

ECR Bus Speed and Reliability Study

Draft Recommendations

Public Meeting
May 19th, 2022

Study Goal and Outcomes

Goal

- Increase bus **speeds** and improve bus **reliability** on El Camino Real

Desired Outcomes

- A better rider experience
- Improve rider access to social and economic opportunities
- Better driving experience for our bus operators
- Improve route efficiency
- Attract new riders and support ridership recovery

Study Background



We're here

Importance of Route ECR



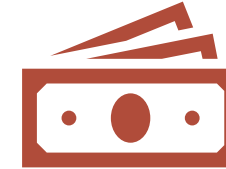
Backbone of Network

- Serves 13 cities across 28 miles and 105 bus stops each way
- Provides connections to BART, Caltrain, Muni, VTA, and two-thirds of SamTrans routes



Ridership Workhorse

- Generates about 25% of daily SamTrans ridership
- Primarily serves lower income riders and people of color

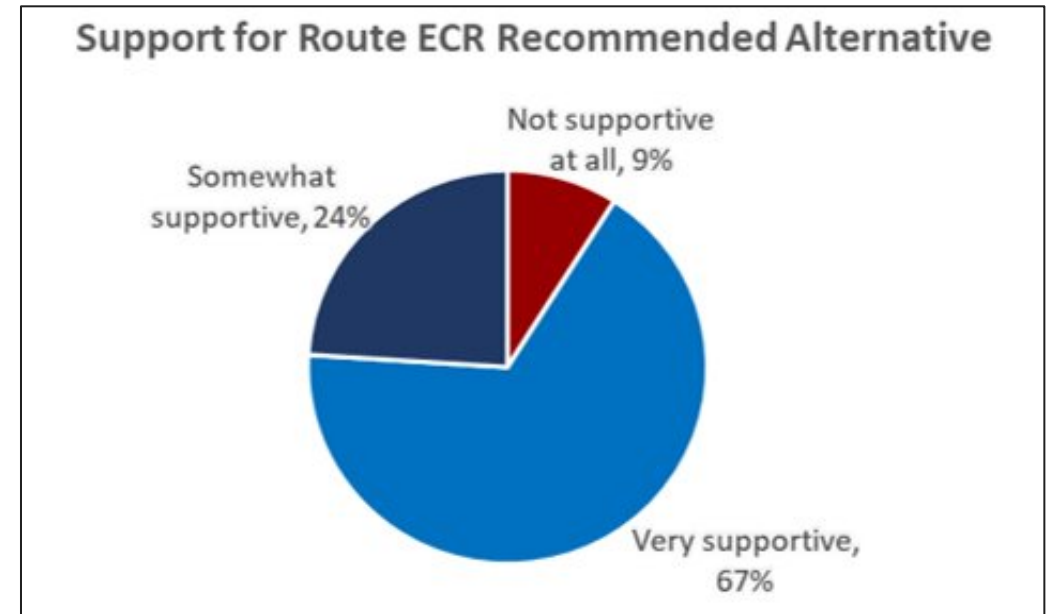


Resource-intensive

- About 20% of bus operations budget
- Very long route, challenging to operate

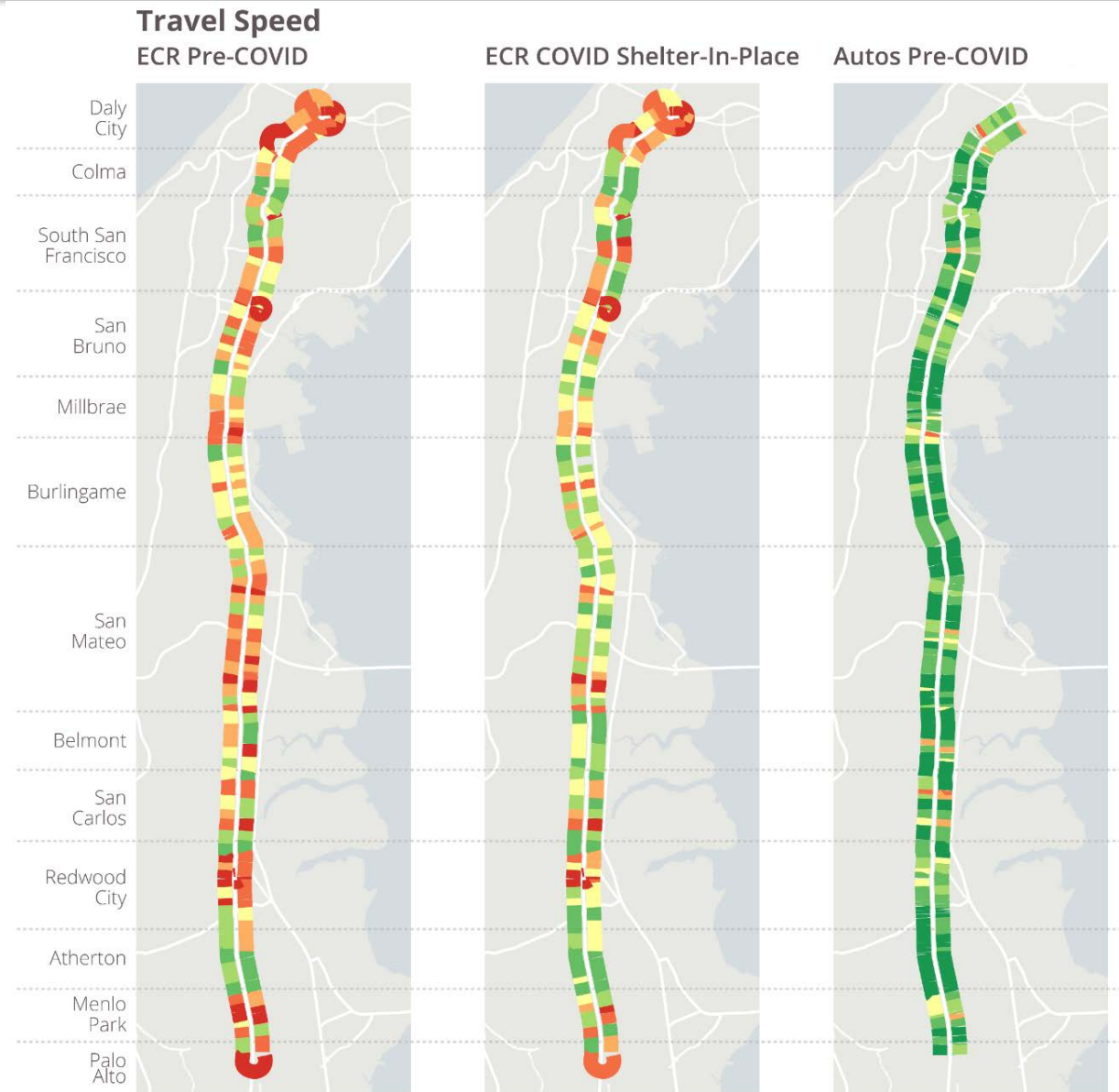
Building on *Reimagine SamTrans*

- During *Reimagine SamTrans*, public requested:
 - Faster service, better reliability, more frequent service
- Final new network includes
 - more frequent service on weekends
 - a stop consolidation effort to reduce stops by up to 30% on Route ECR



Current conditions on El Camino Real

- **There is no single bottleneck** on El Camino Real
- **Faster bus service is possible:** travel times decreased 15 to 25 percent during COVID shelter-in-place orders



How did we develop the recommendations?

Identified recommendations based on:

- Expected travel time savings and reliability improvements
- Rider benefits and impacts
- Relative costs
- Feasibility
 - Coordination required between SamTrans, municipalities, Caltrans
 - Right of way constraints

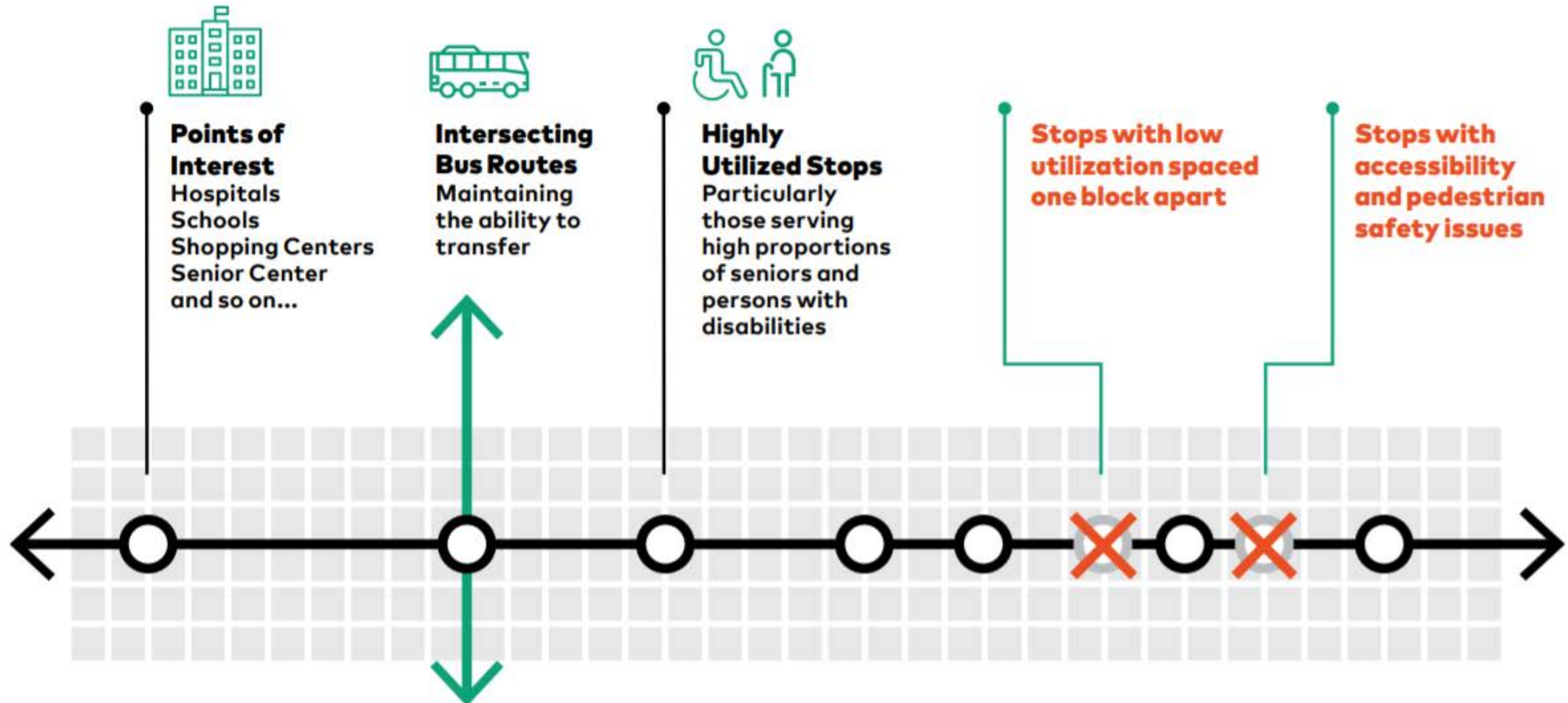
Summary of Draft Recommendations

Four types of recommendations are included:

1. Bus Stop Balancing
2. Capital and Bus Stop Placement Improvements
3. Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Optimization
4. Bus-Only or HOV Lanes

1. Bus Stop Balancing

The Basics of Bus Stop Balancing

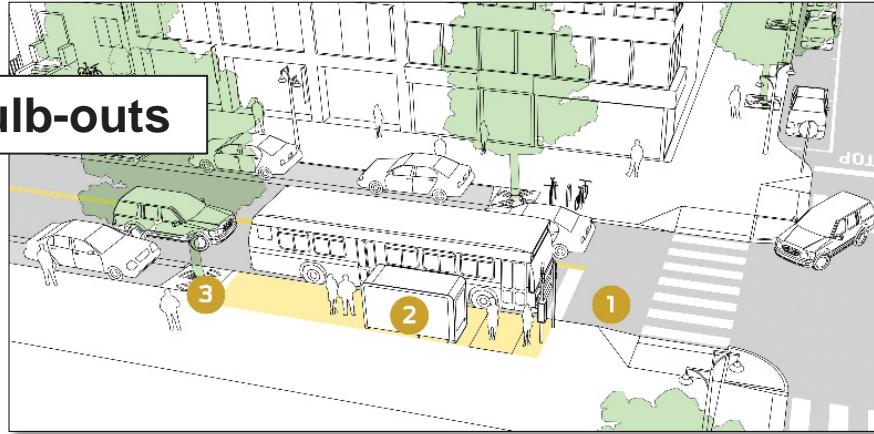


1. Bus Stop Balancing

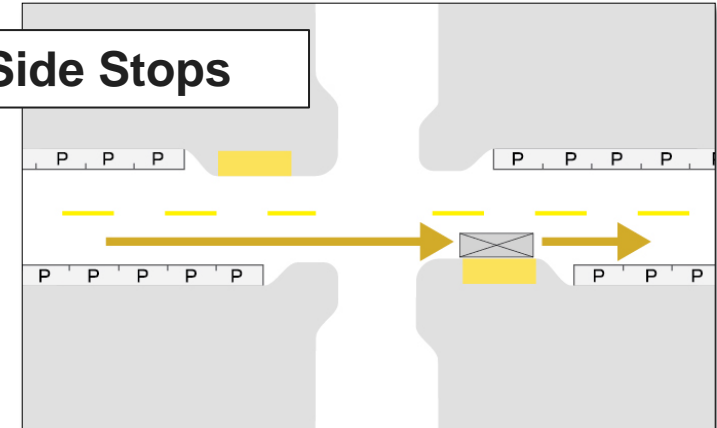
- Draft Recommendations include 30% overall reduction in number of Route ECR stops (~64 stops total)
- Maintain spacing consistent with ridership and land use density:
 - ¼ mile spacing in high density, high ridership areas
 - ½ mile spacing in low density, low ridership areas
- Supported by public input: **70% of Reimagine survey respondents** said they would be willing to **walk farther for faster bus service**

2. Capital & Stop Placement Improvements

Bus Bulb-outs



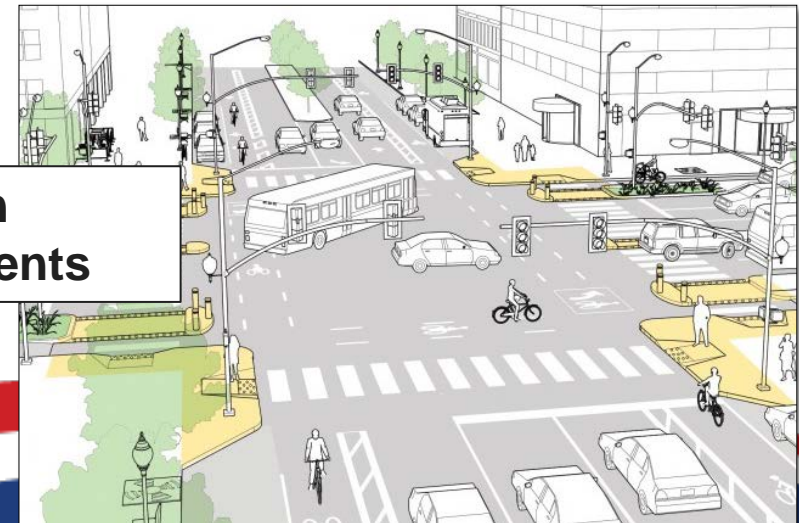
Far-Side Stops



Queue Jumps



Pedestrian Improvements

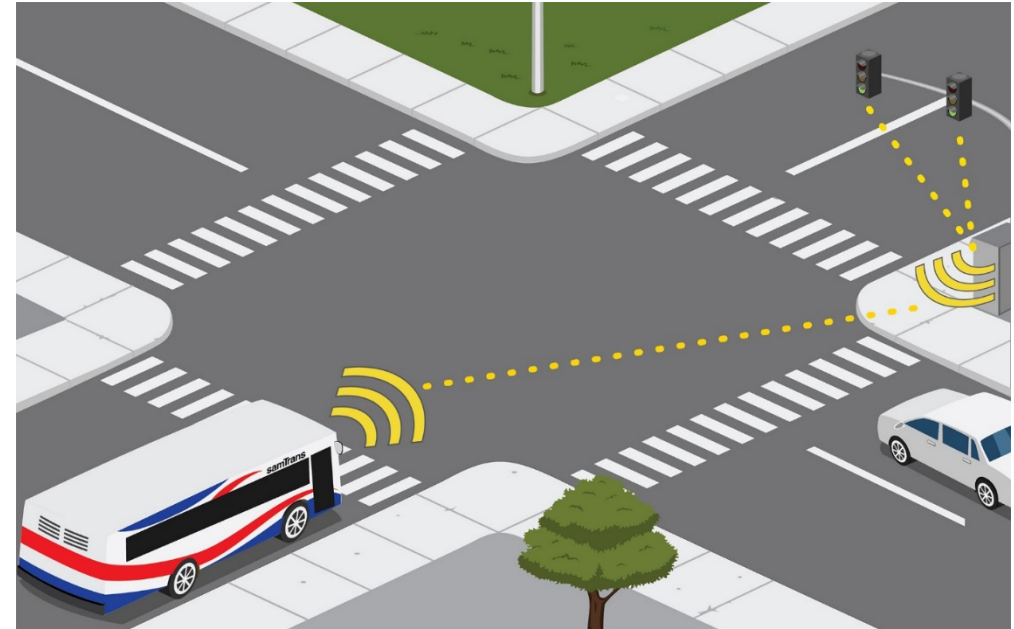


2. Capital & Stop Placement Improvements

- Draft recommendations include:
 - Bus bulbs at ~70 stops along corridor
 - Queue jumps near ~7 stops
 - Pedestrian access improvements at ~40 stops
 - Relocation of 15-25% of stops (e.g., near-side to far-side of intersection)

3. Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Optimization

- TSP installed in January 2021 at every signal on El Camino Real
- Bus requests green light extension when approaching an intersection
- Ways to optimize:
 - Increase the green light extension time
 - Relocate stops from near-side to far-side of intersection



4. Bus-Only or HOV Lanes

- Most effective improvement measure, with the biggest tradeoffs
- SamTrans analyzed four factors to prioritize potential segments:
 - Bus speeds pre-COVID
 - Increase in speeds during COVID
 - Bus passenger loads
 - Right of way & six-lane cross-sections
- San Mateo, Millbrae, San Bruno, and Menlo Park demonstrated greatest potential & operational benefit



Lombard Street (US-101) Bus/HOV Lane Pilot

Looking Ahead

- Continued coordination with the cities and Caltrans
- Incorporate findings from stakeholder and public outreach
- Finalize recommendations and bring to Board in early Fall 2022
- Begin implementing bus stop balancing in 2023
 - Will communicate with riders again before implementation

Project Website – www.samtrans.com/ecrstudy

On the website, you can:

- Download full list of draft recommendations
- Submit a comment
- Find a link to the interactive stop change map

Improvement opportunities

- **Bus stop balancing and relocation** removes bus stops that are too close together and relocates bus stops to the far-side of the intersection to help buses travel faster and more reliably.
- **Bus bulbs** are curb extensions that allow buses to stop in the lane of traffic. Bus bulbs improve speed and reliability by reducing the amount of time lost when merging in and out of traffic, while also reducing pedestrian crossing distances.
- **Queue jumps** allow buses to enter traffic flow from a dedicated bus lane or right-turn only lane and reduce delay for buses merging back into traffic.
- **Bus-only lanes** help buses bypass traffic congestion to achieve faster and more reliable service.

[Click here](#) to download the initial draft list of improvements on El Camino Real.

We want to hear from you!

Do you want reduced travel times? Shorter and more predictable wait times? Help us speed up Route ECR and tell us what improvements you want to see on El Camino Real. You can provide comments by commenting below or on the interactive map, joining the community meeting, or emailing ecrstudy@samtrans.com

Your Email

Add Comment

SUBMIT

Email address is optional. SamTrans respects your privacy - your email address will only be used for communications related to transportation in the Bay Area and will not be sold to third parties for advertising purposes.

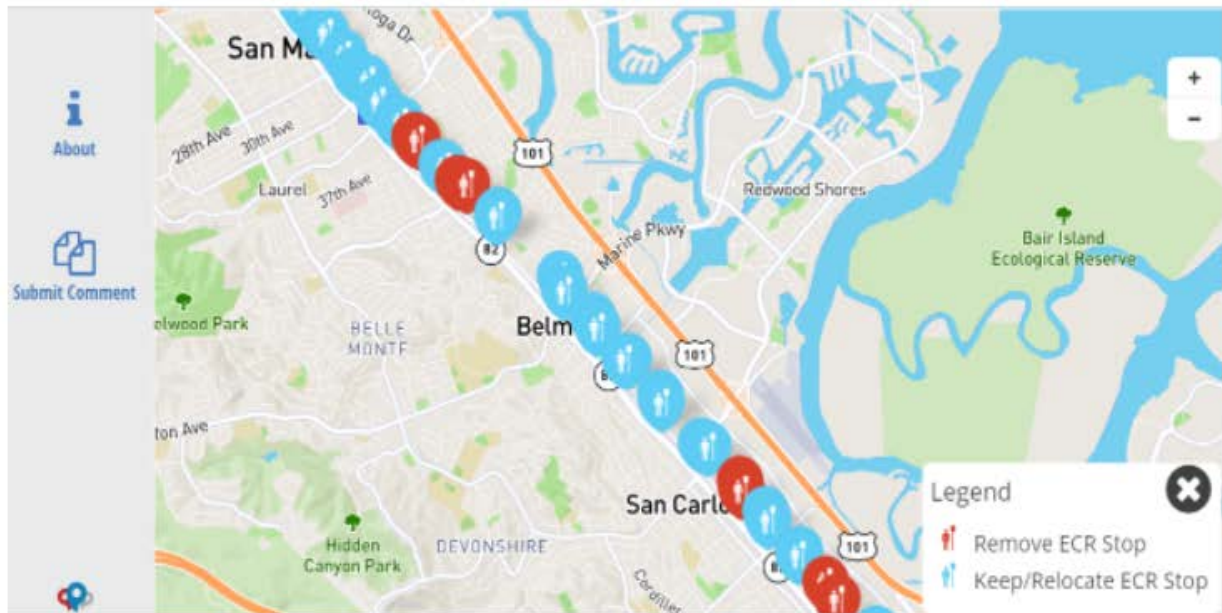
[Interactive map](#)

View your neighborhood stops and provide your comments directly on this [interactive map](#) of the **draft** bus stop balancing effort for Route ECR. Please note that this is an early phase of identifying stops for removal/consolidation. We will conduct additional rider outreach before making any changes.

Project Website – www.samtrans.com/ecrstudy

- Interactive Map of *draft* bus stop balancing
 - Will conduct customer communications before any bus stops are removed

View your neighborhood stops and provide your comments directly on this [interactive map](#) of the **draft** bus stop balancing effort for Route ECR.



SB @ Bellevue Avenue
This stop would be removed to improve bus speeds and reliability on Route ECR. Riders would be redirected to the nearest stop. How would this change affect you?

[Start a discussion](#)

👍 Agree | Disagree 🗨️

🔍 Zoom in 🕒 2 months ago

Let us know what you think!

- Discussion
 - Does your trip on the bus take longer than you anticipated?
 - Which type of recommendations do you support?
 - Are there other ideas for how to make Route ECR faster?
 - How would a faster bus benefit you?
 - Other questions/comments?
- Please also give feedback at www.samtrans.com/ecrstudy