



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION
February 5, 2019
(Continued from December 4, 2018)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Phillip L. Harrington, Director, Department of Public Works

Subject: Pedestrian Master Plan Update

INTRODUCTION

The Pedestrian Master Plan approved by City Council June 22, 2010¹ (Resolution No. 64,951-N.S.) is currently in the early phases of being updated, with Council adoption of the update anticipated to occur in June 2019. No specific action is required of the Council at the current time other than to provide comments to staff on the information presented.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Pedestrian Master Plan Update (Plan Update) is being developed as a multi-year blueprint to achieve the vision of Berkeley as a model walkable City where traveling on foot or by assistive device is safe, comfortable, and convenient for people of all ages. The Plan Update will ultimately include policies and actions to provide further direction on how to make progress toward meeting its goals. It will identify the City's pedestrian high-injury corridors and include a list of proposed capital projects that are grouped together geographically in order to be competitive for future grant applications.

The scope of the Plan Update includes the development of a vision and set of goals, the assessment of existing conditions and needs, the identification of projects and programs to meet those needs, the development of a funding plan, and the creation of design concepts for twenty high-priority projects. The Plan Update will also include a crosswalk policy and an update to the engineering and design guidance that was included in the 2010 Pedestrian Master Plan. The Plan Update's analytic approach will be to identify the City's pedestrian high-injury corridors through an analysis of collisions, with a focus on severe and fatal crashes. The project prioritization will weight projects based on crash severity and other factors, such as proximity to schools, transit access, socioeconomic equity, and pedestrian demand.

The community engagement process to guide the Plan Update consists of providing information and receiving feedback at neighborhood and citywide events, holding public

¹ The 2010 Berkeley Pedestrian Master Plan can be found at <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/pedestrian/>.

open houses at key points in the Plan Update development (first to receive input on the proposed goals and existing conditions and needs analysis, and later to review the draft Plan Update), presenting the Plan Update progress and deliverables at key milestones at not less than three Transportation Commission meetings, and employing an online and print survey. Thus far, information about the Plan Update has been shared and comments received at seven community events. Also, the proposed vision and goals of the Plan Update and the proposed performance measures have been presented and discussed at a Transportation Commission meeting and a meeting of the Pedestrian Subcommittee of the Transportation Commission.

BACKGROUND

The Pedestrian Master Plan guides the development and enhancement of the pedestrian environment within the City. Berkeley is already a very walkable city, with the highest rate of commuting by walking in the State among cities and towns with a population of 20,000 or greater, and the second highest rate in the country among medium-sized cities.² However, the City's pedestrian environment is still in need of improvement. Sidewalk gaps are present in some areas of Berkeley, and many streets, particularly major ones, are intimidating to cross in places. The Plan Update will identify problem locations and propose projects and programs to improve them.

Another reason for the Plan Update is that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Alameda County Transportation Commission, and the State of California all require cities to update their bicycle and pedestrian plans every five years to maintain eligibility for County, State, and federal competitive transportation grant funding. The Plan Update will ensure that the City continues to receive the funds needed for safety improvements.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Walking trips do not cause the release of air pollutants or greenhouse gasses. A better pedestrian network would increase the share of walking trips by making this mode safer and more accessible. Increasing walking would help the City achieve the Berkeley Climate Action Plan greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 33% below year 2000 levels by the year 2020, and 80% below year 2000 levels by 2050. The Climate Action Plan states that transportation modes such as walking must become the primary means of fulfilling the City's mobility needs in order to meet these targets.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The Plan Update will identify the City's pedestrian high-injury corridors and develop a list of priority pedestrian projects that are grouped together in order to apply for grant funding from the MTC, Alameda CTC, and the State of California. Once grant funding is obtained, these projects can be built.

² *American Community Survey Reports: Modes Less Traveled – Bicycling and Walking to Work in the United States: 2008-2012*, by Brian McKenzie, May 2014, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2014/acs/acs-25.pdf>.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The fiscal impacts of future actions will depend on what projects are identified by the Plan Update and successful grant applications.

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