



URGENT ITEM AGENDA MATERIAL

Government Code Section 54954.2(b)
Rules of Procedure Chapter III.C.5

THIS ITEM IS NOT YET AGENDIZED AND MAY OR MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR THE AGENDA AS A LATE ITEM, SUBJECT TO THE CITY COUNCIL'S DISCRETION ACCORDING TO BROWN ACT RULES

Meeting Date: May 25, 2021

Item Description: Budget Referral: Funding for Traffic Control Mitigations to Protect Pedestrian Access to Cragmont Elementary School

This item is submitted pursuant to the provision checked below:

- Emergency Situation (54954.2(b)(1) - majority vote required)
Determination by a majority vote of the legislative body that an emergency situation exists, as defined in Section 54956.5.
- Immediate Action Required (54954.2(b)(2) - two-thirds vote required)
There is a need to take immediate action and the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda for this meeting being posted.

Once the item is added to the agenda (Consent or Action) it must be passed by the standard required vote threshold (majority, two-thirds, or 7/9).

Facts supporting the addition of the item to the agenda under Section 54954.2(b) and Chapter III.C.5 of the Rules of Procedure:

On May 11, 2021 a horrific collision occurred on Marin Avenue, resulting in the tragic deaths of the driver and passenger of one vehicle and moderate injuries of the driver of another vehicle. Many parents and their young children at Cragmont Elementary were present and witnessed a vehicle literally flying past the school's Marin frontage and then crashing just below Spruce Street. They are fearful of the dangers of walking along Marin Ave and crossing at Spruce and Cragmont Streets. Had the vehicles, which flipped and hit at least one telephone pole, jumped a sidewalk or run through a crosswalk with children present, the outcome would have been even more tragic.

Immediate action is required to approve this budget referral to fund traffic control mitigations to protect pedestrian access to Cragmont Elementary School so it can be included in the upcoming budget process.



Susan Wengraf
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
May 25, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Wengraf (author) and Councilmember Hahn (author)
Councilmember Taplin and Mayor Arreguín (co-sponsors)

Subject: Budget Referral: Funding for Traffic Control Mitigations to Protect Pedestrian Access to Cragmont Elementary School

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget Process an allocation of \$150,000 for traffic control measures on streets surrounding Cragmont Elementary School, with an emphasis on Marin Avenue, and Spruce Ave to provide as much protection as possible to children, parents, teachers, staff and neighbors accessing the school.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$150,000 in funding.

BACKGROUND

The Vision Zero Plan identifies Marin Ave and neighboring streets such as Spruce, Grizzly Peak, and Euclid as high injury streets. The location of Cragmont School with property spanning along various high injury streets on Marin Ave and Spruce Street creates a challenging situation where Cragmont students cross two high injury streets on their way to and from school.

Marin Avenue in north Berkeley climbs straight up a hill with a 25% grade and is the steepest street in the entire San Francisco Bay area.

On May 11, 2021, at approximately 1:40 p.m., a horrific collision occurred on this segment of Marin resulting in the tragic deaths of Ruby Edwards and Anthony Rollins. A second vehicle was impacted in the collision. The driver was taken to the hospital with moderate injuries. Luckily, her 3-year-old child, strapped into a car seat in the rear of her vehicle, was not hurt.

Compounding the horror of the incident is that kindergartners at Cragmont Elementary had just been dismissed for the day. Many parents and their young children were present and witnessed a vehicle literally flying past the school's Marin frontage and then crashing just below Spruce Street. They are fearful of the dangers of walking along Marin Ave and crossing at Spruce and Cragmont Streets. Had the vehicles, which flipped and hit at least one telephone pole, jumped a sidewalk or run through a crosswalk with children present, the outcome would have been even more tragic.

Marin Avenue is a major thoroughfare for entry and exit from I-80 to all of North Berkeley. Due to services such as Waze and Google Maps, it is also an increasingly frequent route for vehicles travelling from I-80 to communities east of the East Bay Hills, who take Marin to bypass the MacArthur Maze and Highway 24 back-ups. Despite signage prohibiting heavy trucks, vehicles that appear to be overweight or oversized are frequently seen travelling both up and down Marin.

The safety of Berkeley's elementary schoolchildren is of paramount concern, and the location of Cragmont Elementary is unique in the steepness and configuration of surrounding streets. While the impact location for the recent tragic accident on Marin was below Spruce Street, high speeds and erratic driving, the cause of which have yet to be determined, occurred above Spruce. Reviewing safety for the entire steep portion of Marin is therefore of particular concern.

When Cragmont Elementary was rebuilt in 1999, Spruce Street was the designated drop-off and pick-up access area but accessing the school from that vantage involves climbing a steep staircase and parents do not have visibility onto the schoolyard to view their children meeting up with friends and adult supervisors. The work to identify measures to reduce risks should include outreach to BUSD and Cragmont Elementary Administration, teachers, staff and families, as enhancing safety will require partnership.

This item refers an amount adequate to cover some measures which may be taken to reduce speeds, improve crossings, and otherwise manage potential challenges on Marin Avenue and consider potential improvements to Regal Road and Spruce Street entrances to the School, as well as measures that might be taken by BUSD/Cragmont Elementary in collaboration with the City to meet our shared commitment to the safety and well-being of students, teachers, staff and neighbors.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Pedestrian safety is paramount to encouraging adults and children to walk to their destinations, which reduces GHG emissions and supports health.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Wengraf

Council District 6

510-981-7160