



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 13, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Harrison
Subject: Budget Referral: Police Foot Patrol in Downtown

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the FY 2018/19 Budget Process to establish funding for police foot patrol or bicycle officers to cover the Downtown Area as defined in the Downtown Area Plan, which includes portions of Berkeley Police Department Beats 4, 3 and 5. In addition, explore the possibility of a deputized Community Service Officer, who can issue citations and make arrests. Potential revenue sources could include parking revenue if Downtown meters are extended from 6-8 p.m.

BACKGROUND

The Downtown area is the heart of Berkeley's culture, economy and government. Nearly 31% of Berkeley residents travel to the Downtown by foot, and almost two million people from across the Bay Area, country and the world visit the area each year. The area is home to a bustling Berkeley Bay Area Rapid Transit station that serves as the gateway to one of the most important universities in the world, hundreds of businesses, historical attractions, cultural amenities and residences. The Downtown is also the seat of Berkeley's municipal government. With its emphasis on pedestrian traffic, providing funds for a foot or bike patrol will help improve public safety for the many residents, employees, and visitors to the Downtown.

The Downtown continues to be impacted by property crime, assault and other crimes.¹ A 2016 criminology study conducted by researchers at the University of Cambridge concluded that targeted deployment of two full-time Police Community Support Officers in Peterborough, England "would prevent 86 assaults a year, or incidents of the equivalent crime 'harm value', saving potential costs to the public of eight years of imprisonment." The study suggests that "vehicle-based" policing is less effective than beat policing.²

¹ "Crime Report - 2016." City Clerk, City of Berkeley. March 14, 2017. Accessed February 14, 2018. <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/recordsonline/export/17190550.pdf>.

² "Policing: two officers 'on the beat' prevent 86 assaults and save thousands in prison costs." Research. June 14, 2016. Accessed February 14, 2018. <http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/policing-two-officers-on-the-beat-prevent-86-assaults-and-save-thousands-in-prison-costs>.

In 2010, a successful pilot program between University of California Police and BPD took place over the course of six weeks, in which a joint UC/BPD beat patrol walked Telegraph Avenue. This joint beat patrol resulted in an increase in business sales and a decrease in illegal activity. Referrals in 2011 and 2015 passed unanimously to create a permanent foot patrol in the Telegraph Commercial District.

This proposal also responds to residents and business owners, who have requested more beat officers Downtown. This would not only ensure expedient response to calls for service, but can help deter crime from happening.

Significantly, foot and bicycle patrols also have the potential to enhance civilian-police relations as officers will be engaged in increased contact with the community as compared to officers that exclusively patrol in vehicles. In addition, beat officers would help contribute to Berkeley's ambitious climate goals as patrolling by foot and by bicycle generates zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Given the effectiveness of beat policing, this proposal could potentially provide a small step toward alleviating what departmental leadership identified as a "deepening staffing crisis" by providing meaningful and fulfilling policing opportunities for existing officers and new recruits.³

With beat policing already proving successful in Berkeley, the Council should invest in its Downtown by approving funding for beat officers.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Having two beat officers available six hours daily from 4:00 to 10:00 would require 4,452 hours of work annually, or approximately 2 FTE. At a salary for a BPD Officer ranging from \$107,000-\$117,852 and a fringe benefit rate of 97.7%, the total cost would be \$423,331 to \$465,987 annually). Alternatively, these hours could be filled on overtime at an annual cost of \$343,532.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Beat officers patrolling by foot and by bicycle generate no transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

CONTACT PERSON

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³ Raguso, Emilie. "Chief: Berkeley police face a deepening staffing crisis." Berkeleyside. December 19, 2017. Accessed February 14, 2018. <http://www.berkeleyside.com/2017/12/15/chief-berkeley-police-face-deepening-staffing-crisis/>.