



Councilmember Ben Bartlett

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CONSENT CALENDAR
May 28th, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett
Subject: Budget Referral: Funding for a Traffic Safety and Mitigation Study and Investments on Alcatraz Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council refer to the budget process funding of a traffic safety and mitigation study for Alcatraz Avenue to address the high volume of traffic accidents along this roadway due to inadequate street lighting and traffic controls. This study will determine the best methods of controlling all forms of traffic to maximize the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

CURRENT SITUATION

Alcatraz Avenue, which intersects the major roadways Adeline Street and California Street, suffers from poor lighting and traffic controls resulting in a high number of traffic accidents. These accidents can be easily prevented with the installation of more streetlights and effective traffic signals or signage. However, to maximize the cost-effectiveness of these improvements, a study must first be made to determine the best placement and types of lights and signals to be used. Therefore it is necessary for the City Council to fund a traffic safety and mitigation study to better protect the residents and commuters moving through this area.

BACKGROUND

In February 2019, Councilmember Bartlett's office released a survey to residents and community members of South Berkeley to receive feedback on ideal locations for streetlight and traffic control upgrades and additions. One street that was named several times was Alcatraz Avenue, which lacks adequate lighting and intersects major roadways such as Sacramento Street and Adeline Street. These intersections have been specifically named by residents as sites of high volumes of accidents. Alcatraz

Avenue itself has been described as dark and poorly lit, making it a dangerous place to walk, bike, or drive at night.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

On December 11, 2012, Berkeley City Council adopted the Complete Streets Policy to guide future street design and repair activities. This policy outlined a comprehensive transportation network that allows safe and convenient travel along Berkeley's streets for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.

In the resolution of the policy, it is stated that "the City of Berkeley expresses its commitment to creating and maintaining Complete Streets that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel along and across streets."¹ If the City of Berkeley is to uphold this commitment, then funding a traffic mitigation and safety study for Alcatraz Avenue is an ideal opportunity.

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternative actions include directly installing street lights and traffic controls without a prior safety and traffic mitigation study. However, this would still require a budget referral and funding required may vary. Outcomes from this alternative may also be less effective than ones stemming from a study.

OUTREACH OVERVIEW AND RESULTS

District 3 constituents were given a survey to help determine where to install and improve street lights and traffic controls.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Ever since Berkeley adopted the Complete Streets Policy, the City has been committed to developing an integrated transportation network to promote "safe, equitable, and convenient travel for all users while preserving flexibility...using the latest and best design guidelines and standards."²

IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The Council should refer to the Transportation Division to create a plan for the enforcement and implementation of the study and future installation of traffic lights.

¹ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%20Complete%20Street%20Resolution%2012%2011%2012.pdf

² https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%20Complete%20Street%20Resolution%2012%2011%2012.pdf

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time as well as costs associated with traffic mitigation study and installation of new lights and traffic controls.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

A traffic mitigation and safety study can lead to more efficient traffic controls that not only make the roads safer but less congested as well, reducing the carbon footprint.

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

It is expected that the City of Berkeley will recognize the importance of funding a traffic safety and mitigation study on Alcatraz Avenue.

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