



CONSENT CALENDAR
December 14th, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Terry Taplin

Subject: Budget Referral: Pedestrian Crossing Improvements at Ashby and Acton

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council refers to the FY2023 budget process the funding of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at Ashby Avenue and Acton Street.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

As a "High-Injury Street" under Berkeley's Vision Zero Action Plan and Pedestrian Plan, Ashby Avenue is among the most dangerous streets in the entire city.¹ As a state highway that runs east-west along the entirety of Berkeley, Ashby attracts high volumes of vehicle traffic. The importance of Ashby Avenue as a connection to residential and commercial parts of Berkeley make it an important street for pedestrians and cyclists as well. The high speed of automobiles on Ashby, however, has resulted in a regular stream of tragic deaths and injuries on the street over the years.

Berkeley's Pedestrian Plan singles out Ashby Avenue from San Pablo to Shattuck as a street in need of prioritized investment and pedestrian safety improvements. Among the numerous recommendations for Ashby Avenue in the Pedestrian Plan, a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at Acton Street² is one that should be pursued as soon as possible. This intersection currently has a crosswalk with pedestrian yield signs, but an RRFB would be an important enhancement of this pedestrian crossing.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Staff time, an estimated \$50,000 for installation of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, and an estimated \$50,000 for 10 years of maintenance.³

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

¹https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/2020%20Pedestrian%20Plan%20Chapter%203%20adopted.pdf

²https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/2020%20Pedestrian%20Plan%20Chapter%203%20adopted.pdf

³[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017_AppendixF_Facility%20Design%20Toolbox\(1\).pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017_AppendixF_Facility%20Design%20Toolbox(1).pdf)

Establishing a network of safe streets for pedestrians and bicycles, promoting bicycle literacy, and distributing bicycles to those in need incentivize nonautomobile travel, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City estimates that transportation-related emissions accounts for approximately 60% of our community's total annual greenhouse gas emissions.⁴ By encouraging alternatives to car transportation by making pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure safer and more accessible, these improvements stand to lower the emissions from our community's dominant source of carbon emissions.

CONTACT

Terry Taplin, Councilmember, District 2, (510) 981-7120

⁴https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/12_Dec/Documents/2018-12-06_WS_Item_01_Climate_Action_Plan_Update_pdf.aspx