



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

ACTION CALENDAR
April 23, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Harrison and Mayor Arreguín

Subject: Allocate \$400,000 from the Street and Open Space Improvement Fund for the Design and Construction of a Protected Milvia Bikeway Pilot Project between University Avenue and Allston Way

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution allocating \$400,000 from the Street and Open Space Improvement Fund (SOSIF) to design and construct a protected Milvia Bikeway pilot project between University Avenue and Allston Street.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Public Works is currently pursuing a 0.7 mile Milvia Street bikeway project with initial funding from a Measure B sales tax grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC). This bikeway is a priority in the City's Bicycle Plan.¹ The project will make bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements that align with the city's bicycle, pedestrian, climate, and Vision Zero goals. Staff estimate that permanent upgrades for the entire bikeway extending between Hearst Avenue and Blake Street will cost approximately: \$350,000 to design, \$273,000 for consultant costs and a total of \$4,200,000 to build. The earliest the entire bikeway could be completed is in 2022.

This Resolution empowers the Council to accelerate the project by allocating SOSIF funding to the project, for design and construction of a critical pilot portion between University Avenue and Allston Way in the near-term. The intersection at Milvia and University has the highest collision rate for walking and cycling in the City and is tied with Milvia and Dwight for the highest number collisions involving cyclists.²

¹ Berkeley Bicycle Plan 2017, Berkeley Transportation Division, May 2, 2017, <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/berkeleybikeplan/>; See also, Milvia Street Bikeway Project Public Open House, City of Berkeley, January 30, 2019, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/18055%20Berkeley%20Milvia%20Public%20Workshop%20Exhibits%202019201%20email.pdf, p. 2.

² *Id.*, p. 6.

The SOSIF is a depository for the in-lieu fees paid by developers for the “timely development of open space improvements that will serve the needs of both project residents and other people living in and using the downtown.” The Department reports that the SOSIF fund has a projected gross fund balance of \$1,230,951 in FY 2019 and \$432,592 in FY 2020. Council specified that these fees are to be used for projects in the 2012 Downtown Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).³ The Milvia Bikeway is designated as a project in the SOSIP.⁴

Public Works presented the bikeway project in both near and long-term phases spanning 2019-2022. Preliminary conversations (subject to change) with the community, impacted businesses and staff suggest that the City’s *Near-Term Option 2*, featuring one-way protected bicycle lanes in each travel direction and one-way southbound vehicle traffic from University Avenue to Addison Street, and one-way cycle tracks with two-way vehicle traffic between Addison Street and Allston Way may be a feasible near-term option for a Milvia cycle track pilot.⁵ Berkeley Transportation Division staff indicate that pilot project construction could begin as early as spring 2020. In addition, staff would pursue the pilot project in coordination with an ongoing traffic study of the Milvia-University intersection and a PG&E electrification infrastructure upgrade project.

³ Open Space In-Lieu Fee for New Downtown Buildings, Department of Public Works, June 13, 2017, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2017/06_June/Documents/2017-06-13_Item_56_Open_Space_In-Lieu_Fee.aspx.

⁴ Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan Chapter 6: Bicycle Networks and Facilities, Department of Planning & Development, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_DAP/Chapter%206%20Bicycle%20Networks%20and%20Facilities.pdf.

⁵ “Milvia Street Bikeway Project Public Open House,” p. 6.

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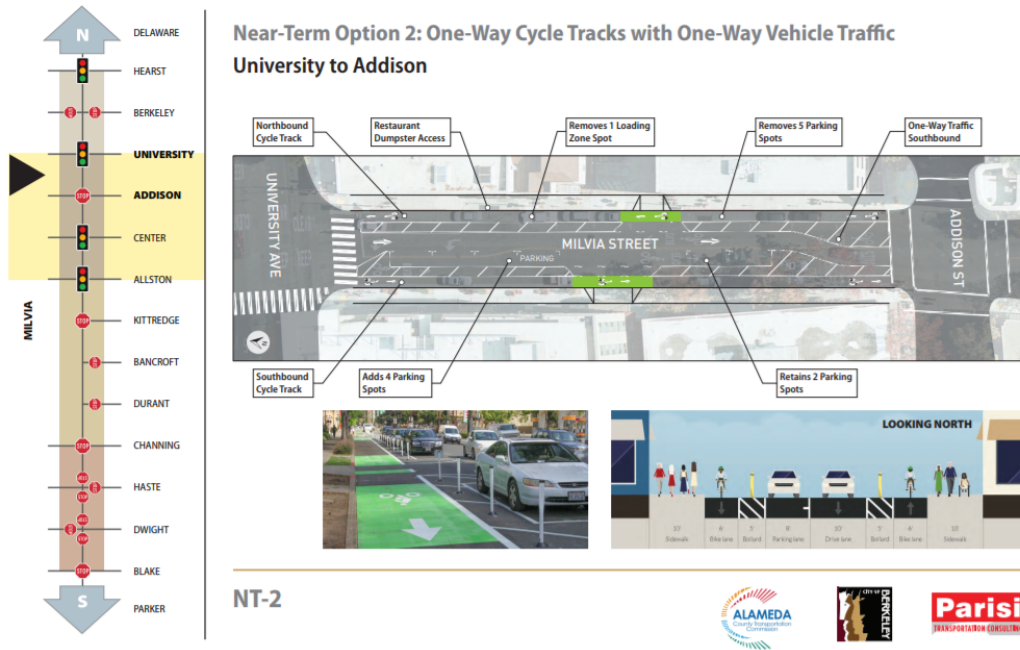


Figure 16

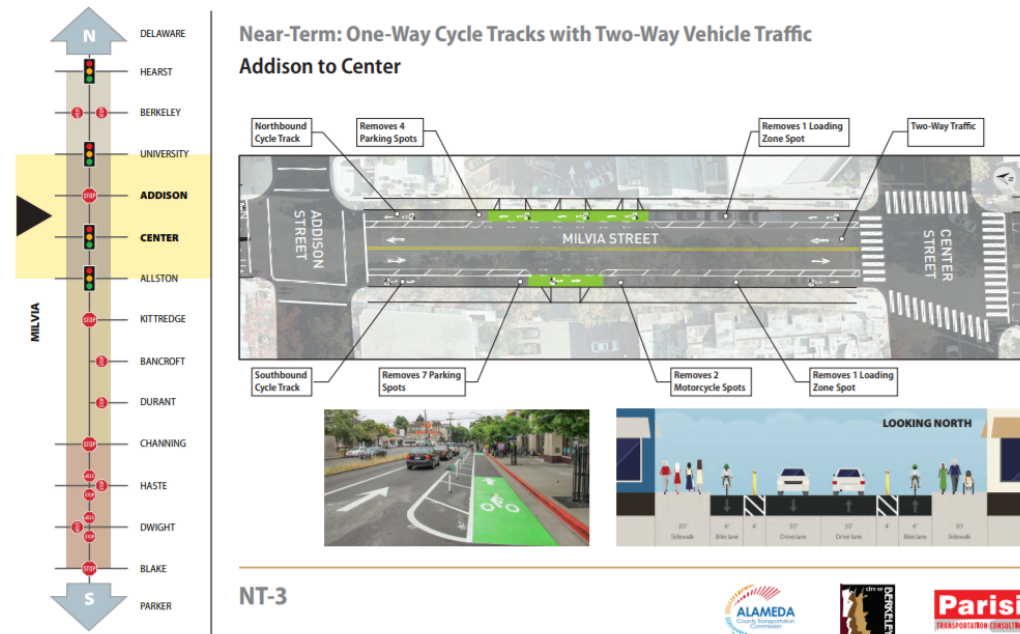


Figure 27

⁶ *Id.*, p. 10.

⁷ *Id.*, p. 11.

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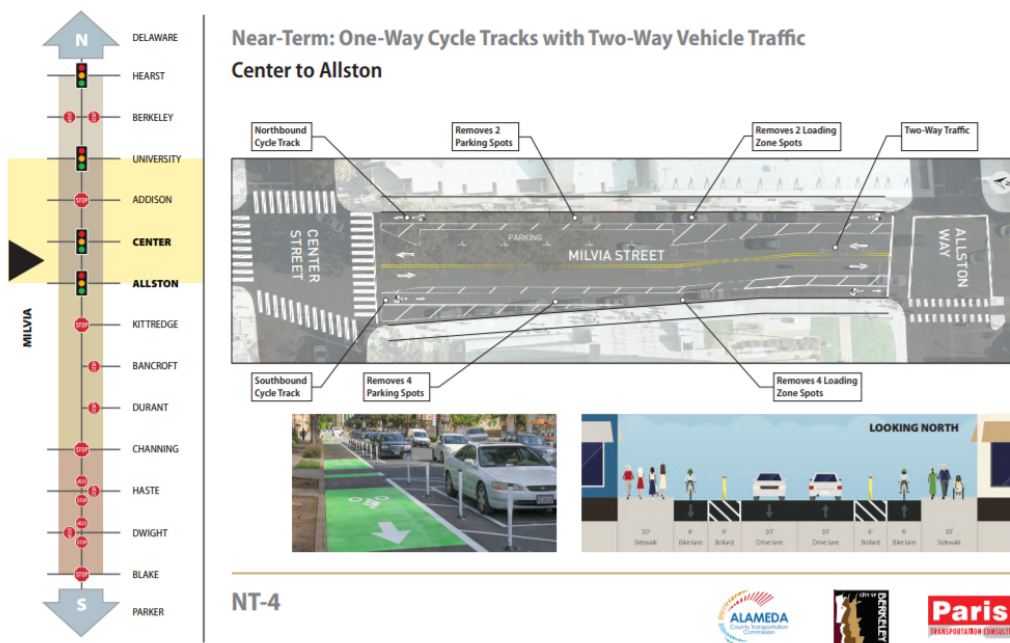


Figure 3⁸

It is in the public interest to allocate SOSIF funds for the near-term bikeway project, which is prominently featured in the 2012 SOSIP and is critical to the City’s health, safety and climate goals.

According to the City’s Transportation Division, Berkeley has the highest rate of bicycling to work in the U.S. of cities with greater than 100,000 residents. Berkeley’s Downtown area is the heart of Berkeley’s culture, economy, government, and education system. The Downtown’s Milvia bikeway is the city’s primary north-south bikeway, featuring intersections through which 400-500 cyclists pass during daily peak periods.⁹

Since 1971, the City of Berkeley has considered and planned to make Milvia Street safe and attractive for people riding bikes through Downtown. The bikeway was consistently referenced in the City Bicycle Plans (1999 and 2005), Streets and Open Space Plan (2012), and the Downtown Berkeley Area Plan (2012).¹⁰ Unfortunately, today the Milvia bike corridor consists of a combination of rudimentary bike boulevards and bike lanes that fail to adequately protect cyclists.

⁸ *Id.*, p. 12.

⁹ Milvia Bikeway Project, Transportation Division, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Planning_and_Development/Downtown_Area_Plan/Streets_and_Open_Space_Improvement_Plan.aspx.

¹⁰ “Milvia Street Bikeway Project Public Open House,” p. 3-8.

City bikeway research suggests that that individuals who may otherwise cycle across the Downtown are hesitant to do so because the route is deemed unsafe. The Department of Public Works found that the existing bike lanes and boulevards on Milvia feature the highest number of cycling collisions of any Berkeley bikeway. Furthermore, bicyclists consistently report that Milvia is one of the “most stressful” corridors to navigate and as a result are only suitable for the most “traffic-tolerant” cyclists. The Berkeley Strategic Transportation Plan (2015) and Bicycle Plan (2012) recommend replacing the existing Class III Bicycle Boulevard and Class II bicycle lanes on Milvia with a Class IV cycle track. Some 72% residents surveyed in September 2018 supported such a protected bikeway across Milvia Street.¹¹

Beyond the basic health and safety necessity of this infrastructure, the City has a strong environmental interest in building infrastructure that offsets greenhouse gas emitting vehicles with zero carbon and low-carbon modes of transportation. The Energy Commission found in its 2019 Fossil Free report that expanding bicycle transportation infrastructure will be critical to addressing transportation emissions, which is the largest sector of Berkeley’s greenhouse gas emissions.¹² Further, transportation emissions in Berkeley have risen in recent years, unlike other emission sectors.¹³

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This resolution results in an expenditure of \$400,000 in SOSIF fees for the design and construction of a pilot that is designated as a broader SOSIP project. The Department of Public Works projects a \$432,592 gross fund balance for FY 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Completing the Milvia Bikeway project is directly in line with the Climate Action Plan and subsequent plans as it has the potential to lower greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging residents to use bicycles and other low-carbon methods of transportation.

CONTACT PERSON

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¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Fossil Free Berkeley Report, Berkeley Energy Commission, January 23, 2019, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_Commissions/Commission_for_Energy/EC2019-1-23_Item%205_Fossil%20Fuel%20Subcommittee%20Report.pdf.pdf.

¹³ 2018 Berkeley Climate Action Plan Update, Office of Energy and Sustainable Development, December 6, 2018, https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/12_Dec/Documents/2018-12-06_WS_Item_01_Climate_Action_Plan_Update_pdf.aspx, p. 20.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

ALLOCATE \$400,000 FROM THE STREET AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A MILVIA BIKEWAY PILOT PROJECT BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AVENUE AND ALLSTON WAY

WHEREAS, Berkeley has the highest rate of bicycling to work in the United States among cities with over 100,000 residents, and the Downtown Milvia bike corridor is the City's primary north-south bikeway; and

WHEREAS, Downtown Berkeley is the heart of Berkeley's culture, economy, government, and education system; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has considered Milvia Bikeway improvements since 1971, including references in the City Bicycle Plans (1999 and 2005), Streets and Open Space Plan (2012), and the Downtown Berkeley Area Plan (2012); and

WHEREAS, according to State data, the existing Milvia Street has the highest number of cycling collisions of any Berkeley bikeway; and

WHEREAS, today, the Milvia Street bikeway consists of a combination of rudimentary bike boulevards and bike lanes that fail to adequately protect cyclists; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Strategic Transportation Plan (2015) and Bicycle Plan (2012) recommend replacing the existing Class III Bicycle Boulevard and Class II bicycle lanes on Milvia with a Class IV cycle track; and

WHEREAS, the City has strong health, safety and environmental interest in building protected bikeway infrastructure on Milvia Street; and

WHEREAS, while initial funding for a protected bikeway has been provided by a Measure B sales tax grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission, the City can leverage additional funding to accelerate the design and construction of a near-term protected bikeway pilot between University Avenue and Allston Way; and

WHEREAS, Streets and Open Space Improvement Fee (SOSIF) funds are available to cover the costs associated with the pilot; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works projects a \$432,592 gross SOSIF fund balance for FY 2020; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it hereby approves allocating \$400,000 in SOSIF funds for the design and construction of a protected Milvia Bikeway pilot project between University Avenue and Allston Way.