



CITY COUNCILMEMBER
RIGEL ROBINSON
DISTRICT 7

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ACTION CALENDAR
September 24, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Rigel Robinson, Lori Droste, Kate Harrison, and Mayor Jesse Arreguin
Subject: Referral: Develop a Bicycle Lane and Pedestrian Street Improvements Policy

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the City Manager to develop a comprehensive ordinance governing a Bicycle Lane and Pedestrian Street Improvements Policy that would:

- Require simultaneous implementation of recommendations in the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans when City streets are repaved, if one or more of the following conditions are met:
 - Bicycle Plan recommendations can be implemented using quick-build strategies that accommodate transit operations.
 - Pedestrian Plan recommendations can be implemented using quick-build strategies that accommodate transit operations.
 - The Bicycle Plan recommends studying protected bike lanes as part of a Complete Street Corridor Study in the Tier 1 Priority list.¹
 - Improvements are necessary to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Prioritize bikeways and Vision Zero high-fatality, high-collision streets under the five-year Paving Plan by requiring that 50 percent of the repaving budget go towards such streets until they meet a minimum surface standard established with input from the Public Works and Transportation Commissions.
- Encourage the use of quick builds by expediting quick-build projects under \$1 million.
 - “Quick-build” is defined as projects that a) require non-permanent features such as bollards/paint/bus boarding islands, b) make up less than 25 percent of the total repaving cost for that street segment, and c) can be a component of a Complete Street Corridor Study that includes evaluation after installation.
- Require staff to report progress back to Council every two years.

Furthermore, refer to the City Manager to draft a revised version of the City’s Complete Streets Policy that would clarify that the presence of an existing or planned bikeway

¹ [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017_AppendixE_Project%20Recs%20Priorities\(1\).pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017_AppendixE_Project%20Recs%20Priorities(1).pdf)

parallel to an arterial does not exempt projects along said arterial from bicycle and micromobility improvements under the Policy.

BACKGROUND

Bicycle lanes decrease conflict between different modes of transportation, promoting safe streets for both motorists and bicyclists. A 2012 study found that protected bike lanes are the strongest indicator of lower fatality and injury rates. Where bike lanes were most abundant, fatal crash rates dropped by 44 percent and injury rates dropped by 50 percent.² Another study showed that bike lanes improve safety for motorists because drivers who pass bicyclists on unmarked roads tend to veer farther into the next lane of traffic. Similarly, bicyclists on unmarked roads tend to hug the curb, increasing their risk of injury.³

Recently, the Cities of Cambridge and San Francisco have implemented policies that streamline the process of adding bike lanes to their streets. Cambridge's new ordinance, passed in April 2019, requires that any streets undergoing improvement per the City's paving plan must also be upgraded per the City's bike plan.⁴ This law ensures that new, protected bicycle lanes get built regularly, and furthers the City's goal of improving accessibility and safety for bicyclists.

In June 2019, San Francisco passed a quick-build policy allowing the City Traffic Engineer to approve reversible and/or adjustable parking and traffic modifications that previously required approval by the SFMTA Board of Directors.⁵ This policy encompasses bike lanes, in addition to street improvements such as painted safety zones, changes to the configuration of traffic lanes, and roadway and curb paint.

In September 2019, the City of Seattle passed an ordinance mandating that when a paving project over \$1 million is slated for a street that is meant to be upgraded to a protected bike lane per the City's Bicycle Master Plan, the two projects must be done simultaneously.⁶ This policy is a hybrid of the San Francisco and Cambridge models.⁷

According to the City of Berkeley's Bicycle Plan, Berkeley has the fourth highest bicycle commute mode share in America, at 8.5 percent. Nearly one in ten residents rides a bicycle to work as their primary mode of transportation. As a result of Berkeley's high bicycle mode share and the City's insufficient bike infrastructure, there were 133 bicycle

² <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2019/06/protected-bike-lanes-safe-street-design-bicycle-road-safety/590722/>

³ <https://bicycleuniverse.com/bicycle-lanes-no-brainer/>

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<http://cambridgema.iqm2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=5905&highlightTerms=cycling%20safety%20ordinance>

⁵ [https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/06/6-4-](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/06/6-4-19_item_11_quick_build_projects_-_transportation_code_amendment_resolution.docx_.pdf)

[19_item_11_quick_build_projects_-_transportation_code_amendment_resolution.docx_.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/06/6-4-19_item_11_quick_build_projects_-_transportation_code_amendment_resolution.docx_.pdf)

⁶ <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/seattle-city-council-approves-new-bike-lane-requirements-calls-for-more-bike-lane-funding/>

⁷ <http://seattle.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4078670&GUID=2AE8E905-1F17-4ED2-B9C2-3207591B92F6>

collisions in 2018.⁸ Fear of injury is a significant deterrent to bicycling. A record 90 percent of Berkeley residents would consider bicycling under the right roadway conditions, demonstrating how important bikeway improvements are for increasing Berkeley's bicycle mode share.⁹

Additionally, as the City prepares for the introduction of shared electric scooters, it is appropriate and necessary to prioritize bike lane and pedestrian upgrades. Micromobility plays an important role in the future of transportation. Our approach to street improvements should reflect the growing population that uses alternative methods of transportation to get around our city.

Improving Berkeley's bike and pedestrian infrastructure is also an effective way to combat climate change. The City's Climate Action Plan calls for sustainable mobility modes, such as cycling, to become the primary means of transportation for Berkeley residents and visitors.¹⁰ Adding new cycling facilities gives residents a safe alternative to driving, which reduces car usage and greenhouse gas emissions.¹¹

This ordinance would prioritize bikeways and Vision Zero streets in the Paving Plan. Analysis of Berkeley's draft 2020-2024 Paving Plan shows that 23 percent of the repaving budget and 36 percent of street miles currently go towards streets that include bikeways. Upgrading high-fatality, high-collision streets, as defined in the forthcoming Vision Zero Action Plan, is consistent with the City's goal of eliminating traffic deaths in Berkeley. In July 2019, Council adopted Resolution No. 68,371 "In Support of Vision Zero," which created a City policy to prioritize high-collision streets as the City develops work plans and carries out infrastructure improvements. Adopting a quick-build policy and requiring simultaneous street upgrades would reduce delays, ensuring the timely implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans.

This item also directs the City Manager to draft a revised version of the City's Complete Streets Policy, which currently provides an exemption from the Policy for when a "reasonable and equivalent project along the same corridor is already programmed to provide facilities exempted from the project at hand."¹² This language serves as a potential obstacle to adding bike infrastructure along arterials that run parallel to existing bikeways.

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Council could choose to maintain the current structure for repaving streets which takes bikeways into consideration, but does not prioritize such streets. Berkeley's

⁸ <https://tims.berkeley.edu/login.php?next=/tools/query/summary.php>

⁹ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley-Bicycle-Plan-2017-Executive%20Summary.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_Energy_and_Sustainable_Development/BCAP%20Exec%20Summary4.9.09.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S136192091630270X>

¹² https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Transportation/Berkeley%20Complete%20Street%20Resolution%2012%2011%2012.pdf

current bike plan recommends “complete street corridor studies” to determine how to add protected bike lanes on major streets.

The Council could also choose to follow Seattle’s model, which would require that when repaving is done on streets that are slated for full protected bike lanes (as opposed to *any* upgrades per the Bicycle Plan), the two improvements happen together.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Transportation accounts for 60 percent of Berkeley’s community-wide GHG emissions. Improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure promotes sustainable, zero-emission methods of transportation, which is key to reaching the City’s target of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent below 2000 levels by 2050. The actions outlined in the referral are in line with the City’s Climate Action Plan, which envisions “public transit, walking, cycling, and other sustainability modes” as the “primary means of transportation for Berkeley residents and visitors.”¹³

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: City of Cambridge Ordinance Language

¹³ <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/climate/>

In the Year Two Thousand and Nineteen

AN ORDINANCE In amendment to the Ordinance entitled “Cambridge Municipal Code.”

That the Municipal Code of the City of Cambridge be amended by adding in Title Twelve entitled “Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places” a new Chapter 12.22 entitled “Cycling Safety Ordinance,” which reads as follows:

Chapter 12.22 Cycling Safety Ordinance

Section 12.22.010 Short Title

This Chapter may be cited as the "Cycling Safety Ordinance" of the City of Cambridge.

Section 12.22.020 Purpose

This Chapter seeks to eliminate fatalities and injuries on City streets in accordance with the City's Vision Zero goals through safety improvements and the construction of a connected network of permanent separated bicycle lanes across the City.

Section 12.22.030 Definitions

A. “Adequate Directionality” shall mean (1) a two-way street with a separated bicycle lane or lanes that allow bicycle travel in both directions, or (2) a one-way street with a separated bicycle lane or lanes that allow bicycle travel either in the direction of the flow of vehicular traffic or in both directions.

B. “Connectivity” shall mean the provision of a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane system that reflects desired routes between all major origins and destinations in the city.

C. “Cambridge Bicycle Plan” shall mean the plan adopted by the City of Cambridge in October 2015 to create a framework for developing a network of complete streets, and which is entitled “Cambridge Bicycle Plan: Toward a Bikeable Future”.

D. “Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan” shall mean the City of Cambridge Department of Public Works’ five-year work plan of May 1, 2018, as it may be amended from time to time.

E. “Improvements” shall mean the construction of new City-owned streets, or the reconstruction of an existing City-owned street, including but not limited to full depth reconstruction, expansion, and/or alteration of a roadway or intersection. Improvements shall not include routine maintenance, repairs, restriping of the road surface, or emergency repairs to the surface of a roadway (collectively “Maintenance”), provided that existing bicycle lanes will be restored to existing conditions or better.

F. “Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane” shall mean a bicycle lane separated from motor vehicle traffic by a permanent vertical barrier that shall remain in place year-round,

including but not limited to granite or concrete barriers and raised curbs, provided, however, that the bicycle lane need not be separated from motor vehicle traffic by a permanent vertical barrier for short stretches to accommodate crosswalks, curb cuts, accessible parking, intersections, and public transportation, and provided further, that existing bicycle lanes may be temporarily removed during construction of Improvements or Maintenance, so long as they are restored to existing conditions or better.

G. "Separated Network" shall mean the proposed set of bicycle facilities identified in the Cambridge Bicycle Plan (Figure 5.14), or any plan superseding it, provided, however, that any such plan shall maintain Connectivity.

Section 12.22.040 Requirements

A. Whenever Improvements are made to a City-owned street under the City's Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, the City Manager shall cause such Improvements to comply with the Cambridge Bicycle Plan, or any plan superseding it; provided, that if Improvements are made to a segment of the Separated Network, a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane with Adequate Directionality shall be installed along that segment.

B. Full compliance with the provisions of Subsection A above is not required where the City Manager can demonstrate through a written alternatives analysis, to be made public, why it is impractical to comply with the provisions of Subsection A above, and where there will be a loss of Connectivity if the provisions of Subsection A are not complied with, how Connectivity could be otherwise advanced, if possible. Full compliance with the provisions of Subsection A above will be considered impracticable only in those rare circumstances where the City Manager determines that the characteristics of the physical features or usage of a street, or financial constraints of full compliance prevent the incorporation of a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane with Adequate Directionality.