



**BEN BARTLETT**  
CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

CONSENT CALENDAR  
October 29th, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett  
Subject: 2024-2025 Budget Request: Funding for Speed Bump at Russell and Martin Luther King Jr. Way

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Council refers the November AAO#1 Budget Process \$7,000 to fund the speed bump installation on Russell Street at King Street or other costs associated with the traffic calming method that City Staff sees fit.

### CURRENT SITUATION

On May 21st, 2024 Regular Council Meeting, an item was passed approving the [Speed Bump Installation on Russell St at King Street \(South Berkeley\)](#) 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.

### BACKGROUND:

The intersection at Russell St. and King St. located within District 3, is a regularly crossed street by pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike. Both Russell Street and King Street are "Bicycle Boulevards", and are the main routes as parents/children go to Malcolm X Elementary School, Sylvia Mendez Elementary School, Emerson Elementary School, and Willard Middle School. Right at its corner, Grove Park and the Tarea H. Pittman Berkeley Public Library (South Branch) are walking-distance away, as well as other service centers in the community. Commuters park in the neighborhood, and walk or bike to Ashby BART. Neighborhood residents walk to the retail hubs with Walgreens and Berkeley Bowl. There are home-based daycares and preschools on the same block in question. 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. While the [Speed Bump Installation on Russell St at King Street \(South Berkeley\)](#) item was previously passed, City Staff asked our office to write an additional item for a budget request in order to get the speed bump installed. Further, discussions with staff have revealed there are two additional traffic calming requests and an ultimate improvement of a traffic circle contemplated for the area long term via the Bike Plan. This speed bump would serve an immediate traffic calming need identified by neighbors and staff at this intersection until the long term plan is executed.



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REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

Video Links:

1. [Public YouTube Channel](#) - Over 50 videos demonstrating traffic violations at the intersection.
2. [Silver Minivan Ignoring Stop Sign](#) - A recent upload showing a silver minivan blasting through the intersection.
3. [SUV Scaring Cyclist](#) - Video of an SUV frightening a cyclist.
4. [Cyclist Halting Due to Overtaking Car](#) - A cyclist freezing to a halt upon hearing a car engine accelerating.
5. **Nighttime Violations:**
  - o [SUV at 9:26 PM](#)
  - o [SUV at 9:28 PM](#)
  - o [Clip at Dawn](#)
6. [Near-Miss Incident](#) - A minivan almost hitting a cyclist.
7. [Family Escaping Potential Collision](#) - Red car blasting through the intersection.
8. [Blue Sports Car Ignoring Stop Sign \(January 2024\)](#)
9. **Garbage Trucks Ignoring Stop Sign (January 31, 2024):**
  - o [Video 1](#)
  - o [Video 2](#)

Comments and Anecdotes from Neighbors

1. **PG&E Workers' Account** - Daily observation of drivers ignoring stop signs; anecdotally, around 8 drivers per day were observed blasting through without stopping.
2. **Witness Comment #1 (Jessica and Tao, 1703 Russell Street):**  
"Daily observation of cars neglecting the stop sign and speeding down Russell Street."
3. **Witness Comment #2 (Cindi Augsjoost, 2906 King St):**  
"Close call with a car while crossing Russell. Observes daily violations of stop signs by cars. Requests speed bumps for safety."
4. **Witness Comment #3 (Balark):**  
"Supports the installation of speed bumps due to frequent traffic violations at the intersection."
5. **Witness Comment #4 (Sudhir, 2901 King Street):**  
"Daily observation of cars speeding through stop signs at all times of the day, impacting safety for all residents."



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6. **City Council Meeting Anecdote** - Mayor Jesse Arreguín recounts his personal near-miss while cycling through the intersection, echoing community concerns.

Documents and Reference Links:

1. [Request for Traffic Calming Study \(Jessica Liu, 11/2022\)](#)
2. [Neighbor Comment/Testimony \(Cindi Augsjoost, 11/2023\)](#)
3. [Correspondence with Public Works \(Jessica Liu, 11/2023\)](#)
4. [Neighbor Comment/Testimony \(Sudhir Manandhar, 11/2023\)](#)
5. [Correspondence with Public Works \(Loa Ortiz, 11/2023\)](#)
6. [Correspondence with Public Works \(Jessica Liu, 12/2023\)](#)
7. [Correspondence with Police Department \(Sutapa Mallik, 12/2023\)](#)

Additional Reference Links:

1. [City of Berkeley Bicycle Plan \(2017\) - Traffic circle recommendation at Russell St/King St intersection](#)
2. **News Articles About South Berkeley Hit and Run:**
  - o [Kron4](#)
  - o [Berkeleyside](#)
  - o [NBC Bay Area](#)
3. [Original Petition for Traffic Safety Measures](#)
4. [News Article on Funding for Road Safety Improvements](#)

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The neighbors would also be amenable to whatever calming device City Staff sees fit such as a traffic circle or other effective and permanent traffic calming solution.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff time and cost associated with the installation of a speed bump (\$7,000) or other effective traffic calming measure (For example \$30,000 to fund traffic circle)

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

The proposed traffic calming measures are expected to have no adverse environmental effects. Reducing vehicle speeds and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety contributes to a safer and more sustainable urban environment.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The implementation of a speed bump at the intersection of Russell St. and King St would reduce consistent vehicle-related violations along the intersection.



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CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Ben Bartlett  
Tina R. Posner  
James Chang

[bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info)  
[tposner@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:tposner@cityofberkeley.info)  
[jchang@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:jchang@cityofberkeley.info)