

UNDERCROSSINGS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Engagement Summary Spring/Summer 2025



7th St
under I-980



Last Updated December 2025



Broadway
under I-880



CITY OF
OAKLAND

DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION



BACKGROUND

Project Scope

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The goal of this project is to improve undercrossings for people walking, biking, and rolling.

Undercrossing Improvements will include:

- **Lighting** will help make people feel safer and could be colorful or fun to look at.
- **Wayfinding** will help people know where they are and see where they want to go.
- **Placemaking** makes the space feel safe, welcoming, and reflective of the surrounding community.

Lighting



Wayfinding



Placemaking



Project Locations

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This project will improve four freeway undercrossings:

- 7th Street under I-980
- Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880
- Washington Street under I-880
- Broadway under I-880



Engagement Methods

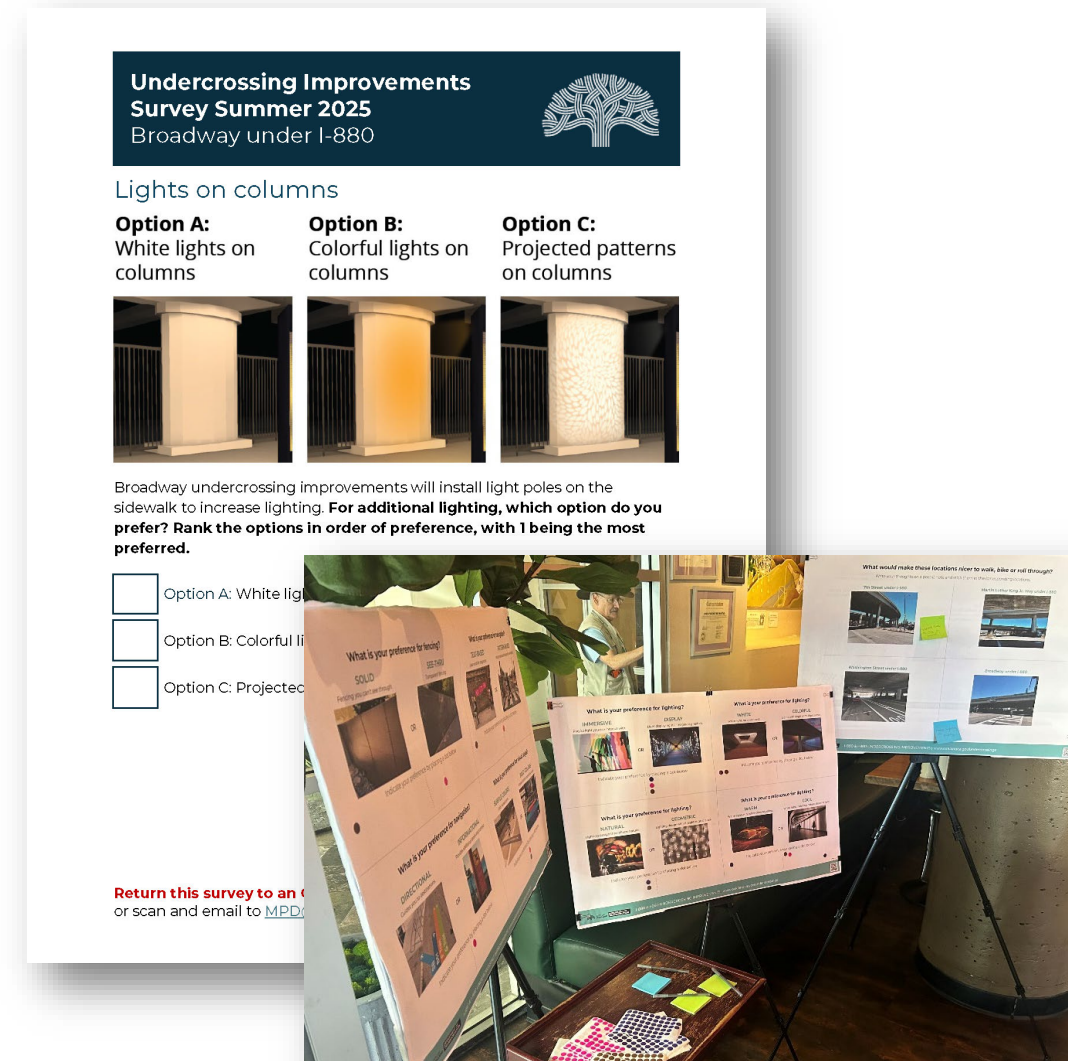
5

Previous engagement from Fall-Winter 2024 indicated community concerns around lighting, wayfinding, traffic safety, personal safety, cleanliness, community identity, and support for unhoused people. For more info on past engagement activities, visit OaklandCA.gov/Undercrossings.

From **May 1 through June 30, 2025**, the Undercrossing Improvements team engaged with community members in two ways:

Online survey: Over 700 people responded to a survey questions distributed online, in person, and through word-of-mouth in the project area.

In-person and virtual meetings: The project team presented project updates and survey questions at meetings with 13 organizations or commissions that were previously engaged.



Engagement – Online Survey

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The Undercrossing Improvements project staff chose design elements based on previous engagement and ongoing research of Caltrans' requirements in these spaces. The survey asked questions about these elements and their appearance. *Final designs will rely on Caltrans approval.*

Survey Facts

736 respondents (including 32 polled in person)

Offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese

Distributed through:

- Social media
- UXI project newsletter
- OakDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission newsletter
- City of Alameda newsletter
- 7th Street Thrives newsletter
- McClymonds High School newsletter
- In-person meetings and word of mouth

Respondents' relationships with the UXI project area:



Engagement – In-Person and Virtual Meetings

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Meetings and presentations in 2025 focused on 13 previously engaged organizations and City of Oakland commissions that address disadvantaged groups.

These activities took place in the West Oakland, Downtown Oakland, Old Oakland, Chinatown, or Jack London Square neighborhoods.

Date	Organization or Commission
May 8	Oakland Youth Commission (OYC)
May 18	Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD)
May 20	Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council (OCIC)
May 21	McClymonds High School staff
May 22	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
May 23	Jack London Improvement District (JLID)
May 27	7th Street Thrives meeting
June 2	Oak Center Neighborhood Association (OCNA)
June 5	8 Orchids – Board of Homeowners Association
June 10	Kinetic Arts Center
June 12	Oaklandish
June 12	OakDOT MPD Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
June 25	Mayor's Commission on Homelessness



SURVEY RESULTS

7th Street under I-980

9

These images suggest making the undercrossing more colorful by adding designs to the columns.

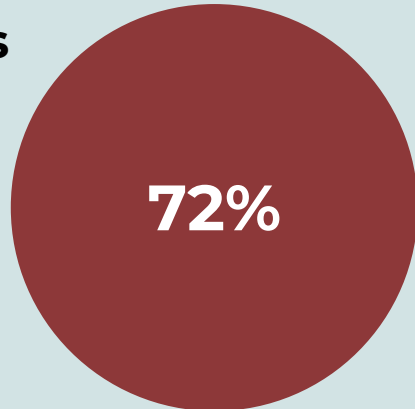
Which design option do you prefer?

Most (72%) preferred

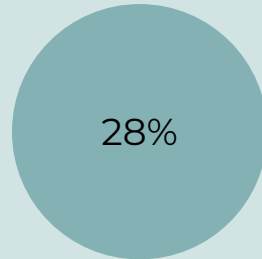
Option B: Black liberation history and the words “West Oakland”.

Should the undercrossing have designs on the sidewalk?

Yes



No



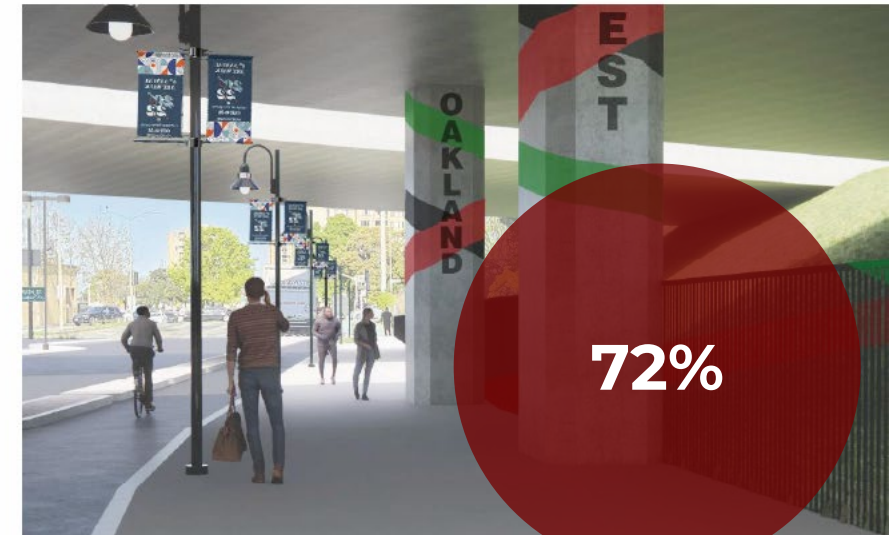
Option A:

Music notes to represent the history of Black jazz/blues



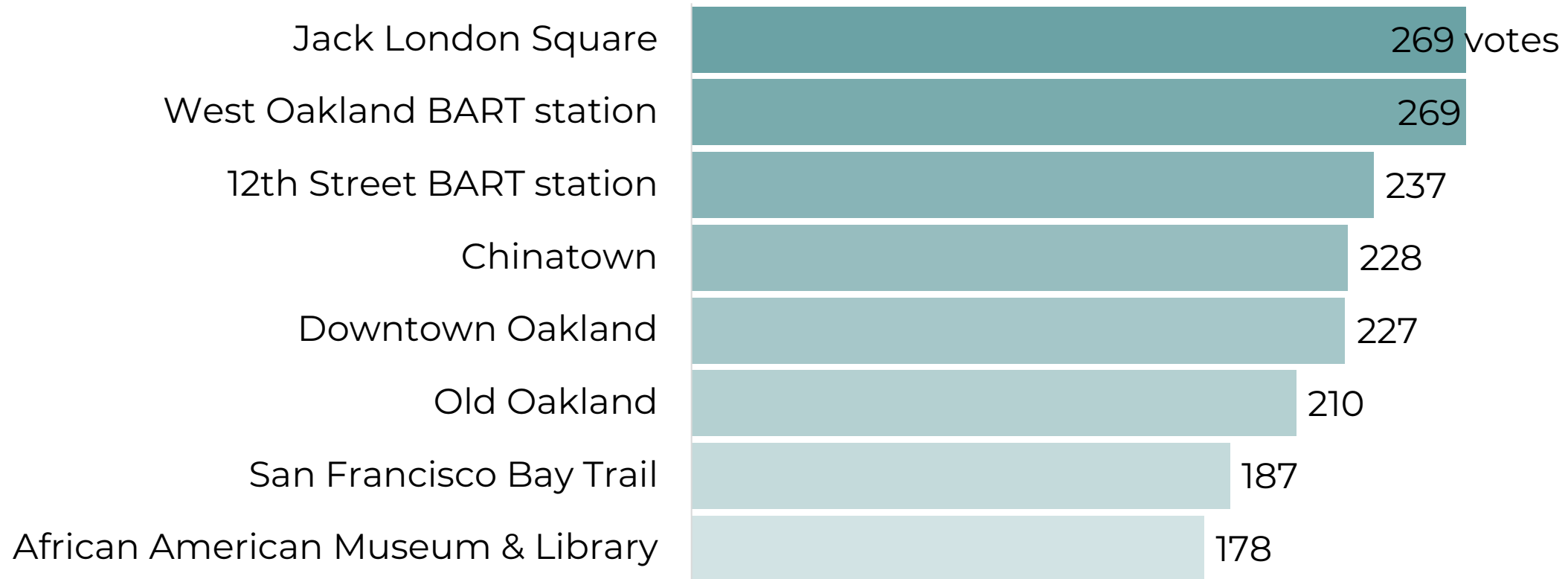
Option B:

Black liberation history and the words “West Oakland”



This project will install new wayfinding signage on 7th Street between Brush and Castro Streets. **Which destinations should signage show?**

The top three choices were **Jack London Square**, **West Oakland BART station**, and **12th Street BART station**.



Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880

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These images suggest making the undercrossing more colorful by adding designs to the columns.

Which design option do you prefer?

Most (69%) preferred

Option A: Add tiles that are different shades of one color.

Option A:

Add tiles that are different shades of one color

69%

Option B:

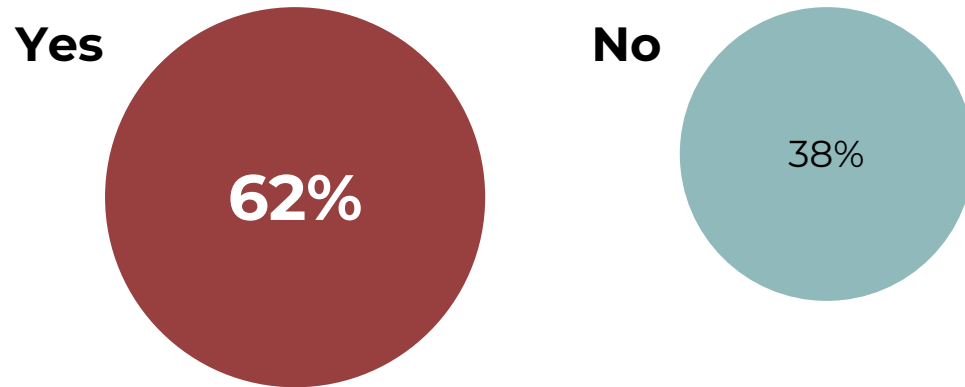
Paint the upper half of each column

31%

Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880

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For option A, tiles can be arranged to create images of people from Oakland. **Would you like to see mosaic tile portraits at this location?**



Most (62%) chose **Yes**, in favor of mosaic tile portraits.



Top 5 suggested portraits:

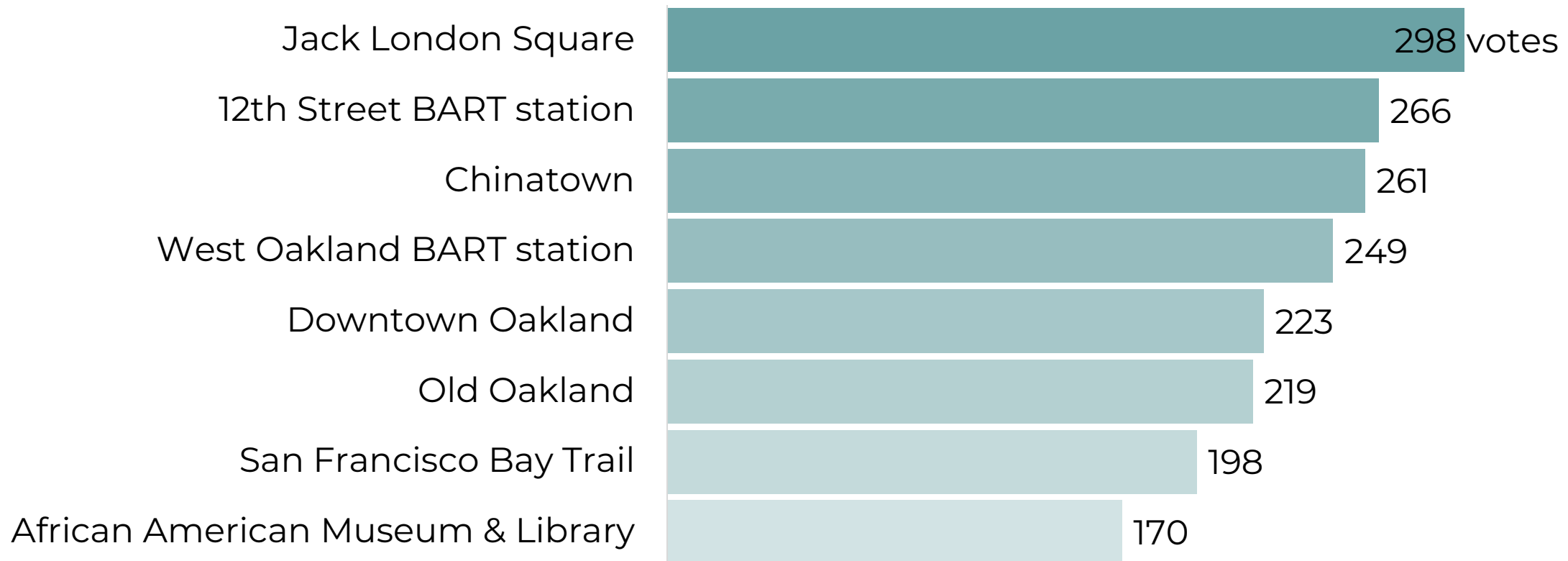


Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880

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This project will install new wayfinding signage on MLK Jr. Way between 5th and 6th Streets. **Which destinations should signage show?**

The top 3 choices were **Jack London Square**, **West Oakland BART station**, and **12th Street BART station**.



Broadway undercrossing improvements will install light poles on the sidewalk to increase lighting. **For additional lighting on columns, which option do you prefer?**

Most (48%) preferred **Option C:** Projected patterns on columns.

25%

Option A:
White lights on columns



27%

Option B:
Colorful lights on columns



48%

Option C:
Projected patterns on columns



Washington Street under I-880

15

Which protected pedestrian space option do you prefer?

Most (75%) preferred

Option B: Painted patterns that represent neighborhoods.

25%

Option A:

Painted solid color on both sides



75%

Option B:

Painted patterns that represent neighborhoods



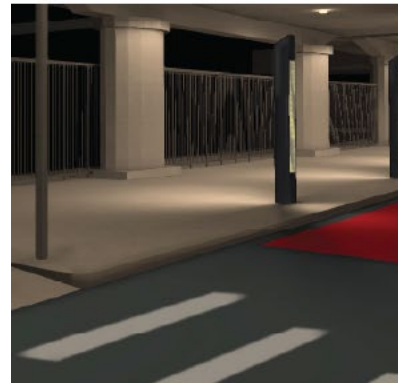
Which sidewalk bollard option do you prefer?

56% preferred

Option C: Bollards placed along the full length of the sidewalk.

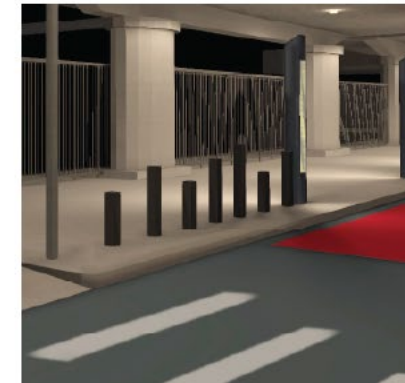
17%

Option A:
No bollards on the sidewalk



27%

Option B:
Bollards placed at corners only



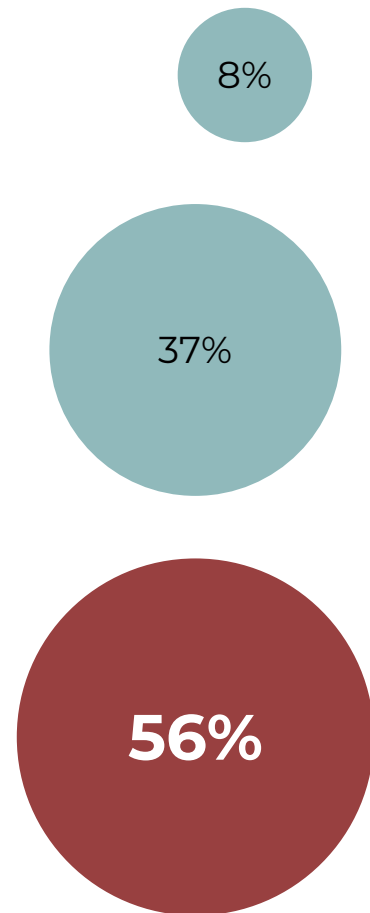
56%

Option C:
Bollards placed along sidewalk



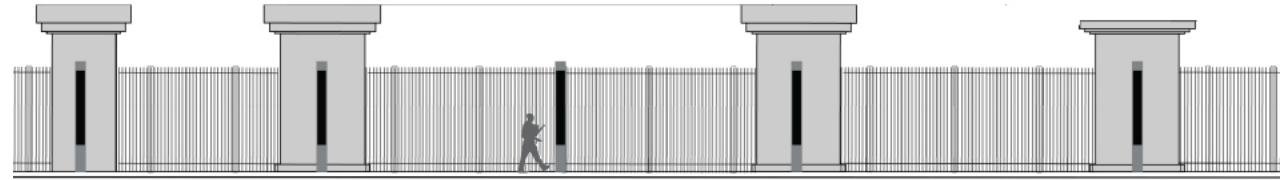
Which fencing design do you prefer?

Most (56%) preferred **Option C:** Fence with patterned panels including the word “Oakland”.



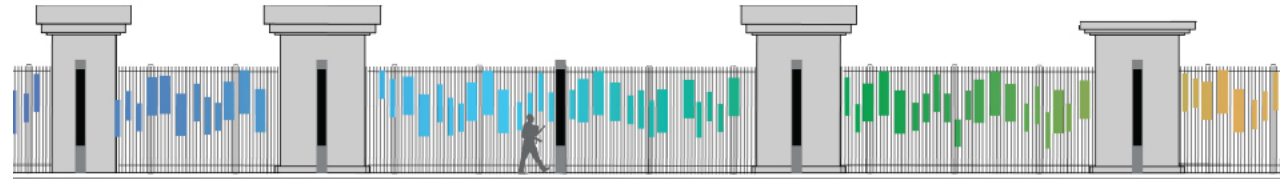
Option A:

Plain, undecorated fence



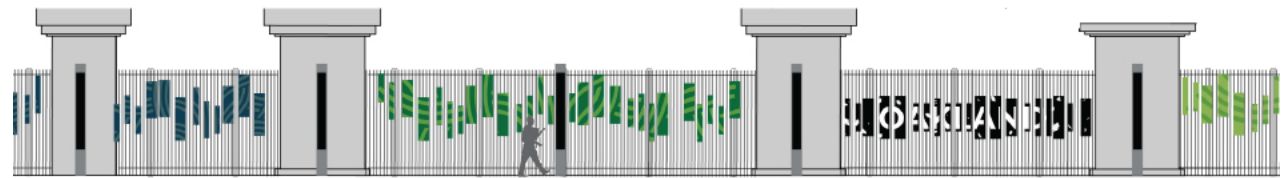
Option B:

Fence with panels that are solid colors



Option C:

Fence with patterned panels including the word “Oakland”

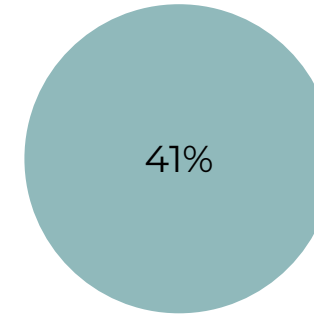


Which kind of wayfinding design do you prefer?

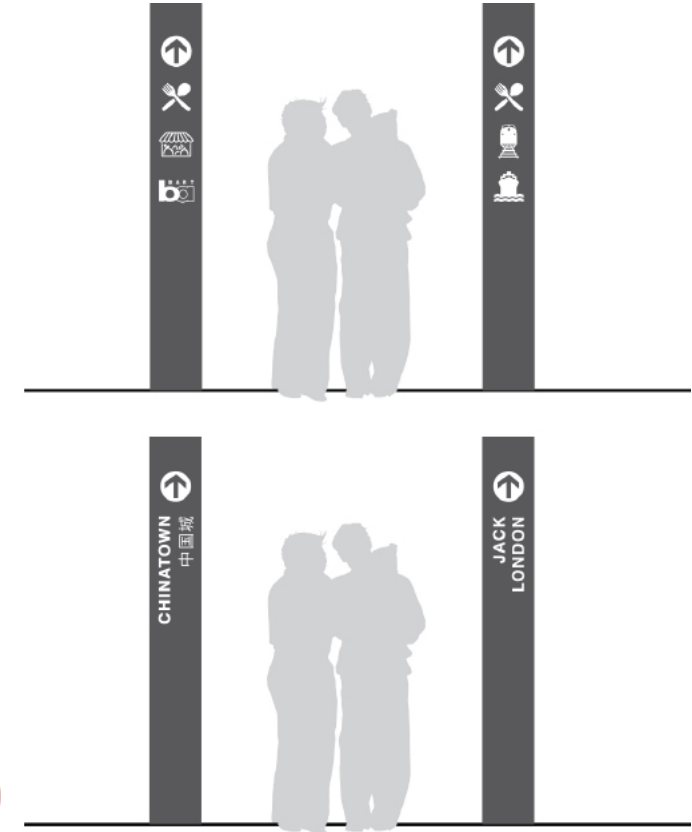
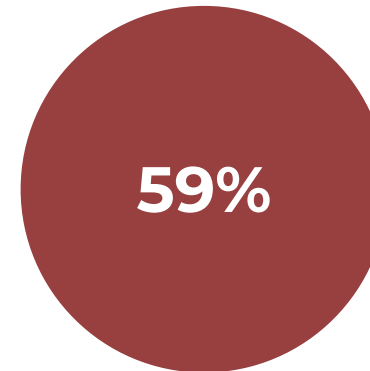
Most (59%) preferred

Option B: Neighborhood names in more than one language.

Option A:
Neighborhood icons



Option B:
Neighborhood names in more than one language





QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

This section summarizes open-ended comments from the survey as well as comments received from attendees of meetings and presentations. Because the project lies within Caltrans right-of-way, some suggestions may not be permitted. The UXI project team will work to confirm improvements that meet Caltrans guidelines.

All or multiple locations (54 comments)

- Add brighter, more vividly colorful lighting (pedestrian-scale and/or additional lighting)
- Design lighting fixtures to prevent vandalism or theft of copper wires

Broadway under I-880 (33 comments)

- Strong support for more lighting to improve pedestrian safety
- Design for durability, ease of maintenance, and resistance to (or compatibility with) graffiti.
- Include designs or patterns, such as an Asian motif (e.g. lanterns), or filters that can be changed in the future.
- Light the underside of the freeway in addition to the columns and walkways.

Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880 (15 comments)

- Add interesting fixtures or light sculptures on the undercrossing columns and ceiling

Broadway under I-880 (29 comments)

- Use both icons and names in wayfinding signage
- Include names of destinations in multiple languages, especially Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese
- Ensure that icons are recognizable

Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880 (9 comments)

- Include other destinations such as the Ferry Terminal and Water Shuttle
- Include community services such as health clinics or soup kitchens

7th Street under I-980 (12 comments)

- Include wayfinding, such as “West Oakland” and other neighborhood names, on the columns or ceiling
- Include distances on wayfinding
- Make wayfinding legible to people moving quickly (in vehicles or on bicycles)

All or multiple locations (7 comments)

- Add more decorations and colors
- Include noise reduction or abatement

Broadway under I-880 (92 comments)

- Use a different shape of bollard, such as large spheres, railings, circular bike racks, etc.
- Use fewer bollards to be less distracting and less costly
- Remove existing guardrail art installation
- Light or paint the underside of the freeway in addition to columns and walkways
- Include Chinatown or Asian American history as themes
- Use a plain or less messy design for the pattern on the fence
- Make sure that there's consistency between the designs for fencing, lighting, and bollards

Washington Street under I-880 (31 comments)

- Include more patterned lighting, designs, or art
- Use art patterns that reflect the history and culture of Jack London and Old Oakland

Martin Luther King Jr. Way under I-880 (32 comments)

- Put column designs in brighter colors or at a more visible height
- Include artwork of notable figures, such as Huey Newton and members of the Black Panther Party, in tiled portraits on the columns

7th Street under I-980 (52 comments)

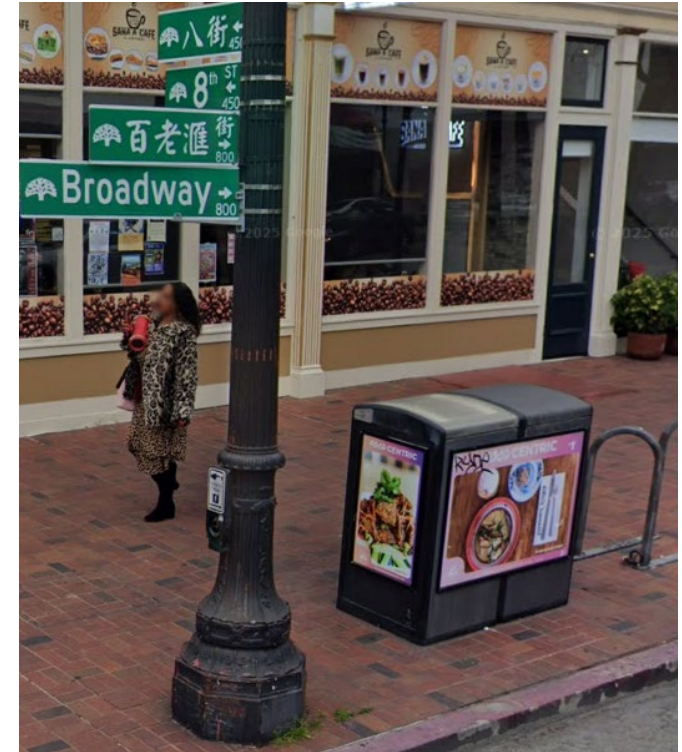
- For the black jazz theme – the music notes should reflect actual music
- The designs should acknowledge history, such as freeway impacts, blues and jazz history, local figures, and local organizations (such as The Crucible and Mandela Co-op)
- Consider plants, a “green wall”, or other landscaping

All or multiple locations (14 comments)

- Include regular cleaning as a part of the scope of improvements
- Ensure that lighting, artwork, and designs are cleaned and maintained
- Design for durability, ease of maintenance, and resistance to graffiti
- Work with groups such as the City of Oakland's Adopt-a-Spot program, Jack London Improvement District, Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council, to maintain the undercrossings after construction is complete

Broadway under I-880 (35 comments)

- Clear trash and clean sidewalks more often
- Add trash receptacles at every corner



Existing trash cans at the corner of Broadway and 8th Street

Washington Street under I-880 (13 comments)

- Consider more durable options for the posts in the painted curb extensions
- Regularly refresh the painted patterns in the curb extensions since they will fade over time

Martin Luther Jr. Way under I-880 (22 comments)

- Ensure that the designs on the columns are cleaned and maintained. Consider graffiti-resistant coatings

7th Street under I-980 (12 comments)

- Perform regular cleaning and maintenance
- Design for durability and easy cleaning



An ambassador sweeping up debris in Jack London District. Photo credit: Jack London Improvement District

Traffic safety, pedestrian safety, and bike lanes (164 comments)

Comments were centered around desires for improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure at the 4 undercrossings, particularly infrastructure to facilitate safe crossings at intersections.

New bike and pedestrian safety improvements will be delivered at the Martin Luther King Jr. Way, 7th Street, and Broadway undercrossings through these projects:

- [Martin Luther King Jr. Way Streetscape Improvements](#)
- [7th Street Connection Project](#)
- [Broadway Streetscape Improvements](#)

Encampments (56 comments)

- Presence of encampments at undercrossings, particularly Broadway under I-880
- Preference for or against hostile infrastructure to deter encampments.

Read more about [the City of Oakland's Homeless and Encampment Response on the City website](#).



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INCORPORATING FEEDBACK INTO PROJECT DESIGNS

Design Direction for All Four Undercrossings

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The project team incorporated community feedback into the designs of the four undercrossings. The project designs follow the principles outlined in the slides in this section.

Lighting

- Add brighter, more colorful lighting

Wayfinding

- Make sure wayfinding is legible

Placemaking

- Incorporate ways to add more color at the undercrossings

Maintenance

- Design for durability, ease of maintenance, cleaning, and resistance to (or compatibility with) graffiti.



An example of wayfinding signage in Jack London Square, Oakland

Not all community-preferred design elements may be approved by Caltrans and final designs may be substantially different or reduced compared to images and descriptions in this presentation.

7th Street under I-980

- Explore adding a painted design on the sidewalk near the freeway columns
- Explore using paint or stain on the columns that is resistant to weathering
- The design team is adding street trees and ground plantings on 7th Street outside of Caltrans right-of-way

MLK Jr. Way under I-880

- The project team is not pursuing tile portraits on the columns. There was no clear consensus from community engagement feedback on who to represent in the portraits.
- Use brighter colors for column designs (i.e. explore using a different color)
- Explore whether there are other treatments that can be added to the fence to obscure the vehicles and trucks parked in the lot behind the fence
- Add the ferry terminal to wayfinding signage

Design Direction for Broadway and Washington St Undercrossings

30

Broadway under I-880

- Project lighting will be designed to be as colorful and expansive as possible without being distracting.
- The project team will work with Oakland Cultural Affairs and the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) to explore the removal of the existing public art (the guardrail art installation).
- Wayfinding should include both recognizable icons and names in multiple languages.
- Explore ways other than bollards to include visual cues for separation and safety from moving vehicles. Bollards invite challenges for maintenance and cleaning, as well as some pedestrian navigation, and they do not provide a crash rated barrier.

Washington Street under I-880

- Pursue inclusion of patterns that better represent Jack London and Old Oakland that aren't prone to fading over time.
- Bring curb ramps into Americans with Disabilities Act guideline (ADA) compliance



NEXT STEPS



The project team is working with the consultant teams to incorporate feedback from community engagement and will further develop the designs for the four undercrossings.

The next set of designs will be more detailed and will be available by the end of 2025. These designs will be submitted to Caltrans for their review and approval of encroachment permits.

Not all community-preferred design elements may be approved by Caltrans and final designs may be substantially different or reduced compared to images and descriptions in this presentation.

Visit www.OaklandCA.gov/Undercrossings for more information.

For questions, contact mpd@oaklandca.gov