

**BEN BARTLETT**

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 21, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett

Subject: Speed Bump Installation on Russell St at King Street (South Berkeley).

RECOMMENDATION:

Refer to the City Manager to analyze the potential for the installation of a speed bump on Russell St. at King St. (South Berkeley), to improve the public space to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and people living with disabilities, while also meeting the needs of public transit and emergency vehicles. The analysis should prioritize speed bump installation that reduces injuries and accidents in the street and creates many benefits for our community. It should also consider other items listed by members of the community.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The intersection at Russell St. and King St. located within District 3, is a regularly crossed street by pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike. Right at its corner, Grove Park and Berkeley Public Library are walking-distance away, as well as other service centers in the community. Community members have expressed a shared interest in maintaining the safety and accessibility of this crucial intersection. While it serves as a hub for community activities and services, there is a growing awareness of safety concerns for all road users.

Residents have requested a Traffic Study to be conducted for the intersection at Russell St. and King St. dating as far back as 2022. Their original request was not met and a new request has been submitted for the fiscal year of 2023-2024 as of January 2, 2024.

Funding for a speed bump would meet the goals for the State of California's "Safe Streets and Roads for All" (SS4A) Program.

Links:

1. PDF from 11/2022, request for traffic calming study (Jessica Liu)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RFLut2WQ2fs_2tJqWaXhYTcbGEIKgfGE/view?usp=drive_link
2. PDF from 11/2023, neighbor comment/testimony (Cindi Augsjoost)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nc0HEt12lsSAnJVAV1ZIZRQiLIACbKDq/view?usp=drive_link
3. PDF from 11/2023, correspondence with Public Works (Jessica Liu)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/11G4jDW2iHHX5MVMjESQrMoKnCxMtc91y/view?usp=drive_link

4. PDF from 11/2023, neighbor comment/testimony (Sudhir Manandhar)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aR7y3IVH3I99gh87fO2O4y0ildse1KdG/view?usp=drive_link
5. PDF from 11/2023, correspondence with Public Works (Loa Ortiz)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gt0SNHq6BecFbcgUhkNPANclSWq_1QUx/view?usp=drive_link
6. PDF from 12/2023, correspondence with Public Works (Jessica Liu)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/10rjPLm_n7sQj9oup-tNcPQ570S673qD2/view?usp=drive_link
7. PDF from 12/2023, correspondence with Police Department (Sutapa Mallik)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1chrHVlrHfYwFB2568J1_iC0vqGfwug7/view?usp=drive_link
8. Video from 01/2024, showing a blue sports car ignoring the stop sign
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gTpsHHXf89oPsB1pmG8O6DJKmn62lfgg/view?usp=drive_link
9. Video from 01/31/2024, showing garbage trucks ignoring the stop sign
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tFvLW7wmbzm92B8lvrdemg1qhkt_OPdX/view?usp=drive_link
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yif0qT6Am9HS540p4zfN-Llo3UXbrsah/view?usp=drive_link

News articles about south Berkeley hit and run:

- <https://www.kron4.com/news/bay-area/7-year-old-trick-or-treater-injured-in-berkeley-hit-and-run/>
- <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2023/11/17/berkeley-traffic-safety-petition-san-pablo-park-halloween>
- <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/east-bay/boy-injured-hit-and-run-halloween-berkeley/3358693/>

Original petition: <https://www.change.org/p/demanding-traffic-pedestrian-safety-measures-after-halloween-night-s-hit-run>

Relevant news article on funding (federal and state):

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/road-safety-improvements-coming-to-bay-area-california-with-139-million-in-federal-funding/>

BACKGROUND:

Over the past year, more than two vehicle-related accidents have been reported along Russell St. and King St. These incidents not only highlight the immediate need for enhanced safety measures but also underscore the potential long-term impacts on the

well-being of residents in District 3¹. Crime rates are intricately linked to the overall safety of streets². Safer streets contribute to a sense of security for residents, acting as a deterrent to criminal activities³. Conversely, unsafe streets can create an environment conducive to criminal behavior, affecting the overall well-being of the community.

Community members have been corresponding with the City of Berkeley's Transportation and Public Works Departments since 04/2019, requesting a speed bump. Community members have since submitted two separate petitions for a "Traffic Calming Study" in 2022. Community members have also contacted the Berkeley Police Department for enforcement help.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

The Vision Zero Action Plan for Berkeley was adopted in 2019 and outlines key priorities and actions to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and severe injuries by 2028. The plan focuses on collaboration, capacity building, transparency, equity, project planning, and public awareness.⁴

The Council adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2013, which intends to create and sustain street designs and repairs. This policy is determined to create a "comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel"⁵ for all users. This includes pedestrians, persons with disabilities, motorists, bicyclists, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff time and cost associated with the installation of a speed bump.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

No adverse effects to the environment. Slower traffic and safer street crossings.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

If the Council is dedicated to ensuring safety in the neighborhoods for all people, they should refer to the implementation of a speed bump at the intersection of Russell St. and King St. The consistent vehicle-related crimes along the intersection can be prevented with further action. The Council must keep their commitment to ensuring the safety of our drivers and pedestrians by preventing future accidents from occurring through the construction of more visible crossing signals.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternatives include the consideration of other items listed under the petition. The recommendations include the installation of safety features such as speed bumps,

¹ <https://bpd-transparency-initiative-berkeleypd.hub.arcgis.com/pages/traffic-safety>

² <https://bpd-transparency-initiative-berkeleypd.hub.arcgis.com/pages/crimes>

³ <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/summer16/highlight2.html>

⁴ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/Berkeley-Vision-Zero-Action-Plan.pdf>

⁵ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/Berkeley%20Complete%20Streets%20Policy.pdf>

enhancements to pedestrian crosswalks, and a comprehensive traffic flow analysis.

CONTACT PERSON

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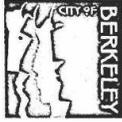
tposner@cityofberkeley.info

npaetsch@cityofberkeley.info

Attachment:

1. Request for Traffic Calming Study from November 2022.
2. Safety concern from resident regarding Russel St. and King St. intersection from November 2023.

Attachment 1:



Date: 11/13/2022

City of Berkeley

Neighborhood Request for Traffic Calming Study

We, the residents of 1703 RUSSELL STREET, would like the City of Berkeley's Public Works (PW) Transportation Division to initiate a Traffic Calming Study in our neighborhood to address the following concern(s):

- Speeding
- Pedestrian Safety
- Cut-Through Traffic
- Commercial Vehicle Restriction
- Bicycle Safety
- Parking Issues
- Other (Please Specify)

◆ The specific location encompasses RUSSELL STREET, between KING ST. and McGEE AVE.

> Brief explanation of the reasons for the need for traffic calming, and any supporting observations:

Every day I observe cars ignoring the stop sign at the intersection of Russell/King St and speeding down Russell. There are many children walking to Malcolm X Elem. School + Grove Park, and cyclists on the Bicycle Blvd. Consider a traffic circle? Thank you!

> Please provide the name and contact information of the resident representing the consensus of your neighborhood on this matter:

Name: JESSICA LIU

Address: 1703 RUSSELL STREET, BERKELEY 94703

Telephone: 626-679-1216 email: 1703 RUSSELL BERKELEY@GMAIL.COM

Please submit the completed form to:

Jesse Peoples, PE
1947 Center Street, 4th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
jpeoples@cityofberkeley.info

Attachment 2:



[Redacted]

Urgent need for speed bump on Russell St at King St (south Berkeley)

Fri, Nov 3, 2023 at 2:58 PM

To: Russell Berkeley <1703russellberkeley@gmail.com>
Cc: "Bartlett, Ben" <bbartlett@berkeleyca.gov>, "Chang, James" <jchang@berkeleyca.gov>, S [Redacted]
"Posner, Tina" <TPosner@berkeleyca.gov>, [Redacted]

[Redacted]

I am the next door neighbor to [Redacted]. I live on King Street at Russell in the [Redacted]

My child and I were 3 inches away from being hit by a car last year as we crossed Russell in front of the daycare. A guy drove through the stop sign without stopping while also looking down at his cell and didn't see me at all until I screamed at him and hit the car hood.

I sit in my driveway and watch hundreds of people ride their bikes on Russell which is a Bike Boulevard, and King Street which is a Bike Boulevard. They ride to Malcolm X Elementary school, to Willard Middle School, to Sylvia Mendez Elementary, and to UC Berkeley. They ride to the Ashby BART station. They use these streets to cross the city east- west and north- south. I also watch drivers blow through the stop signs at the Russell-King intersection every day. It is only a matter of time until someone is killed.

It is now scary to cross Russell St, just 10 steps, or 15 steps if you are a small child. We want to get to Grove park and the Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch library, but to take your kids across Russell on foot or on a bike feels like you are taking a risk with their lives.

And it is incredibly scary to teach my children how to ride a bike, knowing that drivers don't respect the stop signs at this intersection at all.

Please, put in a speed bump. This will make drivers slow down and pay attention as they come to this intersection.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Quoted text hidden]