

Truck Routes

In accordance with the California Vehicle Code, trucks are allowed on all streets to make deliveries. However, through truck traffic (trucks on a street where no delivery is being made) is not permitted on local streets. The state allows local jurisdictions to limit truck traffic on other streets as well by designating truck routes that provide access to all areas of the City. El Cerrito does not post accepted truck route signs, but it posts truck prohibitions and areas with truck weight limits (see Figure 8).

Truck prohibition signs are posted in the southwest corner of the City in the area bounded by Central Avenue, Carlson Boulevard, Cerrito Creek, and the City of Richmond City limits. Truck weight limits are used in El Cerrito to prohibit heavy trucks from attempting to travel on steep streets such as Moeser Lane and the eastern portion of Potrero Avenue. Other streets with truck weight limits are a small segment of Cutting Boulevard between Fairview Avenue and Arlington Boulevard, and Rifle Range Road east of Arlington Boulevard.

Emergency Response Routes

Emergency response routes are the routes that police, fire and paramedic vehicles use when traveling to the scene of an emergency. These routes are generally located on streets with adequate width to accommodate large vehicles. All arterials are generally considered part of the emergency response routes, although emergency vehicles may avoid these streets during heavy peaks when the arterials are congested. El Cerrito emergency response routes are shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND TRUCK ROUTES

Parking

Most residences in El Cerrito have at least one off-street parking space, and there is generally on-street parking available for additional cars and the vehicles of visitors. Most non-residential uses (retail and office) in El Cerrito also have an adequate supply of on-site parking with the exception of many commercial areas on San Pablo Avenue. Along much of San Pablo Avenue, older businesses do not provide off-street parking facilities, leaving only on-street parking for customers, which is sometimes inadequate. This lack of parking tends to thwart full productive use of properties.

The other exception is in the vicinities of the two BART stations, which experience high parking occupancies and parking spillover onto adjacent properties. Neighborhood parking permits have been used to protect residential areas surrounding BART stations from parking intrusion. In areas with neighborhood parking permits (see Figure 9), residents displaying parking permit stickers are permitted to park for an unlimited time. Vehicles without permits can park for only two or four hours, depending on the posted sign, and run the risk of being ticketed if they park for a longer time.

BART Stations

The Del Norte BART Station provides over 2,000 off-street parking spaces, including about 1,300 in a parking structure. There are also about 1,000 on-street parking spaces within a half-mile radius of the BART Station.

El Cerrito Plaza BART contains about 800 on-site parking spaces. In addition, by courtesy of the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center operators, BART riders are currently permitted to park on a portion of the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center parking area. This generally is parking that, in the past, served the Emporium store, which closed in 1996. Based on observations made in March 1997, about 350 BART riders were parking on the Plaza site. As of spring 1999, the owners of the Plaza are proposing substantial reconstruction of the center, and it is not expected that BART patrons will continue to be able to park on the side of the shopping center.

Funds are available to the City from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to build a parking structure of approximately 400 spaces as an expansion of BART patron parking. Although the City has considered locating the structure on a portion of the shopping center site, it appears most likely that the parking will be developed on BART property, possibly in conjunction with a mixed-use development on the western part of the BART site.



Figure 9 PARKING ISSUES

Transit

El Cerrito is served primarily by AC Transit and BART but, because the Del Norte BART station is a major transit transfer location, it is also served by WestCAT Transit, Vallejo Transit, and Golden Gate Transit. Figure 10 shows the current transit routes within El Cerrito.

BART

The El Cerrito Del Norte and El Cerrito Plaza BART stations lie on the Richmond - Fremont and Richmond – San Francisco/Colma lines. The El Cerrito BART station is the closest station to the Bay on the East Bay portion of the system. BART service runs from approximately 4 a.m. to midnight, with headways of approximately 15 minutes throughout the day. Figures provided by BART in 1996 showed that approximately 7,100 people enter and 8,000 people exit the Del Norte BART station, the larger of the two stations, during a typical weekday. The imbalance is due primarily to morning peak period carpoolers (including casual carpoolers) who use BART to return in the afternoon. Roughly 28 percent of the daily BART traffic occurs during the a.m. peak period (6 to 9 a.m.) and 32 percent occurs during the p.m. peak period (4 to 7 p.m.).

On weekends, BART service is offered from 6 a.m. to midnight on Saturdays and 8 a.m. to midnight on Sundays, with headways of approximately 20 minutes throughout the day. Figures provided by BART in 1996 showed that approximately 2,500 people enter and 2,900 people exit the Del Norte BART station during a typical Saturday.

AC Transit

AC Transit bus coverage within El Cerrito is fairly comprehensive, with most houses within a quarter mile of a transit stop and all houses within a half-mile. Due to budget constraints, AC Transit has reduced or eliminated weekend and off-peak (particularly evening) service on many routes such that route frequencies are less than desired frequencies on most routes. Transit routes are: San Pablo Avenue; the Colusa Avenue – Ashbury Avenue – Navellier Street – Ganges Street – Glen Mawr Avenue – Cutting Boulevard corridor; Arlington Boulevard in the north-south directions; Barrett Avenue; Cutting Boulevard; Potrero Avenue; Stockton Avenue; and the Central Avenue – Fairmount Avenue corridor in the east-west direction.

San Pablo Avenue is one of AC Transit's key transit corridors. AC Transit has received grant funding and is scheduled to prepare a planning study for the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The study will evaluate bus rapid transit treatments for high-frequency routes: Line 72, which serves North Oakland, and Line 82, which serves South and East Oakland. The study will also evaluate physical and technological enhancements that can be used to improve transit vehicle travel times.

Transit First

The City of El Cerrito has taken a step toward making AC Transit more efficient by adopting a Transit First Policy. It is the official policy of the City of El Cerrito to encourage public transit among El Cerrito residents and visitors, and expedite the movement of transit vehicles.