



Councilmember Ben Bartlett

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CONSENT CALENDAR

September 10th, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett
 Subject: Funding the Construction of a Pedestrian Signal at Ashby Street and Fulton Street

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council refers to the November Budget Annual Appropriations Ordinance to fund the construction of a pedestrian crossing signal at the intersection of Ashby and Fulton Street in order to address inadequate traffic control and stopping, reduce traffic accidents, and further safeguard the community.

CURRENT SITUATION

The intersection at Ashby Street and Fulton Street only has two ground stoplights that control the flow of traffic. However, the ground lights are not easily visible and are often ignored by drivers, leading to many close-calls and accidents. In order to cultivate a culture of traffic and pedestrian safety, the Council should refer to the November Budget Annual Appropriation Ordinance its proposal for the budget process to fund the construction of the more effective pedestrian crossing signal.

BACKGROUND

In this district, even with streets with stoplights, cars tend to exceed the speed limit or even ignore the stoplight itself. This not only threatens the safety of drivers but children and seniors as well. On March 5th, a 73-year-old cyclist was riding south down Fulton Street when he was struck by a westbound vehicle. The stoplights that were posted there were not visible and failed to control the flow of traffic and resulted in a fatal accident.¹ It is crucial to take the necessary steps in improving pedestrian safety and traffic conditions at this dangerous intersection by constructing a more visible pedestrian crossing signal.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

The Council adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2013, which intends to create and sustain street designs and repairs. This policy is determined to create a “comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel”² for all users. This includes pedestrians, persons with disabilities, motorists, bicyclists, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families.

¹ <https://www.berkeleyside.com/2019/03/02/cyclist-seriously-injured-in-hit-and-run-crash-on-ashby>

² <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/completestreetspolicy/>

This Complete Streets Policy, resolves to “provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel along and across streets.”³

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternatives include replacing the existing traffic signal with a more visible one or installing the crosswalk LED lights to flash while a pedestrian or cyclist crosses the street. However, this will still require additional funding and possible paving.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

If the Council is dedicated to ensuring safety in the neighborhoods for all people, they should refer to the construction of a pedestrian signal at the intersection of Ashby and Fulton to the November Budget Annual Appropriations Ordinance process. There have been many auto-related accidents throughout the City of Berkeley, especially at the relevant intersection that can be prevented with further action. The Council must keep their commitment to ensuring the safety of our drivers and pedestrians by preventing future accidents from occurring through the construction of more visible crossing signals.

IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The Council should refer to the Department of Public Works Transportation Division to create a plan for the installation of a crossing sign. The Council should also refer the plan to the November Budget Annual Appropriations Ordinance process to insure its implementation.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time and cost associated with the construction of the crossing signal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No adverse effects to the environment. Slower traffic and safer street crossings.

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

It is expected that the City of Berkeley will recognize the importance of funding the construction of a visible pedestrian crossing signal for the residents who live in this neighborhood.

CONTACT PERSON

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ARTICLES

<https://www.berkeleyside.com/2019/03/02/cyclist-seriously-injured-in-hit-and-run-crash-on-ashby>

³https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%20Complete%20Street%20Resolution%2012%2011%2012.pdf