



Office of the City Manager

PUBLIC HEARING  
November 17, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Dee Ridley-Williams, City Manager  
 Submitted by: Liam Garland, Director, Public Works  
 Subject: Closure of the crossing at Camelia Street/Union Pacific (UP) Railroad Corridor; Amending Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 14.24

### RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion, adopt first reading of an Ordinance amending Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 14.24, to close the existing Union Pacific (UP) railroad crossing at Camelia Street to all traffic.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Closure of Camelia Street is one of the components of the traffic and safety improvements of I-80 Gilman Interchange Project. The estimated cost of Camelia Closure component is \$250,000 and will be funded from City's portion of project contribution. Funding will be recommended for appropriation through the Second Amendment to the FY 2021 Annual Appropriations Ordinance in the Measure BB Local Streets & Roads Fund.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

I-80 Gilman Interchange Improvement Project, a City of Berkeley strategic goal, is progressing towards completion of 100% construction plans, with the goal of starting construction in January 2021. As part of the safety improvements, the at-grade crossing of UP railroad corridor at Camelia Street will be closed to all types of traffic, allowing the City to bank credits towards a possible railroad quiet zone in the future.

This Public Hearing and subsequent Ordinance Amendment supports the City Strategic Plan that creates a resilient, safe, connected, and prepared City.

### BACKGROUND

I-80 Gilman Interchange Project proposes to improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle operations at the Interstate 80 (I-80) / Gilman Street interchange in northwest Berkeley. The existing intersection controls, roadway geometry, and the high volumes of local and regional traffic on Gilman Street result in poor traffic operation and non-motorized access at and near the interchange. The proposed interchange project seeks to

- Simplify and improve navigation and traffic operations on Gilman Street

- between the West Frontage Road and 2nd Street through the I-80 interchange so that congestion is reduced, queues are shortened, and merging and turning conflicts are minimized;
- Improve access for the bikes/pedestrians traveling between the Bay Trail and Northern Berkeley;
  - Improve safety at Gilman Street intersections;
  - Improve mobility in the Gilman Street corridor;
  - Create a Gateway into North Berkeley.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Closure of Camelia Street at the UP railroad crossing would divert the traffic currently using this crossing to adjacent open crossings, so there will be a net-zero change in environmental impact as a result of this closure. UP Railroad has requested this crossing closure as part of the approval for the project to build a shared use bike and pedestrian path across the railroad on the south side of Gilman Street, which will improve safety and accessibility for active transportation modes in the area and reduce reliance on cars.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Closing Camelia Street at the railroad crossing will enhance safety for pedestrians and vehicles, as well as allowing the city to bank credits towards a possible railroad quiet zone in future.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Grade separation of the crossing is a very expensive alternate that was considered however closure of the crossing is expected to have the same benefit but at a much lower cost.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Hamid Mostowfi, Supervising Traffic Engineer 510-981-6403

#### Attachments:

- 1: Ordinance
- 2: Public Hearing Notice

ORDINANCE NO. -N.S.

CLOSURE OF CAMELIA STREET AT UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CROSSING;  
AMENDING BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 14.24

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Section 14.24.240 is added to read as follows:

**Section 14.24.240 Closure of Camelia Street at Union Pacific Railroad Crossing**

As part of the safety improvements for I-80 Gilman Interchange Project the at-grade crossing of Union Pacific railroad corridor at Camelia Street is permanently closed to all traffic, allowing the City to bank credits towards a possible railroad quiet zone in the future.

Section 2. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within 15 days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL  
AMENDMENTS TO BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 14.24**

Notice is hereby given by the City Council of the City of Berkeley that on **October 13, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.** the City of Berkeley is proposing the following addition to Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 14.24:

As part of the safety improvements for I-80 Gilman Interchange Project the at-grade crossing of Union Pacific rail road corridor at Camelia Street to be permanently closed to all traffic.

For further information, please contact **Hamid Mostowfi, Supervising Traffic Engineer 510-981-6403**

The hearing will be held virtually for the duration of the Health Officer's stay home order. The Mayor, Councilmembers, staff, and members of public will participate in the meeting remotely, A copy of the agenda material for this hearing will be available on the City's website at [www.cityofberkeley.info](http://www.cityofberkeley.info) as of **November 5, 2020**. **Once posted, the agenda for this meeting will include a link for public participation using Zoom video technology.**

Written comments should be mailed to the City Clerk, 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704, in order to ensure delivery to all Councilmembers. Communications to the Berkeley City Council are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. **Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to the City Council, will become part of the public record.** If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service to the City Clerk. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the City Clerk at 981-6900 or [clerk@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:clerk@cityofberkeley.info) for further information.

If you challenge the above in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Berkeley at, or prior to, the public hearing. Background information concerning this proposal will be available at the City Clerk Department and posted on the City of Berkeley webpage at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

**Posted:** November 5, 2020

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I hereby certify that the Notice for this Public Hearing of the Berkeley City Council was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on or before November 5, 2020.

Mark Numainville, City Clerk

