



Internal

Berkeley City Councilmembers
Mark Humbert, District 8
Shoshana O'Keefe, District 5
Brent Blackaby, District 6
Igor Tregub, District 4
2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
mhumbert@berkeleyca.gov

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 2

Meeting Date: February 11, 2025

Item Number: 7

Item Description: Refer to the City Manager a request to have staff prioritize study of intersections that include traffic diverters but do not feature stop signs; additionally, staff are requested to review past Council referrals for adoption of National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) street design standards and provide an update on the status and timeline for meeting past policy directives...

Submitted by: Councilmember Humbert, Councilmember O'Keefe, Councilmember Blackaby, and Councilmember Tregub

The attached revised Item 7 *Refer to City Manager study of intersections with traffic diverters* amends the item to include additional references to past Council actions regarding safe streets. The additional references include Councilmember Taplin's *Equitable Safe Streets and Climate Justice Resolution* that was unanimously approved at the September 13, 2022 Council meeting and Councilmember Taplin and Humbert's *Budget Referral: Vision Zero Rapid Response on Bicycle Boulevards*, which was unanimously approved at the May 7, 2024 Council meeting.

The attached revised Item 7 also adds Councilmember Igor Tregub as a co-sponsor.

The attached revised Item 7 also adds clarifying language that the intent of the study is to return with potential safety enhancements.



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CONSENT CALENDAR

February 11, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor & Members of the Berkeley City Council

From: Councilmember Mark Humbert (Author)
Councilmember Shoshana O’Keefe (Co-sponsor)
Councilmember Brent Blackaby (Co-sponsor)
Councilmember Igor Tregub (Co-sponsor)

Subject: Refer to City Manager study of intersections with traffic diverters

RECOMMENDATION:

Refer to the City Manager a request to have staff prioritize study of intersections that include traffic diverters but do not feature stop signs and return with recommendations for potential safety enhancements; additionally, staff are requested to review past Council referrals for adoption of National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) street design standards and provide an update on the status and timeline for meeting past policy directives. Examples of intersections to be studied include but are not limited to:

- Ada and California Street
- Grant Street and Berkeley Way
- Yolo and Milvia Street
- McGee and Virginia Street
- Derby and Mabel Streets
- Piedmont and Russell Street
- Hillegass and Woolsey Street
- Park and Russell Street
- Mabel and Russell Street

BACKGROUND:

Within the past 18 months, two pedestrians in Berkeley have been seriously injured or killed in the vicinity of intersections with traffic diverters but no stop signs:

- On Halloween 2023, Shannon Mitchell's then 7-year-old son was struck by a hit-and-run driver who came speeding around the corner of Derby and Mabel.
- On January 26, 2025, a 66-year-old woman was struck and killed at the intersection of California and Ada streets.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Something these two intersections appear to have in common is the presence of traffic diverters without stop signs. Since there is generally no oncoming traffic, drivers may treat such intersections differently from intersections with through traffic in all directions.

Based on [photos and witness testimony reported on by the Berkeley Scanner](#), the driver involved in the most recent fatal collision had most likely just executed a left turn from northbound California Street on to westbound Ada Street.

Many similar intersections throughout Berkeley already feature stop signs, so their inclusion at additional intersections or other measures may be appropriate. Exploring potential safety improvements at these intersections would be consistent with Berkeley's Vision Zero policies, Climate Action Plan, Pedestrian Plan, and Transit First policy.

Additionally, on [September 13, 2022](#), the City Council adopted by unanimous consent Councilmember Taplin's [Equitable Safe Streets and Climate Justice Resolution](#) which recommended, in part:

"Adopt a resolution committing the expenditure of City and state/federal matching/recurring funds on city-maintained roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes to accelerate safety improvements in a manner consistent with City, State, and Federal policy on street safety, equity, accessibility, and climate change; refer to the City Manager fully integrate Complete Streets design as defined by the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide in the default engineering standard for city streets; restrict city use of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to only documented cases that require its use for compliance with Federal/State regulations; in all other cases, restrict use of the MUTCD to 'engineering judgment.'"

This item has subsequently been ranked with moderate priority in the Councils [2023](#) and [2024](#) Reweighted Range Voting prioritization process.

Additionally, on May 7, 2024 the City Council adopted by unanimous consent Councilmember Taplin and Humbert's [Budget Referral: Vision Zero Rapid Response on Bicycle Boulevards](#). Since California Street is a bicycle boulevard, this direction with respect to traffic safety would apply to the Ada and California Intersection. This item recommended in part:

"Refer to the City Manager to incorporate the City of Oakland's Neighborhood Bike Route Implementation Guide for all Bicycle Boulevards designated in the City of Berkeley's Bicycle Plan, pursuant to the City's Vision Zero Action Plan, Complete Streets Policy, and other applicable policies and plans; and to prioritize proactive and retroactive implementation of standards on Bicycle Boulevards in response to recent traffic collisions, with consideration for quick-build interventions that can be removed, modified or made permanent to advance Vision Zero Action Plan goals."

Taken together, these previous items reflect a clear, unanimous direct from Council for staff to engage in extensive and proactive efforts to improve traffic safety overall and shift to best practices (NAACTO and OakDOT), which promote greater safety for people walking and riding bikes.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Preliminary, order-of magnitude estimate of staff time for study and reporting to Council is \$20,000–\$60,000.

SUSTAINABILITY

By potentially making Berkeley streets safer for walking and biking, this proposal would encourage alternatives to driving, thereby serving to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and other impacts associated with the operation of automobiles.