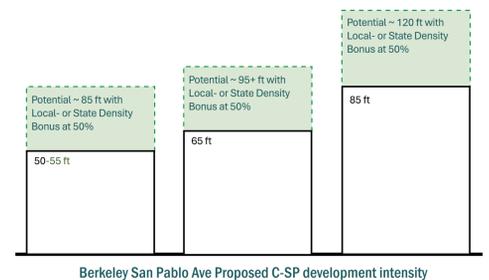
Allow 100% affordable or family-sized housing (2–3 bedrooms) on six MU-LI parcels where residential uses are currently prohibited. Projects that meet the affordability or family-sized unit size requirements may apply the development standards of the C-SP Zoning District.



### LU-P.11 Establish a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program

Establish a San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program by developing an affordable-housing benefit for new, single-use and mixed-use residential projects that is exclusively met through paying an in-lieu fee to the City's existing Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The following components shall be included in the program:

Program Exclusivity	Affordable Housing Contribution	Incentives	Advantages
A project may utilize only the San Pablo Avenue Density Bonus Program, and would be required to waive the ability to use the State Density Bonus for the project.	In-lieu fee shall be placed in the City of Berkeley's Housing Trust Fund and prioritized for projects within the Plan Area to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing.  Fund management and allocation will be determined in accordance with the City of Berkeley Housing Trust Fund and Small Sites Program Guidelines, as amended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlined approval process</li> <li>Bonus density</li> <li>Other waivers and concession may mirror the State Density Bonus</li> </ul>	Certain Standards, such as ground floor frontage use requirements and certain ODS, would not be eligible for waivers.



### Comments

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Objective Design Standards

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### What We've Heard

#### Housing

Community members want more affordable, mixed-income housing, with a majority in favor of higher-intensity development. However, there are concerns too many large "flat" facade buildings could create a "tunnel effect" that degrades the pedestrian experience.

#### Multi-family Building Amenities and Access

Local residents are concerned that new developments are creating "urban gated communities".

They suggested new developments to provide shared indoor or outdoor spaces, to better encourage community cohesion.

*"New developments nice to live in, but not to live around."*

– Small Group Meeting comment

#### Building Design

Community feedback supports the development of buildings with Engaging and Active Building Frontages.

The small ground floor setbacks at recent developments along the corridor received positive feedback.

*"[Make building facades] Architecturally unique. Implement standards that aren't so strict to allow for variety (i.e. ornamental, setbacks, etc.)"*

– Open House Comments

### Modulation & Articulation

#### Standards to reduce the perceived scale, massing and bulk

- Compatibility with adjacent lower-density residential properties (solar access, privacy)
- Human-scaled details and variations on large facades that engage pedestrians.



#### Building Design Medium + Large Buildings ODS:

- Major Massing Breaks
- Setbacks and Neighborhood transitions
- Reduced Massing for Large/ High-Rise Buildings
- Fenestration and Window Treatments
- Vertical Rhythm
- Facade Articulation
- Treatments of Corners and Blank Walls
- Roof Treatments

### Open Space and Site Design

#### Standards that encourage open spaces which foster community interaction and promote walkable, well-connected sites.

- Publicly-accessible open space at key-nodes to foster community interaction
- Open Space as an essential element of site and building design
- Division of large blocks to prioritize pedestrian circulation and linkages to surrounding streets, open spaces, and transit.

#### Site Design ODS:

- Through-Block Access and Connectivity, such as mid-block passages
- Pedestrian, Vehicular and Building Access
- Parking location and access

Supported by Land Use and Public Realm policies and standards.



LU-P.6  
PR-P.18

### Ground Floor Design

#### Standards establish four distinct ground floor typologies: Storefront, Other Non-Residential, Residential, and Live/Work

- Storefront, and other non-residential ground floor typologies prioritize transparency and architectural articulation for adaptability between different commercial uses
- Each type has minimum requirements for dimensions, visibility, and sidewalk interaction.
- All types have standards for weather protection at entries, limit the size of blank walls, and require the use of durable materials for features like awnings.

#### Storefront

##### Active commercial to allow for most visibility between Public Realm and Businesses

- Height: Minimum 15 feet floor-to-floor.
- Depth Min. 40 feet deep for 50% of frontages in Tier 1 Nodes (30 feet for others).
- Transparency: Minimum 60% transparent wall area
- Commercial/ Retail spaces in the Nodes to provide venting/ grease interceptors to reduce future Tenant Improvement (TI) cost



#### Other Non-Residential Ground Floor

##### Designed to allow for all non-residential uses and provides more flexible standards than storefront

- Uses that might prefer this standard include offices, maker spaces, and medical practices
- Height: Minimum 15 feet floor-to-floor.
- Depth min. 30 feet
- Transparency (ODS.39): Minimum 50% transparent wall area



#### Residential Ground Floor

##### Residential units and entries on San Pablo Avenue and side streets that foster interaction and activate the public realm

- Min. 30% of front setback landscaped
- Privacy: Finished floor min. 2 feet above sidewalk grade OR min. 8-foot setback.
- Individual residential entries shall include a min. 4x6 recessed entry or awning/ canopy area
- Transparency (ODS.45): Minimum 30% of wall shall have transparent openings or windows



#### Live/ Work

##### Spaces for both living and working on the Ground floor level

- Open Space: Minimum 40 sq ft of usable open space required per unit.
- Work Space: Non-residential portion must be located towards the street and indicate a business presence
- Open Space (ODS.46): At least 40 sq ft of usable open space required per unit.
- Work Space (ODS.48): Non-residential portion must be a minimum of 300 sq ft, located between the street and the residential portion



# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Economic Development

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### What We've Heard

#### Ground Floor

Community members supported more flexible land use standards for ground floor use so that more businesses or organizations can occupy the space. Ideas for uses included pop-ups, co-working and meeting spaces, business incubators, offices, galleries, art installations, and artist housing.

The community desires a mix of local-serving businesses, affordable retail, and a variety of restaurants, cafes, and bars. Objective Design Standards can shape new ground floor spaces to be the “bones” for future commercial uses as the Plan Area population grows.

#### Challenges

Input from business, architecture, and developer stakeholders identified challenges hindering ground floor commercial use.

Tenant Improvement (TI) costs are often prohibitive for small businesses, largely driven by the expense of specialized infrastructure like bathrooms, grease traps, and exhaust hood ducts that may not be in new buildings.

Small businesses typically seek smaller storefronts but want deeper spaces and back-of-house access for efficient operation.

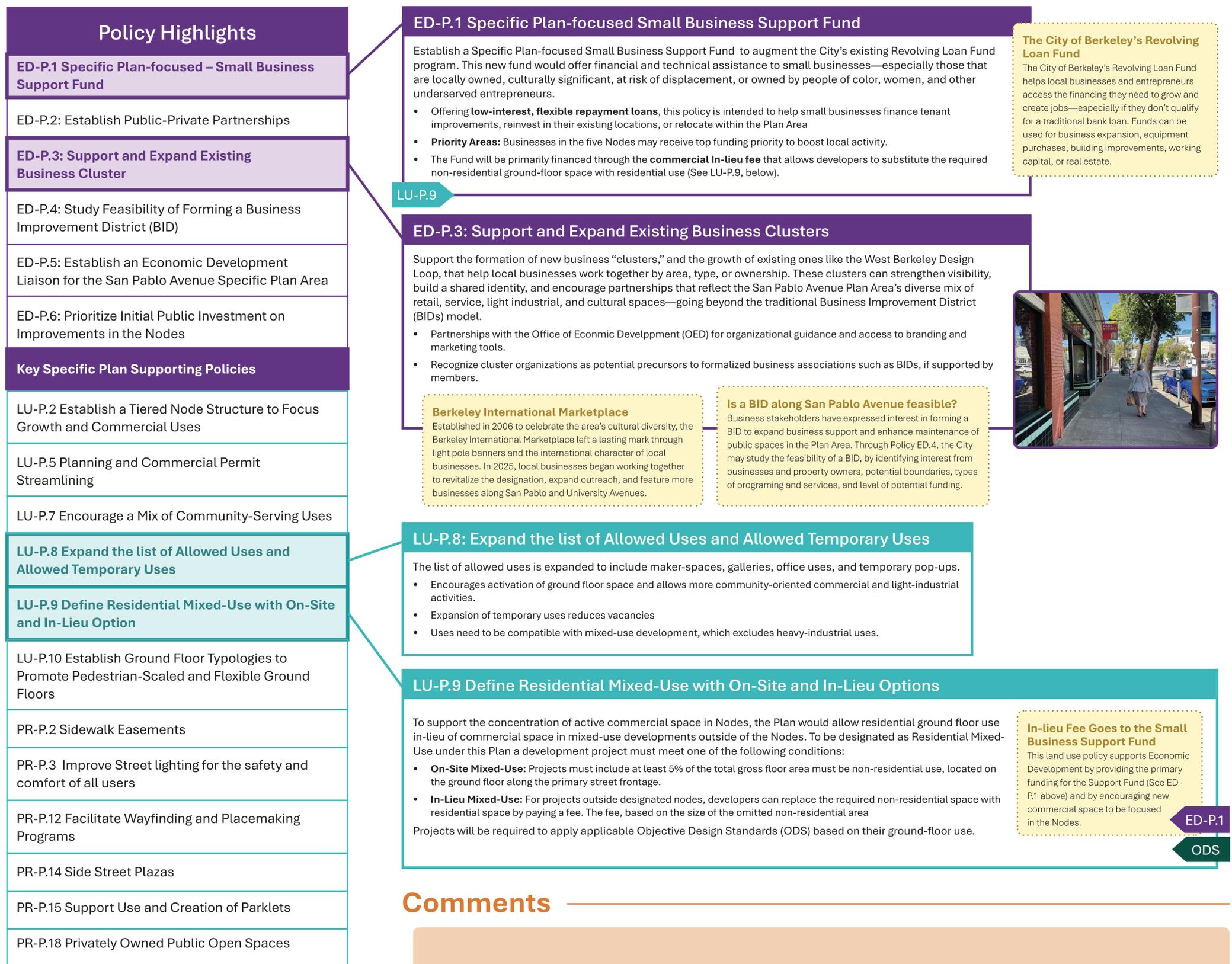
#### Community Life

The Community would like to see ground floor spaces become community gathering or common ground spaces for community events, pop-up retail and other such establishments to support local start-up businesses, art events, etc.

*“Lively corridor where people from all walks of lives can enjoy, mingle, and support local businesses.”*

– Small Group Meeting comment

### Economic Development Policies and Programs



### Comments

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Transportation

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### What We've Heard

#### Getting to San Pablo Avenue

Throughout the community outreach, participants said that they desire a more pedestrian-friendly area. Also, feedback represented walking as the second most common way that people get to and from San Pablo Avenue.

*"SPA is stressful. Just realized it acts as a border and I hate crossing over it. Increase space for people, less space for cars (i.e. parklets, bulb outs, turn median into park.)"*

— Open House #1 Comments

#### Connections

Some community members articulated the importance of East-West transit connections and expressed support for additional routes and service for connectivity to and from BART Stations, Downtown, UC Berkeley, and other parts of Berkeley.

*"We just realized we don't go to James Kenney Park more because it's on the other side of SPA which we don't like to cross (by) foot or bike."*

— Open House #1 Comments

#### Transportation Safety

Concerns about personal safety were prominent, with a majority feeling more unsafe at night and expressing unease while walking along San Pablo Avenue. Especially on segments with empty property frontages and vacant storefronts, participants experience discomfort as pedestrians.

### Transportation Policies and Programs

#### Policy Highlights

T-P.1 Improve mobility, access, and safety for all people

T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue

T-P.5 Create an active parking and loading management program for the Specific Plan Area

T-P.6 Implement Mobility Hub features in the University Avenue Node

T-P.8 Lower Speed Limit on San Pablo Avenue

Pedestrian Crossings:

T-S.1 Pedestrian Crossing Frequency

T-P.9 Pedestrian Crossing Design

T-P.10 Intersection Improvements

T-P.13 Prioritizing Multimodal Safety Improvements

T-P.11 Minor Side Street Intersection Improvements

T-P.17 Prioritize connections with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts

T-P.17 Prioritize connections with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts

Prioritize Multimodal Connection Improvements and monitor performance

As new development brings more residents to the Plan Area, safe and comfortable walking, biking, and transit access to schools, parks, shops, and other community destinations will be essential.

Key priorities:

- **Safe routes to schools and parks:** Focus on streets serving students
- **Bike boulevards:** Create safe, connected routes that cross San Pablo Avenue and link adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Access for seniors:** Improve streets within ¼–½ mile of housing for older adults.

#### T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue

As Berkeley grows, demand for safe and reliable transit and biking options will continue to rise. The Specific Plan recommends that the City, in partnership with Alameda CTC and Caltrans, explore a future planning and design process to study long-term multimodal improvements.

This study could build on current corridor investments and evaluate new options and assess how these could fit within Berkeley's section of San Pablo Avenue, such as Bus Rapid Transit, Dedicated Bus Lanes, Separated Bike Lanes.



#### T-P.8 Lower Speed Limit on San Pablo Avenue

San Pablo Avenue's current speed limit is 30 mph, but many drivers exceed it. California's new **Assembly Bill 43 (2022)** gives the City working with Caltrans more flexibility to set safer speed limits that reflect real conditions on the street. A reduced limit supports traffic calming; improve safety for people walking and biking, and can help reduce collision severity.

While San Pablo Avenue is operated by **Caltrans**, Berkeley can work with Caltrans and **AC Transit** to conduct a Study to verify the potential benefits and feasibility to lower the speed limit to **25 mph**.



#### Pedestrian Crossings

##### Making it easier and safer to cross San Pablo Avenue

The average distance between crosswalks on San Pablo Avenue is about **380 feet**, with some stretches over **600 feet** long. These long gaps make it harder and some people may unsafely cross the street. T-S-1 Pedestrian Crossing Frequency proposes new **mid-block crosswalks** be considered where crossing distances exceed 600 feet.

T.P.9 Pedestrian Crossing Design proposes:

- Refuge islands in medians to shorten crossing distances.
- Pedestrian-scale lighting for better visibility and comfort at night.
- Side street curb extensions where appropriate to increase pedestrian visibility.



Connections Map. Source: City of Berkeley, Alameda CTC, AC Transit, 2025.

### Comments

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Public Realm

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### What We've Heard

#### Streetscape

The narrow sidewalk width in combination with poor physical conditions and maintenance was a frequent issue mentioned by the community. Other concerns were poor lighting and traffic noise in relation to personal safety and discomfort.

*"Open public spaces at nodes to foster community, pull buildings back."*

– Open House Comments

#### Open Space

People have diverse feelings about open space along San Pablo Avenue. For some, concerns about personal safety and lack of maintenance appear to override the potential for community open space given current conditions. Others strongly expressed a desire for civic open spaces and community gathering places to bring new and existing residents together. Some see this as an environment that can support commercial activity.

#### Community Life

Participants would like to see ground floor and underused spaces become community gathering spaces or places of common ground activities, including a combination of indoor or outdoor space for community events, food trucks, pop-up retail for local startup businesses or art events, etc.

### Public Realm Policies and Programs

#### Policy Highlights

##### Sidewalk Space

PR-P1 Sidewalk Zones

PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements

##### Streetscape Standards

PR-S.11 Public Art in Public Spaces

PR-P.12 Facilitate Wayfinding and Placemaking Programs

PR-P.13 Design for People of All Ages and Abilities

##### PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas

PR-P.15 Support use and creation of Parklets

PR-P.16 Commercial and Other Private Use of Sidewalks and the Public Realm

PR-P.17 Purchase Underutilized Small Properties for Public Open Space

##### PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Spaces

#### Sidewalk Space

Sidewalks along San Pablo Avenue are currently about 13 feet wide, narrower than the recommended width in the Pedestrian Plan. Sidewalks cannot be significantly widened within the public right-of-way given other demands on use of the space for existing and potential future transportation uses and the landscaped medians.

**The Specific Plan uses a flexible approach to meet Pedestrian Plan goals, defining three sidewalk zones:**

**Pedestrian Zone:** Clear space for walking.

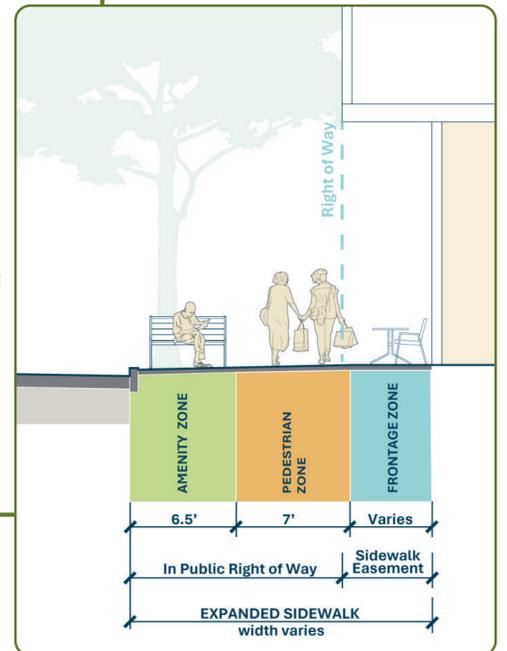
**Amenity Zone:** Space for trees and other landscape, benches, and other street furniture.

**Frontage Zone:** Adjacent to private property, this area can be widened with a public access easement and may include outdoor seating, landscaping, or extra walking space.

##### PR-P.2 Sidewalk Easements

When new developments provide easements to widen the sidewalk, the extra space can be used to expand any of the sidewalk zones for walking, or other amenities. The Plan encourages this approach and provides Expansion Incentives (LU-S.2) to create more room for public activity, seating, landscaping, and a more comfortable pedestrian experience.

LU-S.2



#### Streetscape Standards

The Plan updates streetscape standards to improve the quality and identity of the public realm, and to support the economic and social vitality of the Plan Area. It includes standards for:

- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Street furnishings
- Bus stop improvements
- Trees
- Median and other landscape



#### PR-P.14 Side-Street Plazas

Explore opportunities to convert minor streets into small side-street plazas by limiting or removing vehicle access. These closures would create room for public gathering spaces, urban greening and green infrastructure systems.



- **Access and Safety:** Plazas can fully close vehicle access or allow limited one-way entry or exit, while maintaining emergency and property access.
- **Near-Term Activation:** Quick-build plaza projects can test locations using simple materials such as planters, paint and stone blocks. Logs, rocks, and other materials can be used for children's play areas.
- **Long-Term Investment:** With community support and funding, temporary plazas can evolve into permanent public spaces developed in partnership with the City, local stakeholders, adjacent new developments, and potential future Business Improvement Districts.

LU-S.2

ED-P.4

#### PR-P.18 Privately Owned Public Open Space

Encourage and incentivize privately-owned public open spaces (POPOS), which are publicly accessible open spaces that are built and maintained on private property.

- Can be included in new developments, and transform existing parking lots or underused sites into welcoming public places.
- **Priority locations:** Intersections at major Tier 1 nodes. A well-designed public space at these prominent sites would enhance both the character and functionality of the surrounding public realm. LU-S.2 provides incentives for POPOS and LU-S.5 defines a requirement for POPOS in larger developments.
- **Mid-block passages:** These are a type of POPOS that improve walkability by creating direct routes through long blocks, connecting San Pablo Avenue—and in some cases, University Avenue—with nearby parallel streets and neighborhoods. LU-S.8 requires mid-block passages on larger sites that go through the block.

LU-S.2

LU-S.5

LU-S.8



### Comments

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Implementation

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### Implementing the Specific Plan

The Specific Plan will guide how future development, transportation, and public spaces take shape along San Pablo Avenue. After adoption, the City will update the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to align with the Plan's goals and vision.

Public improvements and programs will move forward through collaboration between the City and its public and private partners. Efforts will build on existing resources, explore new funding opportunities, and form partnerships to carry out the actions.



#### Zoning and Land Use Updates

**New Commercial Zone (LU-P.1):** Add the new C-SP zoning district to the City's Zoning Ordinance.

**Focus Growth at Key Nodes (LU-P.2):** Establish Tier 1 and Tier 2 Nodes with tailored development and frontage standards.

**Support Housing (LU-P.3):** Add a housing overlay district for MU-LI parcels. Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow affordable and family-friendly housing with clear definitions and deed restrictions.

**Update Maps (LU-P.4):** Reflect the Plan boundary, Nodes, rezoning of C-W/C-U parcels within the Plan Area, the housing overlay, and 15 new housing opportunity sites.

**Community-Serving Uses (LU-P.7):** Allow ground-floor residential, pop-up retail for start-up businesses, office, art and cultural institutions, and maker uses throughout the C-SP zone.

**Expand Allowed Uses (LU-P.8):** Add by-right uses (e.g., galleries, coworking, light industrial) and streamline temporary pop-up permitting.

#### Retire San Pablo Avenue Public Improvement Plan (2004)

The San Pablo Specific Plan replaces the street design policies and standards of the Public Improvement Plan and the retirement of that Plan is an action taken with the adoption of the San Pablo Specific Plan.

Key Immediate Actions

### Example Implementation Timeline

Combination of Implementing Policies and Standards Along with Stakeholder Actions is Needed to Achieve the Vision

#### Economic Implementation

Economic Development Liaison (ED-P.5) initiates outreach and education

Public-Private Partnerships (ED-P.2) and Business Cluster support (ED-P.3)

Businesses organize Saturday or Night Market events in the Plan Area

Initiation of BID Feasibility Study with interest from local stakeholders

Establishing the Mixed-Use In-Lieu fee

Small Business receive Funding Support (EP-P.1)

New Development decides to include a POPOS

#### Multimodal Transportation Implementation

Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Corridor Safety Enhancements and Parallel Bike Routes Projects are completed

Study to assess future Transportation needs (T-P.2)

New Developments could result in additional street improvements

Neighborhood and Businesses request a quick build side-street closure

Street improvements follow the Specific Plan Standards

The City and its agency partners move forward with further streetscape improvements based on funding and needs.

Catalyst actions by businesses, neighborhood groups, developers, and other stakeholders

### Implementation Highlights

A framework to support and encourage catalyst actions by stakeholders, shape development, and prioritize public investment

Small Business Support Implementation	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<b>LU-P.9 Define Residential Mixed-Use with On-Site and In-Lieu Options</b> Establish the Residential On-site Mixed-Use and In-Lieu Mixed-Use definitions consistent with the Policy described in Chapter 3 Land Use and amend the Zoning Ordinance to include the definitions within the C-SP zoning district. Amend the City's Fee Schedule to include the Commercial In-Lieu fee and adopt an ordinance dedicating revenues to the San Pablo Avenue Small Business Support Fund. Develop developer and administrative guidance documents for the program.	PLNG	OED	Immediate or within 1 year	General Fund (staff time)
<b>ED-P.1 San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Focused Small Business Support Fund</b> Develop and establish a Local Small Business Support Fund within the City's existing Revolving Loan Fund program or economic development funding mechanisms consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4, including: Define loan guidelines including loan terms, eligibility criteria, fund disbursement methods, and oversight structures. Launch the Small Business Loan Program with an Outreach Campaign (see ED-P.2 and ED-P.3) to Plan Area businesses, especially businesses that are culturally significant or at risk of displacement, as well as business owners who are people of color, women, and other underserved potential applicants for Support Fund loans.	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund	0-3 years	Mixed-Use In-Lieu Fee revenues (LU-P.9), General Fund, federal and state grants, and loan payments.
<b>Small Business Support Fund Annual Tracking and Reporting as part of the Commercial District Dashboards</b> Conduct annual performance tracking on fund deployment, repayment, and Plan Area impacts	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund	On-going	General Fund
<b>Small Business Support Fund Outreach and Program Refinements</b> Conduct outreach to small businesses to assess evolving needs, and opportunities to expand eligibility criteria for the Fund following first 3-years of fund availability. Also, inform businesses about other funding opportunities such as the existing Revolving Loan Fund. Based on findings, the City should consider adjusting eligibility, loan terms, or allowable uses of funds. The Fund's program guidelines may be reviewed and updated as needed following the initial review, incorporating feedback and data on program performance, utilization, and other economic trends. In alignment with ED-P.1 San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Small Business Support Fund.	OED	Non-profit administrator of existing Revolving Loan Fund, CBOs	3-years, as determined following first outreach and review	General Fund

Partnerships to Possible Business Improvement District	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<b>ED-P.2 Establish Public-Private Partnerships</b> Build partnerships with community organizations, local institutions, merchant groups, property owners, and other stakeholders to activate community spaces and organize events consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4 Economic Development. Initial role for OED Liaison with lead shifting to business organizations and potential BID(s) over time. (See ED-P.5 Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area)	OED	PLNG, CBOs and business organizations	On-going	General Fund (staff time); partner contributions
<b>Outreach by OED Liaison</b> to potential community organization, business, and other private and institutional partners. This can include develop of a technical assistance FAQ for navigating permits such as encroachment permits, temporary use, temporary street closures, and vendor permits.	OED	PLNG, PW, Neighborhood Services/Special Events	0-3 years	
<b>Leverage Berkeley Business District Network and CBOs</b> to coordinate events and Plan Area-wide promotions.	OED	BBDN, CBOs	On-going	
<b>ED-P.3 Support and Expand Existing Business Clusters</b> City Support and Technical Assistance OED to offer technical assistance to emerging clusters as defined in the policy. Initial outreach by OED Liaison	OED	BBDN	On-going + 0-5 years	General Fund (staff time)
<b>Coordination with related policies:</b> Ensure coordination with implementation of Policy ED-P.6. Prioritize Initial Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes to ensure improvements are aligned with cluster organization initiatives. Ensure coordination with implementation of Policy ED-P.6. Prioritize Initial Public Investment on Improvements in the Nodes to ensure improvements are aligned with cluster organization initiatives.	OED, PLNG		On-going + 0-5 years	General Fund (staff time)
<b>ED-P.4 Study Feasibility of Forming a Business Improvement District (BID)</b> Fund and initiate a feasibility study of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the SPASP area, consistent with the Policy description in Chapter 4. City Support and Technical Assistance Gauge Plan Area stakeholder interest in moving forward with a feasibility study through initial OED Liaison outreach. (See ED-P.5 Establish an Economic Development Liaison for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area) Consider multiple geographies (full corridor vs. nodes), hybrid models, and cultural district components. Consider the potential for Community Benefit Districts and other organizations similar to BIDs. Conduct equity-centered outreach with businesses, property owners, CBOs, and nonprofits.	OED, OED Liaison	Local businesses and property owners	3 years (potentially earlier if strong interest is expressed by Plan Area stakeholder and funding is available)	General Fund (staff time) and grant funding

Continuing Multimodal Implementation	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timeline	Potential Funding Source
<b>T-P.17 Prioritize Connection with Surrounding Neighborhoods and Districts</b> Review and update priorities for future residents' needs for multimodal connections with the surrounding community, and take these priorities into consideration in future updates to the Berkeley Pedestrian Plan, the Bicycle Plan, and the Transit First Policy Implementation Plan	PW Trans	Partner agencies	Per timing of updates to modal plans	General Fund and grant funding
<b>T-P.18 Monitor Changing Multimodal Needs and Conditions</b> Work with partner agencies to undertake periodic safety assessments and assess multimodal needs within the Plan Area and the safety record of streets in the Plan Area. This could include a review and update of priorities and needed improvements. Use this updated list to guide future implementation, reflecting current conditions, safety need and community input.	PW Trans	Partner agencies	Periodically as needed Coordinate with updates to modal plans	General Fund for City staff time
<b>T-P.23 Maintain and improve bus service in collaboration with Alameda CTC and AC Transit</b> Coordinate with partners to align service levels to meet demand and plan for and implement infrastructure upgrades in alignment with the Transit First Policy Implementation Plan. Monitor progress, needs, and implementation through the AC Transit/City of Berkeley Interagency Liaison Committee. Also see implementation steps for Policy F-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue.	PW Trans	AC Transit, ACTC, Caltrans, PLNG	On-going	Staff participation in Liaison Committee is already funded.
<b>T-P.4 Implement signal timing and transit signal priority (TSP)</b> Coordinate with partner agencies to assess bus transit reliability resulting from existing TSP improvements and Safety Enhancement project bus stop improvements. It is assumed that Safety Enhancement improvements will be complete by end of 2026. Following assessment identify funding for design and construction of any recommended additional improvements.	PW Trans	Alameda CTC, Caltrans, AC Transit City of Albany	2-5 years	County, Regional, and state grants
<b>T-P.2 Future Transportation Study Needs for San Pablo Avenue</b> Coordinate with Alameda CTC, AC Transit, Caltrans, and City of Albany to initiate and complete Multimodal Complete Streets Study of San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley and Albany to determine a preferred design concept for redesign of the street and work together towards construction of the preferred concept. This study will address the feasibility of dedicated bus lanes and separated bikeways on San Pablo Avenue north of the Ashby Avenue and Heinz Street intersections. In addition, assess the benefits of the other two multimodal projects after their construction. This process includes the following steps: Assess operations and benefits of Alameda CTC's Bus-Bike Lanes Project on San Pablo Avenue (Downtown Oakland to Ashby/Heinz) following construction, completion currently anticipated in 2028 with analysis of project expected to occur x years after construction. Prepare to initiate multimodal complete streets study of San Pablo Avenue north of Heinz Street by coordinating with partner agencies to define scope and funding; study to be led by Alameda CTC. Scoping of study to be informed by assessment of initial Bus-Bike Project and needs within the study area at that time.	PW Trans	Alameda CTC, Caltrans, AC Transit City of Albany	Assessment of initial Bus-Bike Lanes Project should occur at least 6 months after complete. Initiate study following assessment of initial project with timing to be determined.	General Fund (staff time), Alameda CTC funding for post construction analysis County, Regional, State, and Federal Grants Alameda CTC CIP

# San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

## Next Steps

### Thank you!

Thank you for joining today's meeting and sharing your time and comments. Your feedback plays a key role in finalizing the Specific Plan.

### Questions? Email us:

[SanPabloPlan@Berkeleyca.gov](mailto:SanPabloPlan@Berkeleyca.gov)

### Review the Specific Plan

Use the link below to visit our public comment page, where you can explore

- The City's website,
- Review the full draft or,
- Any chapter you're interested in.
- Sign-up for Updates on the City's Website including Public Hearing Dates and More.



### Next Steps

- **October 29th to January 2026**
  - Public Review Period
- **November 6th 2025**
  - City Council Update on SPASP Process
- **Winter 2025/ 2026**
  - Transportation and Infrastructure Commission
  - Planning Commission Meeting
  - Preparation of the Final Draft Plan
  - City Council Meeting
- **Spring/ Summer 2026**
  - Preparation of the Final Plan
  - Plan Adoption at Planning Commission and City Council

### Timeline

