

**SOPHIE HAHN**

Berkeley City Council, District 5
2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 981-7150
shahn@cityofberkeley.info

CONSENT CALENDAR

January 16, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Sophie Hahn (Author), Councilmember Mark Humbert (Co-Sponsor), Mayor Jesse Arreguin (Co-Sponsor), and Councilmember Ben Bartlett (Co-Sponsor)
 Subject: Installation of a 3-way Stop at the Intersection of Hopkins and McGee

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to install two additional stop signs at the intersection of Hopkins and McGee Streets, transforming the 'T' intersection into a 3-way stop, to be installed as soon as possible, and no later than July 31, 2024.

BACKGROUND

The intersection of Hopkins and McGee is located in a busy neighborhood commercial district surrounded by residential areas and schools with significant pedestrian traffic. The three-way intersection of Hopkins and McGee makes a "T" directly in front of a preschool and is an important crossing leading to and from a small strip of popular food shops and restaurants. Currently, there is only one stop sign at the intersection, at the end of McGee; traffic on Hopkins Street does not stop in either direction (traveling east or west).

Berkeley Little School, directly across from McGee, is one of three preschools located within a few blocks of McGee and Hopkins, the other two being Mustard Seed School on Carlotta Avenue at Hopkins and Hopkins Preschool on Hopkins between Beverly Place and Josephine Streets. In addition to the large number of toddlers and young children and parents crossing Hopkins at McGee, the intersection is located at the eastern end of one of the busiest shopping blocks in North Berkeley. Families and seniors walk from nearby neighborhoods and drive to the area from throughout North Berkeley - and the entire City and region - to shop at the Monterey Market and other food purveyors including one of the most renown fish markets in the East Bay, as well as a bakery, butcher shop, cheese and coffee shop, wine and liquor store, and a popular pizza restaurant. The century-old Berkeley Horticultural Nursery is around the corner on McGee, also drawing large numbers of patrons as well as semi-trailer delivery trucks and vehicles picking up heavy loads.

Two large schools bring more than 1,500 teen-aged students to the area on a daily basis: Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, with over 900 students, and St. Mary's High School, with over 600. King Middle School's campus includes a pool, tennis courts, and track that are used both by students and by members of the public of all ages who flock to the area after school hours and on weekends to use the recreational facilities. Ruth Acty Elementary and the Crowden Music Center are also located 3 blocks away, bringing hundreds more students and families to the area.

While there is a pedestrian crosswalk on Hopkins at McGee, residents of the area have long expressed feeling unsafe crossing the street, and described many near-misses. The area is home to many elderly residents, as well as residents who are visually impaired and/or have limited mobility. Residents report that they routinely step out to help neighbors who are elderly or have mobility issues cross the street safely. Residents of the neighborhood have reached out repeatedly over more than fifteen years - the first written communication shared with us is from 2008 - expressing concern for drivers barreling down Hopkins without regard for the existing crosswalk, and the potential of serious injuries.

More recently, in the course of planning for a larger project that has since been put on hold, a crosswalk was programmed for this location, and shown on staff-generated plans. In years leading up to the design of a larger project, verbal representations were made to the Council Member representing the District that stop signs were warranted on Hopkins at McGee; installation was delayed to coincide with an expected larger project. With the larger project now on hold, the previously-promised and independently warranted stop signs still should go forward.

In light of all of the above, this item directs the City Manager to install two additional stop signs on Hopkins at McGee Avenue, to stop vehicles traveling both east and west on Hopkins and allow pedestrians – in particular the many children, youth, and seniors who frequent this location – to cross safely. Simultaneous with installation of stop signs, the City Manager is requested to undertake routine intersection daylighting measures, per the City of Berkeley's existing policy, to further support pedestrian safety.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Limited costs and staff time associated with installation of two stop signs; to be accommodated using existing street safety funds, or, if none are available, T1 or other funds previously allocated for improvements to the Hopkins Corridor.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No impacts.

CONTACT

Sophie Hahn, District 5, (510) 981-7150