

City of Albany



TO: ALBANY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: JUSTIN FRIED, TRANSPORTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: 5-1. PROPOSED RED CURB RESTRICTED PARKING AT THE WASHINGTON AND PIERCE INTERSECTION AND RELOCATION OF AC TRANSIT LINE LA NORTHBOUND BUS STOP FROM THE NEAR SIDE OF THE PIERCE AND WASHINGTON INTERSECTION TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE PIERCE AND SOLANO INTERSECTION

AGENDA DATE: MAY 23, 2024

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission recommend that staff install approximately 37 feet of additional red curb on the west side of Pierce Street north of Washington Avenue adjacent to 764 Pierce Street and permit AC Transit to relocate the bus stop from the southeast corner of Pierce and Washington to the northeast corner of Pierce and Solano adjacent to 801 Solano Avenue.

BACKGROUND

In March and July 2013, the Traffic & Safety Commission (now the Transportation Commission) discussed the relocation of the northbound Pierce Street AC Transit Bus Stop from the southeast corner of Pierce and Washington to the northeast corner of Pierce and Solano in line with AC Transit bus stop location guidance to improve safety of transit riders and motorists. The main topics discussed at those meetings were uncertainty around the safety benefits of the one intersection over the other and the impacts for the residence in front of the proposed stop.

Line 80 serving Pierce Street has been suspended since COVID-19 pandemic reductions in AC Transit bus service. AC Transit is currently undergoing service planning, known as AC Transit Realign. While the final service plan has not yet been approved, none of the financially constrained alternatives that have been prepared have included the restoration of Line 80. Transbay service is currently proposed to remain, with an altered Line L/LA route serving Pierce Street.

On February 26, 2024, a motor vehicle collision was reported involving an eastbound motorist proceeding straight after stopping and a southbound vehicle. The eastbound motorist at fault stated that they came to a complete stop and checked for motorists before entering the intersection and the southbound motorist reported they were traveling at 25 miles per hour.

In reviewing collision history at this intersection, staff identified 3 additional injury collisions involving eastbound motorists between 2012 and 2023. On February 18, 2015, with a southbound motor vehicle (Case ID 6931065); on March 31, 2018, with a northbound vehicle (Case ID 8684446); and on December 28, 2023, with a northbound motor vehicle (Case ID 9599099).

DISCUSSION

Intersection Visibility

As part of the city's roadway maintenance, Pierce Street was recently resurfaced, and the street and curb markings refreshed. The City also installed intersection red curb to improve visibility per the City's Intersection Red Curb Policy and California Vehicle Code restrictions on parking in advance of intersections. In reviewing the striping refresh, staff identified locations for additional review. Given the collision history at this location, staff reviewed the visibility for eastbound motorists entering the intersection.

View North from Eastbound Washington Approach



*Vehicle is in second space north of current red curb

View South from Eastbound Washington Approach



*Vehicle is a couple of feet over current red curb

Washington and Pierce is a two-way stop-controlled intersection, with no stop for Pierce Street traffic. There is an all-way stop one block (200 feet) to the south at Solano Avenue. There is a downward slope along Pierce from north to south and along Washington from east to west. The most recent traffic survey conducted along Pierce Street counted an average weekday daily volume of 3,455 vehicles, with 2,721 traveling faster than 25 mph. Vehicle speeds averaged 28 mph, with an 85th percentile speed of 32 mph at a location further north along Pierce Street. No survey has been done at this intersection; vehicle speeds may be faster in the southbound downhill direction here compared to the uphill northbound direction departing from the stop at Solano Avenue.

Per the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, a stopping sight distance of 150 feet should be provided for a roadway with a posted speed limit of 25 mph. Stopping sight distance is the distance required by the driver of a vehicle to bring the vehicle to a stop after an object on the road becomes visible in advance of reaching the object. Although it is beyond the default intersection treatment, given the collision history, staff recommends bringing the intersection visibility closer to this standard.

Given the proximity of the stop at Solano, and the southbound direction being the closer travel lane to eastbound vehicles, the staff recommendation is to increase the vehicle parking restrictions along the southbound approach from the current 20 feet by an additional 37 feet to the first driveway. Although not precise, this would increase sight distance from about 60 feet to 120 feet.

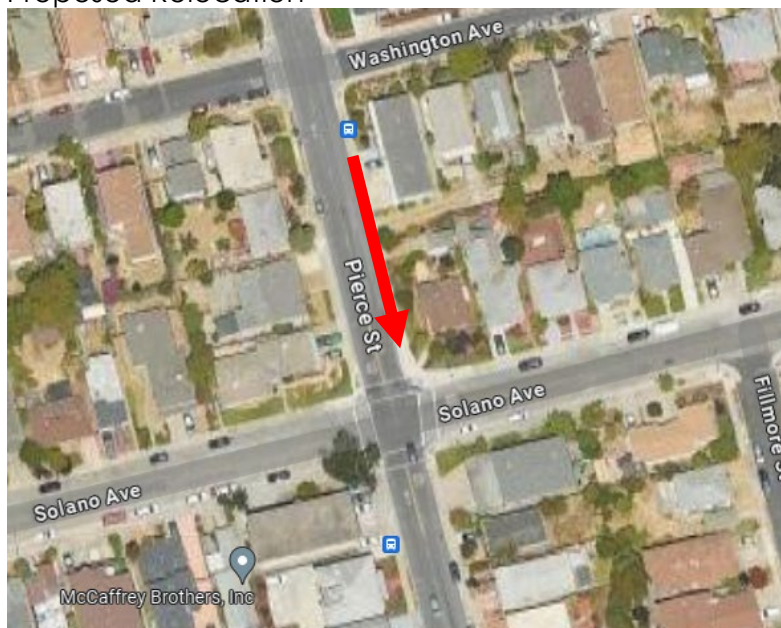
Other Options: If the Commission prefers to retain the first parking space south of the driveway (the one utilized in the photo above), 17 feet of additional red curb could be installed (providing a sight distance of approximately 90 feet). If the Commission prefers

to include increasing the sight distance to northbound vehicles, 10 feet of additional red curb on the southwest departure could be installed (increasing current sight distance from approximately 85 feet to 115 feet).

AC Transit Bus Stop Location

AC Transit's Bus Stop Policy (Board Policy No. 501) states a preference for far-side bus stops at both controlled and uncontrolled intersections. Identified advantages include reducing conflicts between right turning vehicles and stopped buses, eliminating sight-distance deficiencies on approaches to the intersection, encouraging pedestrians to cross at the rear of the bus, and requiring shorter maneuvering distance for the buses to enter and leave moving traffic. The policy lists two disadvantages with far-side bus stops: bus obscuring sight-distance to a n automobile driver turning fricht from the cross street, which should be addressed by locating stops at controlled intersections, and where the bus stop is too short, the rear of the bus will obstruct the cross street. The update to the policy is not anticipated to change the current siting preferences as the safety considerations have not changed.

Proposed Relocation



Solano and Pierce is an all-way stop controlled intersection and has parking restricted for the first 50 feet north of the crosswalk, addressing the disadvantages of the far-side bus stops noted above. In looking at these particular stop locations, AC Transit staff noted the double yellow lines adjacent to the stop location at Solano and whether motorists would comply with that or go around a stopped bus. The nearside stop at Washington at a two-way stop presents visibility issues. That along with the safety benefit for riders crossing at the four-way stop at Solano lead to AC Transit staff recommending the move. This would also place the northbound stop in closer proximity to the paired southbound stop at the southwest corner of Solano and Pierce.

The bus stop relocation would not involve additional motor vehicle parking restrictions, as approximately 50 feet of red curb is already in place at the proposed location. The existing bus stop location at the southeast corner of Pierce and Washington does not have red curb markings for the full length of the stop, as is standard practice. The stop relocation would mean that the 20 feet of red curb on the approach to the intersection would remain and the remainder of the bus stop would be available for motor vehicle parking for one car before the first driveway.

Existing Stop Location, Southeast Corner of Pierce and Washington



Proposed Stop Location, Northeast Corner of Pierce and Solano

