



Kate Harrison
Councilmember, District 4

REVISED AGENDA MATERIAL

Meeting Date: May 16, 2023

Item number: 2

Item Description: Referral to the June 2023 Budget Process for \$100,000 to Fund an Engineering and Design Process for a Mast Arm and Signal Head for the MLK and Haste Intersection

Submitted by: Councilmember Harrison

The City Attorney's Office confirmed that SOSIP fee proceeds can be used to fund traffic calming and measures to improve pedestrian safety. SOSIP fees are paid by developers in the Downtown to improve street safety and open space. The referral has been updated accordingly for the Budget Committee's consideration.



Kate Harrison
Councilmember, District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 25, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Harrison
Subject: Referral to the June 2023 Budget Process for \$100,000 to Fund an Engineering and Design Process for a Mast Arm and Signal Head for the MLK and Haste Intersection

RECOMMENDATION

Referral to the June 2023 Budget Process for \$100,000 using Street and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP) proceeds- to promote traffic calming and measures to improve pedestrian safety through funding an engineering evaluation and design process for a mast arm and signal head at the MLK and Haste intersection in conjunction with planned crosswalk and other safety improvements.

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CURRENT SITUATION, EFFECTS, AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The MLK and Haste intersection is just blocks from Berkeley High School and Washington Elementary, and has been the subject of a number of traffic safety incidents, including a recent injury crash involving a senior.

MLK is a major thoroughfare for the Downtown and the broader City, and lack of safety features at this particular intersection, like MLK and Addison, is of particular concern for District 4 residents. According to residents, it appears that there is no traffic arm that extends over MLK for northbound drivers to see, as there are at all other intersections for northbound drivers between Ashby and University (Haste ends in a "T" at MLK, unlike other streets at intersections with traffic lights on MLK between Ashby and University which have four-way traffic). A traffic arm that would extend over the intersection would be much easier to see for northbound drivers than the current light at Haste on the northeast corner.

This intersection serves as an important corridor for seniors, elementary, middle, high school and college students, shoppers, and inhabitants of existing and new housing.

Transportation Division staff recommend a longer-term project to install a mast arm and signal head (same as Martin Luther King Jr Way - SB) on Martin Luther King Jr Way (NB) at the intersection of Haste St. This measure is expected to enhance the visibility of the traffic signal for the northbound direction, however, since this would involve a reconstruction of at least one corner of the intersection and pouring a new foundation, it would need to be included as part of a capital project with the necessary funding. The

City will be on the lookout for suitable opportunities for including this improvement in a future Capital Improvement Plan project. This item includes \$100,000 for the planning phase which will help determine the cost for construction. The timeline for implementation of the longer-term measures is also dependent on Public Works staffing and vacancies. The City Attorney's Office confirmed that SOSIP fee proceeds can be used to fund traffic calming and measures to improve pedestrian safety. SOSIP fees are paid by developers in the Downtown to improve street safety and open space.

In terms of interim measures, Transportation staff conducted a detailed investigation and a site visit assessment for this intersection. The investigation included a review of the collision history, assessment of the site configuration and sight lines, and City's relevant transportation improvement plans, specifically the pedestrian master plan and Vision Zero Plan.

Based on the available collision history data, the most common collision pattern has been "Traffic Signals and Signs", which has also been considered the primary collision factor (PCF) within the last decade. This usually indicates inattention to traffic signal indication. As a result of this assessment and evaluation of sight lines the following measures are going to be implemented on a quick-build basis by the Traffic Maintenance division and the Parks Department in an effort to improve the visibility of the traffic signal, and to enhance the visibility of the intersection in general:

Quick build measures:

1. Install reflective tape around the signal backplates in order to improve signal visibility.
2. Install pavement skip marks to delineate the separation of the double-left turn exiting Haste onto and through the intersection.
3. Refresh pavement striping in all directions such as stop bars, red curbs and any other markings that will need improvement along this intersection.
4. Install High-Visibility Crosswalks (aka triple-four) in all directions to increase conspicuity of pedestrian crossing locations. This measure is also identified in the Vision Zero Action Plan.
5. Install a "One Way" sign (R6-1) on Haste St WB (north-east of the intersection).
6. Remove tree branches that may be impacting visibility of signal heads and traffic signs.

These measures are already fully funded and are anticipated to be implemented within 8-10 weeks given the current work queue for Traffic Maintenance group.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

\$100,000 in SOSIP funds for traffic safety improvements at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Haste Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Referral to the June 2023 Budget Process for \$100,000 to Fund an Engineering and Design Process for Mast Arm and Signal Head for the MLK and Haste Intersection

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Transportation accounts for a substantial portion of Berkeley's total emissions. The City is committed to increasing the modal share of walking and biking to reduce vehicle miles traveled through safety improvements.

CONTACT PERSON

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