

To: Marketing, Planning & Legislation Committee

Date: 08/25/2025

From: Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: AMS

SUBJECT: Proposed Route 4 alignment

Background:

For several decades, County Connection has operated the Walnut Creek Downtown Circulator as a vital public transit service. Initially known as Route 104, it was later redesignated as Route 4. Since the 1980s, the City of Walnut Creek has partnered with County Connection to provide a fare subsidy, making rides free on weekdays and Saturdays. Subsequent agreements expanded the free service to seven days a week. Notably, Route 4 is the only route in the system served by the prototype Gillig Electric “Trolleys”.

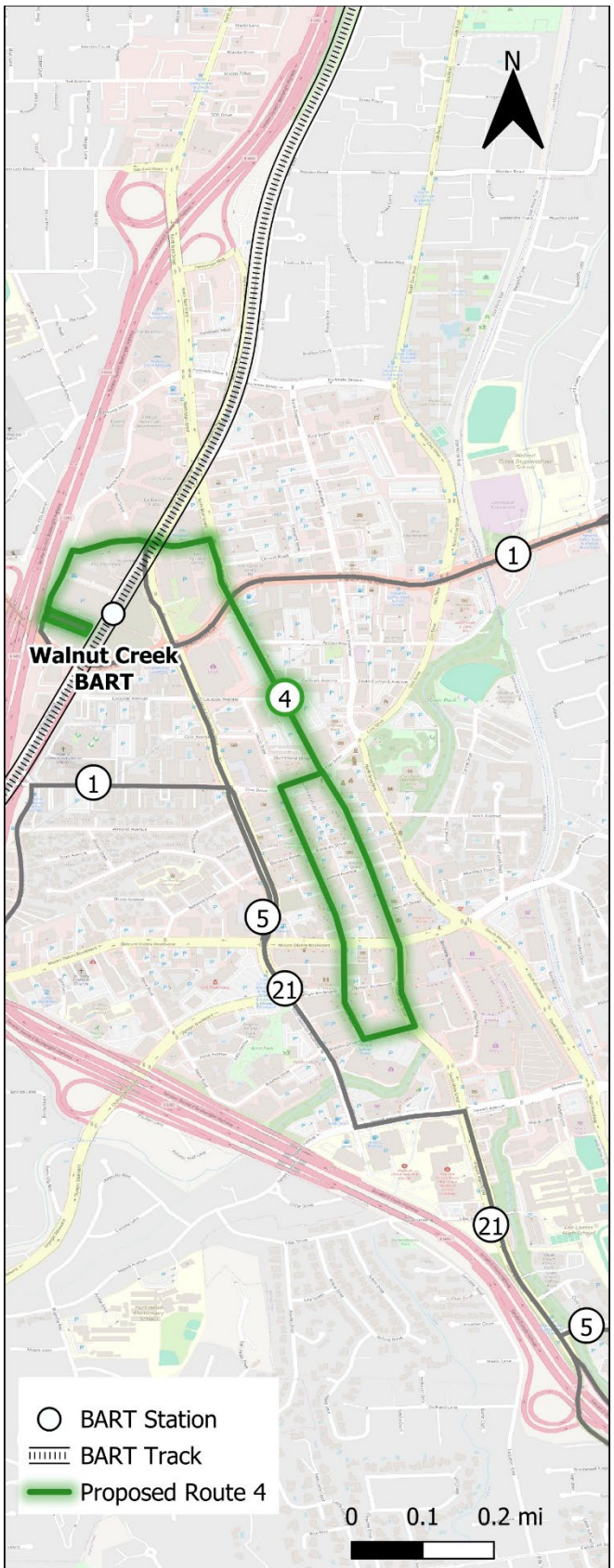
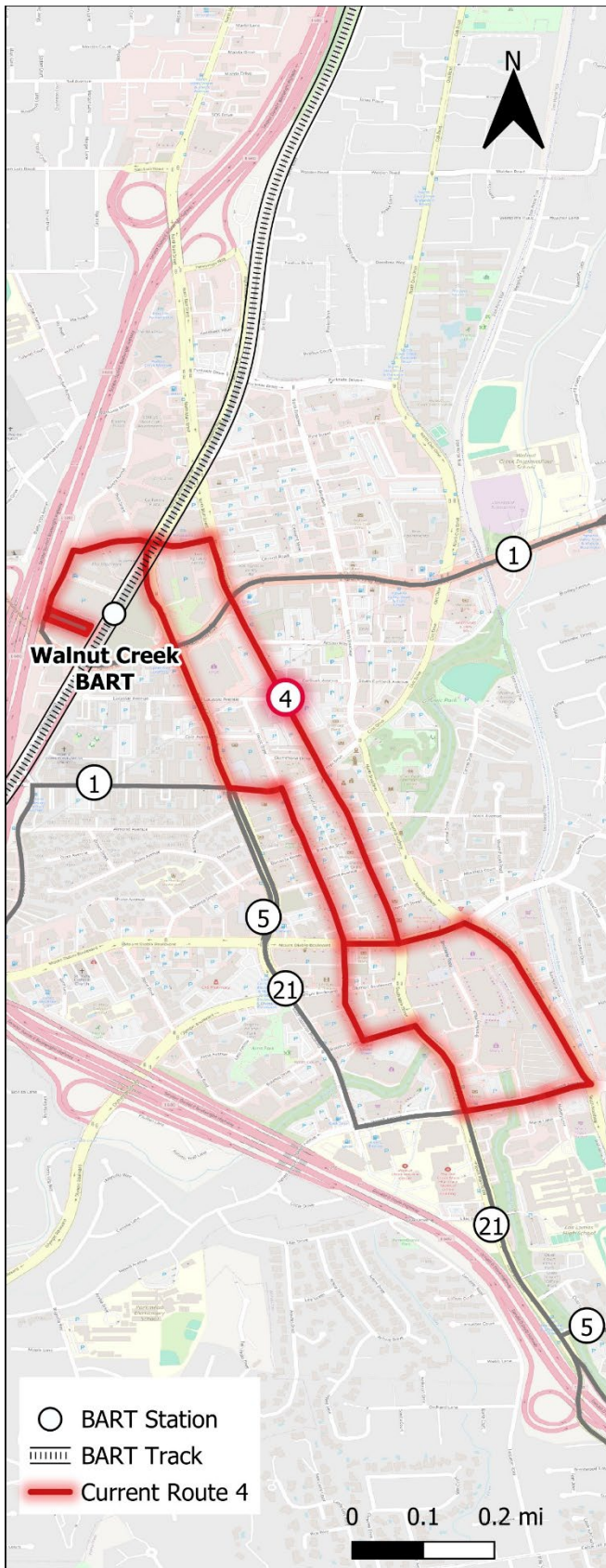
Alignment Change:

Route 4 historically provided a direct connection between Walnut Creek BART and downtown Walnut Creek, including traveling along Broadway Plaza (the street that passes through the shopping mall of the same name). After the construction of the Plaza Escuela shopping center and southerly extension of Locust Street in the early 2000s, the route was restructured to incorporate a figure-8 movement along Botelho Drive and Locust Street, thereby adding two-left turns and necessitating travel along Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Locust Street to Main Street in both inbound and outbound directions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Broadway Plaza (the street) was closed for security reasons, forcing a rerouting to travel along South Broadway and Newell Avenue. Following the pandemic, ridership and traffic increased, creating significant congestion that affected the route's on-time performance. In addition to general traffic, the route's numerous left turns and frequent stops to accommodate its popularity caused delays leading reduced time for charging electric buses.

The proposed new alignment as shown in figure below aims to address these issues by:

- **Streamlining the route** to provide more reliable service while still serving popular destinations.
- **Leveraging existing pedestrian infrastructure** to facilitate movement to and from bus stops, allowing the buses to focus on providing frequent, reliable service.
- **Improving bus stops** to meet current ADA standards, a project to be completed in partnership with the City of Walnut Creek.
- **Optimizing stop locations** by balancing stop spacing and moving stops to the far side of intersections when possible. This strategy leverages the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) system, which has been deployed as part of the IDEA TSP project, to improve on-time performance.



Frequency Improvement:

Additionally, staff had previously partnered with the City of Walnut Creek and RCD Housing on an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant for the **Civic Crossing** project, a new affordable housing development at 699 Ygnacio Valley Road.

The grant was awarded in April 2024 and provides funding for several transit-related improvements, including:

- Additional Transit Signal Priority (TSP) infrastructure
- New bus shelters with real-time signage
- Operating funds to restore 15-minute frequency on Route 4 on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The grant provides County Connection with a total of \$4.15 million over the course of five years for the expanded service on the Route 4.

Financial Implications:

The costs associated with operating the additional service are fully covered by the grant, which will fund these expenses for approximately five years.

Recommendation:

None, for information only. Staff will be presenting a Title VI Equity Analysis and holding a public hearing at the October Board meeting for potential approval of the proposed service.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None.