

CONSENT CALENDAR

June 3, 2025

Igor Tregub, Councilmember District 4

Cecilia Lunaparra, Councilmember District 7

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Igor Tregub (Author) and Cecilia Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Referral: Oxford for All

RECOMMENDATION

1. Refer to the City Manager to design and construct a quick-build class IV bicycle facility on the east side of Oxford Street and Fulton Street between Bancroft Way and Hearst Avenue and implement pedestrian safety improvements on the corridor, potentially through quick-build planning and construction methods.
2. Refer \$400,000 to the June budget process (FY26 Mid-Biennial Update) to provide the City of Berkeley Public Works Department with necessary funds to support design, engineering, and construction costs for the project.
3. Refer to the City Manager and to The City/UC/Student Relations “4x6” Committee to explore opportunities to leverage existing and establish new financial partnerships with UC Berkeley on safety projects along Oxford Street and adjacent areas, including the Oxford and Bancroft volleyball courts project and similar initiatives.

POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 7, 2025, the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability Policy Committee adopted the following action:
M/S/C (Humbert/Lunaparra) to send the item to City Council with a positive recommendation¹.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$400,000 in the June budget process (FY26 Mid-Biennial Update)

¹ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/2025-05-07%20Annotated%20Agenda%20-%20%20Facilities.pdf>

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Oxford and Fulton Streets mark the western boundary of the UC Berkeley campus. The corridor's current configuration reflects antiquated traffic engineering conventions that prioritize vehicular throughput over pedestrian and bicycle safety. Oxford Street serves as the primary pedestrian gateway to the campus from Downtown Berkeley, yet it lacks a distinct ground-level identity.

Just as if not more importantly, the Oxford/Fulton Street corridor is unsafe for many bicyclists, pedestrians, and micro-mobility users, as traffic throughput has been prioritized over safety and comfort.

The outdated current design for Oxford Street/Fulton Street — focused on maximizing car speeds and throughput — is dangerous for all road users, including drivers. On Oxford Street and Fulton Street from Hearst Ave. to Bancroft Way since 2017, there have been 19 total car driver and passenger injuries, including 2 severe injuries; 8 total pedestrian injuries; and 5 total cyclist injuries, including 1 severe injury. Prior to 2017, Shlomo Bentin, a guest lecturer at UC Berkeley, was killed by a truck driver while cycling at Fulton St. and Bancroft Way in 2012.² In 2016, Berkeley resident Megan Schwarzman came minutes from death after being struck by a driver at Fulton St. and Bancroft Way and suffered severe injuries.³

From Bancroft Way to Hearst Avenue., Oxford Street and Fulton Street resemble a suburban arterial with four travel lanes, two parking lanes, and a median with turn lanes at intersections. Cyclists must use Class II bike lanes that put them at risk of getting "doored" if they feel confident enough to ride on Oxford Street, and pedestrians must use narrow sidewalks that do not reflect the significant demand generated by the campus and downtown or the increased demand that will be spurred by future developments. Not only is the current Class II bike lane on Oxford dangerous for getting "doored," but also cars frequently use the southbound bike lane as a temporary parking spot and loading zone for Anchor House, placing users at risk. While the solutions to some of these challenges—including sidewalk widening—may require longer-term projects, there are short-term, quick-build solutions that would significantly improve safety along the Oxford-Fulton corridor.

Improving safety on Oxford Street and Fulton Street is especially important at this moment. In the next decade, many significant developments are planned along the Oxford corridor that could dramatically affect transportation, development, urban design,

² <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2012/07/16/neuroscientist-shlomo-bentin-killed-in-bike-accident>

³ <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2016/02/05/hope-gratitude-after-near-deadly-collision-in-berkeley>

housing, potentially land values/affordability and more! The University of California is planning to redevelop and expand University Hall at Oxford and University and is planning a student housing project at Fulton and Bancroft that will contain an estimated 1625 beds.⁴ Anchor House, between University and Hearst on Oxford has already come online with 772 new beds for transfer students.⁵ Additionally, a 17-story, 283-unit private mixed use development called The Hub will be built at the intersection of Oxford Street and Center Street⁶. Nearby on Hearst Avenue, the entirely new College of Data and Society Gateway building is currently under construction.⁷ Beyond these projects, many substantial projects are planned on adjacent streets. These new developments will spur new transportation demand for safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

There is a long history of interest in redesigning Oxford Street to better serve all street users. The 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan identifies the Oxford-Fulton corridor as an ideal candidate for a Class IV cycle track facility. Oxford serves as a crucial connection between the north and south sides of campus and downtown for people riding bikes. Additionally, Oxford is on the City of Berkeley's High-Injury Network identified in the City's 2019 Vision Zero Action Plan,⁸ meaning that it is one of the small number of streets in the city that account for the most traffic injuries and deaths.

In 2021, UC Berkeley completed an Oxford St./Fulton St. Multimodal Mobility and Urban Design Study, authored by Sasaki and Fehr & Peers⁹. This comprehensive study included data analysis of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian counts and the evaluation of many different alternatives. The study identified the need for improved bicycle and pedestrian safety infrastructure on Oxford Street and recommended the construction of a two-way Class IV cycle track on the east side of Oxford Street. Fehr & Peers found that a cycle track on the east side of Oxford Street, as proposed in this referral, would have "minimal impact on vehicular operations" and would not require removing the median.

⁴ <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/Bancroft-Fulton>

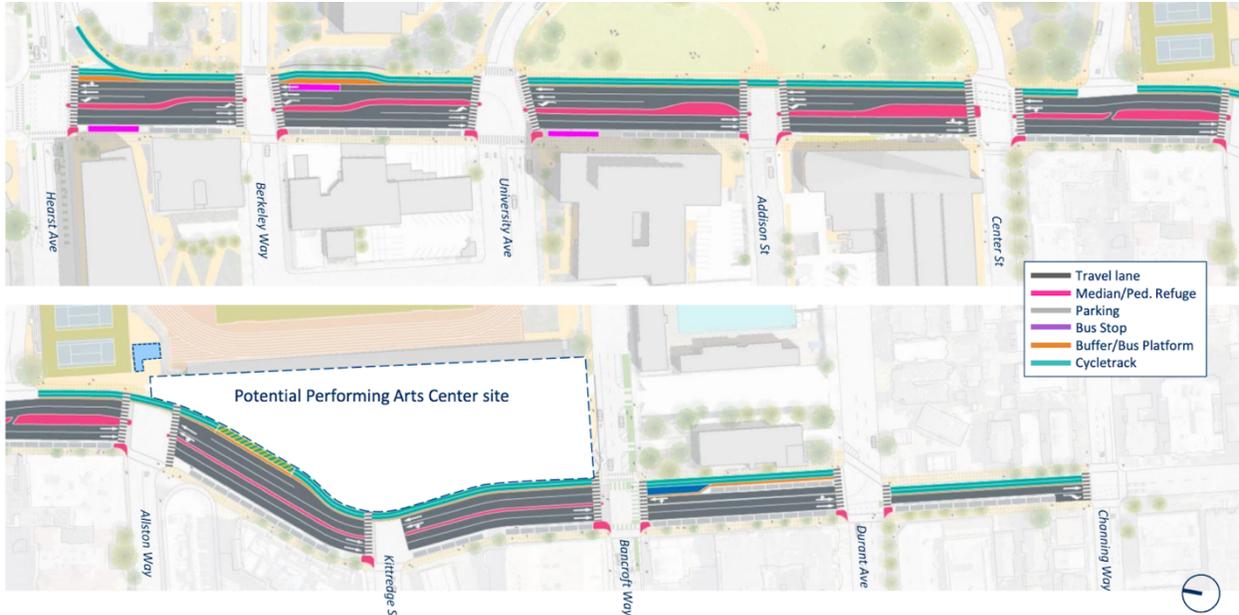
⁵ <https://studenthousingbusiness.com/uc-berkeley-completes-772-bed-residence-hall-for-transfer-students/>

⁶ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/4-The-HUB-Applicant-Statement-01-20-22-2128-Oxford.pdf>

⁷ <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/gateway>

⁸ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/Berkeley-Vision-Zero-Action-Plan.pdf>

⁹ http://www.preservenet.com/20211130_OxfordCorridorStudy.pdf



Preferred Alternative from UC Berkeley Oxford St./Fulton St. Multimodal Mobility and Urban Design Study between Hearst Ave. and Channing Way. Construction has been completed for the blocks between Bancroft Way and Channing Way as part of the Southside Complete Streets Project (Fehr & Peers).

In 2023, students in UC Berkeley's Master of City Planning program at the College of Environmental Design studied the existing conditions and needs for safety improvements on Oxford Street as part of an intensive transportation studio. This team reviewed previous plans and documents, collected average pedestrian and bicycle intersection counts, conducted on-site community engagement, and authored a comprehensive 71-page report.¹⁰ Among other recommendations, this report recommended implementing protected bicycle lanes connected to existing facilities and installing traffic calming measures including bollard curb extensions and painted crossings.

¹⁰ <https://ideas.repec.org/p/cdl/itsrrp/qt53g9g83t.html>



*Illustration of what a Class IV bicycle facility on Oxford Street could look like.
Katie Heuser*

On September 12, 2023, City Council approved a referral titled 51B BRT + University/Shattuck Corridor Mobility Improvements,¹¹ that, among other recommendations, included a \$150,000 budget referral to conduct corridor studies — including on Oxford Street and Fulton Street — to identify appropriate road safety improvements that advance city-adopted safety, transportation, and climate goals. While \$150,000 was allocated in the FY 2025 budget,¹² to the best of our knowledge, these funds have not been expended, and no study has commenced.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This referral builds on prior work and recognizes the urgent need to address traffic safety on Oxford Street with proven infrastructural solutions. In particular, quick-build solutions have become widely utilized to improve traffic safety rapidly at a low cost and could be effective, inexpensive, and quick to implement on the Oxford-Fulton corridor. In fact, quick-build safety improvements were previously successfully implemented on Fulton Street just one block south of this item's project area.

In 2016, Berkeley resident Megan Schwarzman was struck by a driver while riding her bike on Fulton Street just south of Bancroft Way and dragged under a car for 60 feet.

¹¹ [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12 Item 29 51B BRT %2B University-Shattuck.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12%20Item%2029%2051B%20BRT%20University-Shattuck.pdf)

¹² [https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-06-25 Item 53 Fiscal Years 2025 2026 Biennial Budget Adoption - Supp %28Budget%29.pdf](https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-06-25%20Item%2053%20Fiscal%20Years%202025%202026%20Biennial%20Budget%20Adoption%20-%20Supp%20Budget.pdf)

She suffered severe injuries, including “a lacerated liver, collapsed lung, broken ribs, multiple pelvic fractures, a broken collarbone and broken facial bones, along with extreme blood loss” and was minutes from losing her life.¹³

After a significant push by advocates to prevent more traumatic crashes like the one that almost took Megan’s life, the City of Berkeley rapidly approved and built a cycle track from Bancroft Way to Channing Way with only paint and plastic delineators, or flex posts. This quick-build facility was recently removed, as the permanent cycle track constructed with the Southside Complete Streets Project replaced it. While this quick-build improvement was implemented in response to a serious crash that almost took a Berkeleyan’s life, it is in our best interest to identify streets in need of quick-build improvements and prevent future tragedies *before* they occur. We must be proactive, not just reactive.



Before-and-after comparison showing the quick-build bicycle facility constructed on Fulton St. in 2016 (Google Street View).

Quick-build improvements can be implemented without precluding future changes to revise or improve a street’s design and can be built at a low cost and on a quick timeline. While the quick-build bicycle facility constructed on Fulton St. in 2016 is one example, quick-build projects have been implemented across the United States and across the world to great success, especially in the last 10-15 years.¹⁴

While quick-build improvements would be an excellent option for this corridor, this referral in no way intends to preclude staff from planning and constructing more permanent facilities. When planning and designing this project, staff may wish to consult the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission to receive input. Staff should

¹³ <https://www.berkeleyscanner.com/2024/08/06/traffic-safety/berkeley-street-trauma-prevention-program-mike-wilson-meg-schwarzman/>

¹⁴ https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2016PeoplefoBikes_Quick-Builds-for-Better-Streets.pdf

additionally consult with AC Transit regarding AC Transit's current Line 6 terminus on Oxford Street at Addison Street to discuss options to accommodate it in the proposed quick-build design, move it back to its previous location on the 2100 block of Addison St, or otherwise address impacts to this terminus.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Berkeley's 2019 Greenhouse Gas Inventory found that 60 percent of emissions in the City come from transportation sources, predominantly private vehicles. Building connected, safe active transportation facilities is one of the most effective ways Berkeley can reduce its largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Oxford St. and Fulton St. next to campus are highly interconnected to other nearby streets that have already received bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, such as Bancroft Way, Oxford Street, and Fulton Street south of Bancroft Way. Because this project would close a key gap in Berkeley's bicycle network, its impacts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions would be particularly high.

CONTACT PERSON

Igor Tregub, Councilmember District 4, ITregub@Berkeleyca.gov

Olga Bolotina, Chief of Staff, Council District 4, OBolotina@Berkeleyca.gov

Phone: 510-981-7140

