

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 11, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Terry Taplin (Author)

Subject: Budget Referral: Traffic Calming of West Berkeley Pedestrian and Cyclist Crossings

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council refers to the budget process the funding of traffic calming improvements as follows:

- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons:
  - Ashby Way and California Street
  - Sacramento Street and Channing Way
  - Cedar Street and Ninth Street
  - Sixth Street and Channing Way
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons:
  - Sacramento Street and Russell Street
  - Channing Way and San Pablo Avenue

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

With the City Council's adoption of Vision Zero goals in March 2018, Berkeley embarked on a mission to eliminate all traffic deaths and severe injuries by the year 2028. Along with the Pedestrian Plan and the Bicycle Plan, the Vision Zero Action Plan outlines a broad path to accomplish this ambitious goal as well as specific infrastructural recommendations to make Berkeley's streets safer for all who use them. Despite the ambitious goals set by Vision Zero and the recent progress of improvements to infrastructure, motorists continue to strike pedestrians and cyclists at an alarming rate.

Injuries and fatalities disproportionately impact West and South Berkeley, which Vision Zero designates part of the "Equity Priority Area" given historic redlining, long-term disinvestment, and the disproportionate impact of traffic injuries and deaths on low income communities and people of color.<sup>1</sup> In order to rectify historic wrongs and prioritize the parts of Berkeley most in need of infrastructural investment, the City

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Transportation/Berkeley\\_Vision\\_Zero\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Approved\\_03102020.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley_Vision_Zero_Action_Plan_Approved_03102020.pdf)

Council must advance road safety improvements in this area. This referral, which identifies six dangerous intersections for traffic calming, builds upon what has already been considered in Berkeley's Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Plan, and Vision Zero Action Plan and advances particular improvements for expedited consideration. Many of the recommended improvements refer for funding what is already planned for under Berkeley's Pedestrian Plan, which assigns a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) to Ashby & California and Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons to Sacramento & Russell and San Pablo & Channing.<sup>2</sup>

The selected intersections are of particular importance due to the dangers highlighted by the Vision Zero Action Plan. Ashby Avenue, Sacramento Street, Sixth Street, and San Pablo Avenue are all highlighted by Vision Zero as "High-Injury Streets" where the most severe injuries and fatalities have occurred.<sup>3</sup> On the intersection level, Ashby & California and Sacramento & Russell have both been the sites of severe injuries or fatalities in recent years.<sup>4</sup> West Berkeley's streets have been a hazard to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists for years due to car-centric transportation infrastructure, long-term racist disinvestment, and slow-moving reforms.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS

Staff time, an estimated \$92,000 for four Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon crossings (\$23,000 per crossing), and an estimated \$100,000-\$260,000 for two Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (\$50,000-\$130,000 per intersection).<sup>5</sup>

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Establishing a network of safe streets for pedestrians and bicycles, promoting bicycle literacy, and distributing bicycles to those in need incentivize nonautomobile travel, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City estimates that transportation-related emissions accounts for approximately 60% of our community's total annual greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>6</sup> By encouraging alternatives to car transportation by making pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure safer and more accessible, these improvements stand to lower the emissions from our community's dominant source of carbon emissions.

#### CONTACT

Terry Taplin, Councilmember, District 2, (510) 981-7120

---

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Transportation/2020%20Pedestrian%20Plan%20FULL%20adopted.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/2020%20Pedestrian%20Plan%20FULL%20adopted.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Transportation/Berkeley\\_Vision\\_Zero\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Approved\\_03102020.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley_Vision_Zero_Action_Plan_Approved_03102020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Transportation/Berkeley\\_Vision\\_Zero\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Approved\\_03102020.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley_Vision_Zero_Action_Plan_Approved_03102020.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017\\_AppendixF\\_Facility%20Design%20Toolbox\(1\).pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017_AppendixF_Facility%20Design%20Toolbox(1).pdf)

<sup>6</sup>[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City\\_Council/2018/12\\_Dec/Documents/2018-12-06\\_WS\\_Item\\_01\\_Climate\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Update\\_pdf.aspx](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/12_Dec/Documents/2018-12-06_WS_Item_01_Climate_Action_Plan_Update_pdf.aspx)