To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmembers Ben Bartlett and Kate Harrison  
Subject: Request for Information Regarding Current Status and Progress on Traffic Mitigations at Dwight Way and California Street

RECOMMENDATION
Refer to the City Manager a request for information regarding the current status and progress on traffic mitigations and pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of Dwight Way and California Street.

BACKGROUND
On April 21, 2017, a Berkeley teenager biking to school was in a collision with a car at the intersection of Dwight and California and was hospitalized. On September 26, 2017, a different middle schooler biking to school was hit at the same intersection and was hospitalized. In response to these collisions, the City Council allocated $400,000 in November 2017 towards infrastructure improvements, specifically the installation of traffic lights, HAWK lights, or stop signs.

The intersection at Dwight Way and California Street does not meet the prior municipal requirements for a stop sign. Last year, Councilmembers Harrison, Bartlett, and Droste submitted a referral to change the criteria for stop signs by including elements such as the presence of bike boulevards and to allow a simpler process for requesting stop signs in the future. In March 2019, the Transportation Commission recommended expanded stop sign criteria, but the accompanying staff report has not been completed. Hence, the Council has not yet had the opportunity to approve the new criteria, which would allow the installation of a stop sign at this intersection. Installing a HAWK light or Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) would not require any changes to the current traffic policy.

On May 8, 2019, volunteers and bicycle advocates with Walk Bike Berkeley hosted a “safe crossing event” at Dwight and California, where they would stop traffic along Dwight Way with whistles, signs, and their own bodies whenever a pedestrian or bicyclist needed to cross. Other volunteers collected data on how the intersection is used between 8:00-9:00 am and tallied 84 adults and 24 children biking, and 12 adults and 4 children walking. Still, more volunteers gathered 58 signatures petitioning the City to make appropriate safety improvements.

The Transportation Department has developed plans for the intersection in the form of an extended median that can facilitate a two-stage crossing but without a stop sign or HAWK light. However, some constituents have expressed concern regarding the effectiveness of this plan, stating that a stop sign or HAWK light at the crosswalk would be more effective in providing
needed safety. Two-stage crossings are useful for pedestrians, but bicyclists move through intersections at a much faster pace and need vehicular traffic to slow or stop in both directions before crossing is safe. As volunteers with Walk Bike Berkeley demonstrated, the intersection experiences far more bicycle traffic than pedestrian and thus the needs of bicyclists are key in all future traffic mitigations.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES
The 2017 Bicycle Plan is an ambitious plan to turn Berkeley into “a model bicycle-friendly city where cycling is a safe, comfortable, and convenient form of transportation for people of all ages and abilities.” The first goal of the Bike Plan is to achieve zero bicycle-related fatalities by 2025 and zero bicycle-related injuries by 2035.

Dwight Way is considered a major arterial street (see Attachment 3), though it has only two lanes. If we assume a “medium” traffic volume for this arterial, the 2017 Bicycle Plan as seen in Attachment 4 calls for the installation of an RRFB, HAWK light, or traffic light to achieve a low-stress designation (LTS 1). California Street is a bicycle boulevard and a Tier 2 priority project for bicycle improvements. The Plan explicitly calls for the installation of RRFB at the intersection of Dwight and California.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS
The Berkeley City Council approved funds over two years ago for significant traffic improvements most appropriate to the 2017 Bicycle Plan and the needs of cyclists, and it is unclear how these directives are being implemented.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION
It is in the best interest that City Council understand the process in order to create the safest possible intersection and street for pedestrians and bicyclists with maximum community and policy input.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
Unsafe streets discourage Berkeley residents from walking and biking. Hastening safety improvements will encourage people to reduce the usage of their cars and reduce transportation emissions.

FISCAL IMPACTS
None. $400,000 has previously been allocated to address this intersection.

CONTACT PERSON
Councilmember Ben Bartlett (510) 981-7130
Reequanza McBride (510) 981-7131
James Chang jchang@cityofberkeley.info

ATTACHMENTS
1: Item 28, May 30th, 2017: “Expedite the construction of Beacon Lights at Dwight Way and California Street to take place at the onset of Phase 1 of the Berkeley Bicycle Plan”
3: City of Berkeley Traffic Engineering Average Total Daily Traffic Volume
4: Excerpts from 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan
To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City
From: Councilmembers Ben Bartlett and Kate Harrison

SUBJECT: Expedite the construction of Beacon Lights at Dwight Way and California Street to take place on the onset of Phase 1 of the Berkeley Bicycle Plan

RECOMMENDATION
Refer to the Transportation Department to expedite the construction of Beacon Lights at Dwight Way and California Street as part of Phase 1 of the Berkeley Bicycle Plan

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION
Cost of improvements to be determined.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
No ecological impact.

BACKGROUND
On April 21, 2017, a young child riding his bike sustained moderate injuries at this intersection after colliding into a moving car. The incident highlighted the need to improve pedestrian safety at Dwight and California. Numerous senior citizens who live nearby have voiced safety concerns.

California St. is a designated bicycle boulevard, as well as a corridor that many students use to get to two separate schools. Given the high volume of vulnerable traffic and the history of accidents at this intersection, further safety features would be a significant benefit.

California Street routinely carries a high volume of traffic traveling at high speed. Many children ride down California in both directions during rush hour, on their way to school. This beacon light would enable people riding their bicycles down the heavily trafficked bike boulevard on California to more safely cross Dwight Way. This intersection is of particular concern since as one approaches California Street, a bicycle boulevard from
the North, there is no crosswalk at the southbound lane.

CONTACT PERSON:
Councilmember Ben Bartlett 510-981-7130
To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Kate Harrison, Ben Bartlett and Cheryl Davila

Subject: Budget Referral: Prioritize Installation of Traffic Lights, HAWK Lights, or Stop Signs at the Intersection of Dwight Way and California Street in the 2017 Mid-Year Budget Process

RECOMMENDATION
1. Refer to the 2017 Mid-year budget process the installation of Traffic Lights, HAWK Lights, or Stop Signs at the intersection of Dwight Way and California Street. If such an installation is approved in the budget process, direct the City Manager and Transportation staff to prioritize and expedite said installation.
2. Request that the stoplights on Dwight at the intersections on either side of the Dwight and California intersection be coordinated.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION
$10,000-$400,000 and staff time.

BACKGROUND
On September 16, 2017—the most recent in a series of crashes involving young bicyclists occurred at the intersection of Dwight and California, a bicycle boulevard and route to a nearby middle and elementary school. Due both to its unusual layout and high levels of youth bicycle traffic, this intersection has proven repeatedly to be a danger to young bicyclists.

Prior to installation of either Traffic Lights, HAWK Lights or Stop Signs in this location, a traffic study and public hearing must be held to consider the impacts of the proposed improvements. This item urges staff to prioritize completion of all steps necessary to install the improvements immediately after the budget referral is approved. Further, this item requests that staff coordinate the stoplights at the intersections of Spaulding Ave and Dwight Way and Jefferson Ave and Dwight Way, in order to limit two way traffic at the Dwight and California intersection.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
Consistent with the City’s environmental goals by removing disincentives to bicycling.

CONTACT PERSON
Councilmember Kate Harrison, (510) 981-7140
FIGURE ES-6: PROJECT PRIORITIZATION CORRIDORS

TIER 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS
TIER 2 PRIORITY PROJECTS
TIER 3 PRIORITY PROJECTS

COMPLETE STREET CORRIDORS

PARK/REC
RAILROAD
BART STATION
AMTRAK STATION

Complete Street Corridors shown in yellow are proposed studies, not proposed projects. Class 4 Cycletracks and other bikeways that might impact parking, transit operations or roadway capacity that are recommended as part of Complete Street Corridors will not be implemented without further study, traffic and environmental analysis, public process, and coordination with all affected agencies. For further information, see Section 5.7 of the Berkeley Bicycle Plan.
### Table 5-2: Unsignalized Bikeway Crossing Treatment Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CROSSING TREATMENT</th>
<th>VERY LOW</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MEDIUM</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
<td>4 lanes</td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lanes</td>
<td>lanes</td>
<td>lanes</td>
<td>lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked Crossing</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1 or 2</td>
<td>LTS 2</td>
<td>LTS 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Refuge Island¹</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 2</td>
<td>LTS 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRFB², ³</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRFB with median¹, ², ³</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (HAWK)²</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Signal²</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>LTS 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **X** No additional benefit
- ¹ Minimum 6-ft wide median
- ² Subject to successful warrant analysis
- ³ 4-Way Stop Signs may be considered as an alternative to RRFBs

*LTS refers to Level of Traffic Stress*
FIGURE 5-13: RECOMMENDED LOW STRESS BIKEWAY INTERSECTION CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

TRAFFIC CALMING IMPROVEMENTS

EXISTING TRAFFIC CALMING FACILITIES

- TRAFFIC SIGNAL
- RRFB

NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS

- BICYCLE BOULEVARD [3E]
- CYCLETRACK [4B]

EXISTING BICYCLE BOULEVARD NETWORK

- PAVED PATH [1A]
- STANDARD BIKE LANE [2A]
- BICYCLE BOULEVARD [3E]

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