Hopkins Street Alternatives 1 and 2 Overview

April 10, 2026

City staff were asked to present two alternatives for improvements to Hopkins Street based on the 65-percent design developed in 2023 and the January 26, 2026 City Council referral.

Alternatives 1 and 2: Shared Elements

Public Works: Both alternatives will provide new ADA compliant curbcuts and a host of improvements to make it safer to cross Hopkins on foot, bike and other mobility devices. Monterey and Hopkins will become a raised intersection. Bulbouts and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) will be added at Stannage Avenue (as part ACTC's San Pablo Avenue Parallel Bike Improvements project). More pedestrian crossing safety improvements will be added at Peralta Avenue, Josephine Street and The Alameda. Crossing improvements added at Stannage (as part of the aforementioned ACTC project) and at the Ohlone Greenway (as part of the Ohlone Greenway Modernization and Safety Improvements Project) will improve conditions for cyclists crossing Hopkins at these two locations. Bicycle "sharrows" will be added to the roadway between San Pablo Avenue and Gilman Street and between McGee and Josephine.

Fire: Although a raised crosswalk at Josephine and a raised intersection at Monterey will slow emergency vehicles, that is a pragmatic trade-off given the heavy use of these intersections by pedestrians and micromobility users, as well as their proximity to the Hopkins business district, multiple Berkeley Unified School District facilities, and the North Branch of the Berkeley Public Library. Moreover, emergency vehicles already slow at Monterey because of congestion and stop signs.

Regarding evacuation, completion in 2025 of the Evacuation Time Study has given staff a clearer understanding of which design features affect the time required to evacuate different areas of the city. Both alternatives maintain lane widths comparable to existing conditions. The actual impact on evacuation times will be assessed through a sensitivity study that will incorporate the proposed design into the City's evacuation model and compare the results with the baseline evacuation times documented in the Evacuation Time Study.

Fire and Public Works staff have reviewed the proposed traffic calming features, with some modifications yet to be reflected in the designs (example: replacing speed table with the speed cushion in Alternative 1) and Fire has approved them per Section 503.4.1 of the Berkeley Fire Code.

Roadway segments within 20 feet of a fire hydrant (in each direction) have a 26-foot curb-to-curb width whenever possible. Some areas are existing and non-conforming to the 26-foot standard, if

it is infeasible to align them to the standard, they remain non-conforming. This meets the requirements of Appendix D, Section D103.1 of the Berkeley Fire Code.

Alternative 1: 2023 65-percent Design

Public Works: Alternative 1 provides a two-way cycle-track (physically protected bike lane) between Gilman and McGee streets and between Josephine and Sutter streets. This design will repurpose approximately eighty-four parking spaces. To make room for the cycle-track, an estimated thirty-nine parking spaces in the Gilman to McGee segment and forty-three spaces in the Josephine to Sutter segment would be repurposed; and for the above-mentioned crossing improvements, two spaces at Stannage. Traffic signal upgrades at Sacramento Street and The Alameda will complement the cycle-track, adding dedicated bicycle signal heads, new signal arms and other signal head adjustments to align with the new road layout. Alternative 1 would likely need to be delivered as a standalone project, rather than through the regular paving program, due to its complexity, schedule and implementation demands. Estimated cost: $14- to $15-million.

Fire: Alternative 1 retains workable emergency access overall. Public Works will replace the traditional speed table shown in the 65% design with the speed cushion design that Public Works and the Fire Department coordinated to develop and test, which is advantageous in that it allows emergency vehicles to maintain response speed and supports traffic-calming objectives.

Fire staff's review of lane widths shows that, under Alternative 1, approximately four blocks would have lanes narrower than the preferred 11-foot minimum for emergency response, though they would still meet the minimum acceptable width of 10.5 feet.

Alternative 2: 2026 City Council Referral

Public Works: Alternative 2 provides crosswalk enhancements, pedestrian refuge islands and traffic signal upgrades. This design will repurpose approximately five parking spaces to make room for bulbouts (corner sidewalk extensions): two spaces at Stannage (see above) and one at Acton, Albina and Beverly respectively. Bulbouts will also be added at Cornell, Ordway, McGee and Colusa. A pedestrian refuge and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon will be added at Carlotta Avenue. Bicycle "sharrows" will be added to the roadway between Gilman and McGee and between Josephine and Sutter. While Alternative 2 has not been engineered, Public Works is confident that the bulbouts and median refuge island improvements can be provided along with 11' travel lane widths in both directions and will not have lane widths below the Fire Department minimum acceptable width of 10.5'. Alternative 2 could likely be delivered as part of the City's regular paving program. Estimated cost: $11- to $12-million.

Fire: Alternative 2 retains workable emergency access overall, and the proposed curb extensions, median features, refuge areas, raised treatments, and other streetscape elements do not present a clear barrier to emergency apparatus response or operations.

Fire staff's review confirms that the lane width commitments from Public Works statement (above) of 11-foot width preferred and 10.5-foot minimum are acceptable for Alternative 2.

Next Steps: Complete the 65% for the preferred design

Once City Council selects its preferred alternative, staff will work to complete the 65% design stage of the project. This phase is the first stage of detailed design and represents a major step forward in project development. During this phase, the project will be further refined in terms of scope, physical design, and technical engineering details, with review generally focused on internal City stakeholders and key external agencies such as AC Transit and BUSD transportation. This phase will also address major design conflicts, confirm consistency with direction received from Council, develop a more detailed cost estimate, and preliminary technical specifications.