



Environment and Climate Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
[Meeting Date (Month Day, yyyy)]

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Environment and Climate Commission (ECC)
Submitted by: Ben Gould, Chairperson, ECC
Subject: Letter of Support for Hopkins St. Corridor Complete Streets Project

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The Environment and Climate Commission (ECC) strongly urges City Council to approve the full Hopkins Corridor Complete Streets project, including the Gilman to Kains segment (“Option 3”), rejecting any bypass or partial implementation.

Currently, City Council is considering whether to alter already-approved plans for bike lanes on Hopkins St. between Gilman and Sutter, and additionally deliberating on whether to extend those bike lanes to San Pablo Ave. The ECC believes the Hopkins bike lanes should be implemented to the fullest extent.

Automobile traffic is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Berkeley¹ and across the United States². As shown in the latest update to Berkeley’s Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory, Berkeley has made little to no progress in reducing emissions from transportation citywide. Existing efforts to implement minor, modest adjustments to streets have proven insufficient in achieving substantive GHG reductions.

There is significant evidence that protected bike lanes are a cost-efficient, and potentially quick, way to reduce emissions within an urban area^{3,4,5}. Cities which have implemented comprehensive, complete, safe bicycle infrastructure – oftentimes reducing the convenience of driving in doing so – have been able to observe significant and lasting reductions in automobile usage, including places like Paris and Amsterdam.

¹ “City of Berkeley Climate Action Plan” <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/berkeley-climate-action-plan>

² “Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks” <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks>

³ “Protected Bike Lanes Protect the Climate” <https://www.itdp.org/publication/protected-bicycle-lanes-protect-the-climate/>

⁴ “Cars Are Vanishing from Paris” <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/cars-are-vanishing-from-paris/>

⁵ “Now Is the Time to Invest in Protected Bike Lanes” <https://speedandscale.com/now-is-the-time-to-invest-in-protected-bike-lanes/>

ECC Letter on Hopkins Bike Lanes

INFORMATION CALENDAR

Berkeley's approved Hopkins St. plans are aligned with these global best practices and a necessary component of building out a citywide safe bicycle network for all ages and abilities, as set forth in the Berkeley Bicycle Plan. By ensuring continuity and access for bicyclists to safely travel to, and from, all areas of Berkeley, we can help shift more residents to these active modes of travel, reducing air pollution, water pollution, traffic noise, congestion, and collisions.

We do not believe half-measures or partial implementations will bring about these needed effects, and urge the Council to reaffirm its existing commitment to safe bike lanes on Hopkins and approve Option 3 to extend them fully to San Pablo Ave.

Sincerely,

Ben Gould, Chair
Environment and Climate Commission