



CITY COUNCILMEMBER  
**RIGEL ROBINSON**  
 DISTRICT 7

CONSENT CALENDAR  
 February 25, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmembers Robinson, Droste, Harrison, and Wengraf  
 Subject: Referral: Street Lighting Near Campus

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Public Works Commission to include the following in the Street Lighting Subcommittee Work Plan, for the purposes of seeking input from key stakeholders and bringing together work that happens through parallel processes. The Subcommittee should:

1. Invite input from representatives from the UC Berkeley administration, UC Berkeley undergraduate and graduate students, UCPD and BPD, the Department of Public Works, and other relevant groups.
2. Develop a streamlined and accessible process for requesting street lights that includes neighborhood and campus input, while recognizing the overriding public safety concern posed by substandard lighting.
3. Develop a plan for expeditiously installing new streetlights near campus that prioritizes high-crime areas, high-injury pedestrian corridors, and student-priority areas as determined by student input.

BACKGROUND

This referral comes out of discussion at the City-UC-Student Relations (4x6) Committee, made up of the four Councilmembers whose districts border the UC campus and six representatives from UC Berkeley, the ASUC, and the Graduate Assembly. The student-led effort within the Committee to improve street lighting near campus was initiated in November 2018, when City and UC staff delivered presentations to the Committee and provided a map of existing lighting locations.<sup>1</sup> The recommendation in this item carries out the intent of the unanimous motion made at the February 8, 2019 4x6 meeting,<sup>2</sup> as well as continued discussion that occurred at the November 18, 2019 meeting.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level\\_3\\_-\\_General/DRAFT%20Combined%204x6%20Minutes%2013Nov2018.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_General/DRAFT%20Combined%204x6%20Minutes%2013Nov2018.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Commissions/Approved%202-8-19%20Minutes.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/Approved%202-8-19%20Minutes.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Commissions/MINUTES%204x6%2011-18-19%20DRAFT.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/MINUTES%204x6%2011-18-19%20DRAFT.pdf)

Adequate street lighting is an especially important issue around the UC Berkeley campus. 77 percent of UC Berkeley students get to and from campus by walking — fewer than 5 percent use a motorized vehicle of any kind.<sup>4</sup> These students often walk home from campus in the dark after extracurricular activities or study sessions. Sufficient street lighting is crucial late at night or in the early mornings, when light from building windows and porches cannot be used to supplement streetlights. Students, other residents, and visitors should feel safe walking at night. A well-lit streetscape near campus can help reduce crime and traffic crashes, and benefits not only students but the general population as well.

A combination of data analysis and community input is necessary to prioritize streetlight installation in a way that works for residents and the greater good of public safety. In order to ensure efficient use of City resources, the Subcommittee should examine UCPD and BPD crime data, City of Berkeley Vision Zero pedestrian injury data, and student input via organizations such as the ASUC and Graduate Assembly to develop a list of priority streetlight locations.

The Subcommittee should also develop a streamlined streetlight request process. Currently, residents can submit requests for a streetlight to the City of Berkeley Public Works Commission, which evaluates each request based on current available lighting; proximity to public transit, schools, and hospitals; crime statistics and other safety concerns; pedestrian and bicycle traffic; and current zoning. The application process requires the signature of the eight residents who live adjacent to and across from the proposed location before submission. In the case of multi-family residential buildings, 60 percent of tenants in each of these eight properties must approve.<sup>5</sup>

Input from neighborhood residents is important and should be included in the application process. However, individual households should not have the ability to veto streetlights, since inadequate lighting is a pressing public safety concern. Furthermore, the requirement for 60 percent of tenant approval is an overly burdensome condition that disproportionately disadvantages multi-family residential neighborhoods and discourages residents from requesting a streetlight. Students living near campus may not have the time nor resources to collect signatures in large apartment complexes. The Street Lighting Subcommittee should create a streetlight application process that is streamlined and accessible for all Berkeley residents.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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<sup>4</sup> [https://opa.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/where\\_berkeley\\_students\\_live\\_0.pdf](https://opa.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/where_berkeley_students_live_0.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public\\_Works/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Sidewalks,\\_Streets\\_-\\_Utility/PW%20Application%20for%20New%20Streetlight.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public_Works/Level_3_-_Sidewalks,_Streets_-_Utility/PW%20Application%20for%20New%20Streetlight.pdf)

None.

CONTACT PERSON

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Rachel Alper, Intern

Attachments:

1: Public Works Application for New Streetlight

[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public Works/Level 3 -  
\\_Sidewalks, Streets - Utility/PW%20Application%20for%20New%20Streetlight.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Public%20Works/Level%203%20-%20Sidewalks,%20Streets%20-%20Utility/PW%20Application%20for%20New%20Streetlight.pdf)

