

CONSENT CALENDAR

March 9, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Terry Taplin

Subject: Budget Referral: Funding Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at Sixth Street and Addison Street

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council refers to the budget process the funding of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at the south end of the intersection of Sixth Street and Addison Street.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The intersection of Sixth and Addison, a block away from the heavily trafficked University Avenue and close to the University Ave exit of I-580 & I-80, is a reliably busy and often dangerous intersection in an otherwise residential area in West Berkeley. With a pedestrian crosswalk, a traffic light on one side at Sixth and University, and another traffic light on the other side at Sixth and Allston Way, Sixth and Addison is nevertheless characterized by the community around it as a hazardous intersection where drivers regularly violate the 25 m.p.h. speed limit, ignore the pedestrian right-of-way, and even crash their vehicles with or without injuries.

According to the City of Berkeley's Vision Zero Action Plan, a pedestrian was severely injured at the intersection of Sixth and Addison between 2008 and 2018. Unsurprising to the residents of the area, the Vision Zero Action Plan identifies Sixth Street, Addison Street, and the close by University Avenue as "High-Injury Streets", which are defined by having "the most injuries and fatalities" in Berkeley.¹ This intersection is a ticking time bomb for the residents of this area, many of whom are children and the elderly, and must be rectified before tragedy strikes. The dangers this intersection present did not form in a vacuum, but is rather a result of decades of infrastructural disinvestment. This is why the Pedestrian Plan, Vision Zero, and the Bicycle Plan consider this area a "Historically Underserved Area" and target it for prioritized improvements.² The addition of RRFB to this intersection would be an important step for Berkeley's Vision Zero and

¹https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley_Vision_Zero_Action_Plan_Approved_03102020.pdf

²https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%202020%20Pedestrian%20Plan_Draft_2020-10.pdf

Pedestrian Plan, take a step forward in the righting of historic wrongs, and very likely save lives.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Staff time and an estimated \$25,000-\$40,000³ for the RFFB pair.

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Rather than RRFB, the City Council could pursue two new STOP signs at the north and south ends of the intersection. The costs for this alternative would include staff time and an estimated \$1,200 for 2 STOP signs (\$600 per sign).⁴

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

No environmental sustainability impact. Slower traffic.

CONTACT

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³https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%202020%20Pedestrian%20Plan_Draft_2020-10.pdf

⁴https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%202020%20Pedestrian%20Plan_Draft_2020-10.pdf