



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

June 27, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Liam Garland, Director, Department of Public Works
Subject: SteelWave donation for pedestrian safety improvements in West Berkeley

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution accepting \$40,000 cash donation for the Addison Bike Boulevard project and Vision Zero traffic safety improvements in West Berkeley from SteelWave LLC.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The \$40,000 donation will be received in FY 2024 and deposited in the CIP Fund (ERMA Budget Code 501-54-622-668-0000-000-431-664110-) and will be appropriated as part of the First Amendment to the FY 2024 Annual Appropriations Ordinance for supporting implementation of the Addison Bicycle Boulevard project and Vision Zero improvements. The donation will offset some costs of designing and installing pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements on Addison Street in West Berkeley.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Berkeley needs as many resources as possible to achieve Vision Zero and to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions that contribute to climate change. Since committing to Vision Zero and adopting the Vision Zero Action Plan in 2019, the number of people killed and severely injured in traffic each year has remained relatively unchanged. Since adopting the Climate Action Plan in 2009, Berkeley's share of greenhouse gas emissions from transportation increased from 47-percent in 2005 to 60-percent in 2019.

In particular, the Vision Zero Action Plan identified Addison Street between Sixth Street and San Pablo Avenue as a High-Injury Street, and the City of Berkeley has made the Addison Bicycle Boulevard a Tier I priority project for implementation. Installing pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements at the intersection of Sixth and Addison streets is anticipated to reduce collisions at this busy crossing.

SteelWave and Walton Street Capital have formed a partnership to develop theLAB Berkeley life science campus in West Berkeley. The companies are showing their commitment to West Berkeley by providing a one-time payment of \$40,000 that is intended to go towards pedestrian safety improvements at Sixth and Addison streets. The

intersection has a well-documented history of crashes, and the community has shown its strong support for making it safer to walk, bike and otherwise cross this busy intersection.

The City's High-Injury Streets are the streets with the most concentrated fatal and severe injury crashes in the ten-year period analyzed for the Vision Zero Action Plan. Severe crashes requiring emergency response are more than twice as common as less serious collisions in this area. This puts people who travel along Addison Street west of San Pablo Avenue at greater risk of suffering a life-altering crash.

BACKGROUND

City Council approved the Vision Zero Action Plan in March 2019. The plan's goal is to eliminate fatal and severe traffic crashes by 2028. The plan identifies Addison Street, between San Pablo Avenue and Sixth Street, as a High-Injury Street and, thus, a priority for safety improvements. The Addison Bicycle Boulevard project, including Addison between Sixth Street and San Pablo Avenue, was identified as a Tier I priority project in the Berkeley Bicycle Plan approved by the Berkeley City Council in May 2017.

Sixth Street is a residential street, and walking and biking across it can be challenging for many people, especially parents with children, elders and those with disabilities.

In April 2023, six neighborhood organizations and 94 local residents sent a petition to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and Public Works asking for safety improvements at Sixth and Addison streets. Local groups included the Black Pine Circle School, Berkeley Individuals Living with Disabilities (BuILD House), Franklin Brothers Market, Kids "N" Clay Pottery Studio, LifeLong Medical Care (on Addison and Sixth Street) and the Nia House Learning Center.

In 2022, City staff won a \$4.8 million grant from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) to design and implement the Addison Bicycle Boulevard and associated Vision Zero safety improvements. Several intersections along Addison Street, including Sixth Street, present unsafe conditions for people walking and biking, and the grant proposes to directly address these risks. It includes traffic circles, traffic diverters, rapid rectangular flashing beacons, refuge medians and other safety countermeasures along Addison Street west of San Pablo Avenue, ranging in cost from \$30,000 to \$200,000. These measures will address the persistent history of collisions and ensure equity in traffic calming infrastructure.

Addison Street serves as a parallel route to University Avenue, a heavily trafficked major thoroughfare. Between 2010 and 2021, collisions on Addison Street accounted for 2.2% of all bicycle collisions and 2% of all pedestrian collisions in the city. During this same time period, there were almost twice as many bicycle and pedestrian collisions on University Avenue (87) as on Addison Street, including two fatalities. Creating a Bicycle Boulevard and other Vision Zero safety improvements will address Addison Street's collision history and create a safe, low-stress alternative route for people to reach neighborhood destinations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Improving safety along Addison Street supports the City of Berkeley’s 2009 Climate Action Plan goal that by 2050 “[p]ublic transit, walking, cycling, and other sustainable mobility modes are the primary means of transportation for Berkeley residents and visitors.” The City’s 2022 Climate Action Plan Report stated that Berkeley’s transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions have not changed since 2000 and that Berkeley’s share of greenhouse gas emissions from transportation increased from 47-percent in 2005 to 60-percent in 2019. Projects like this, that make streets more inviting for people to walk and bike, make the largest difference in reversing the current trend and reducing Berkeley’s transportation-related Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

People who travel on foot, wheelchair, bicycle and under their own power produce zero greenhouse gases. Implementing the Addison Bicycle Boulevard and other Vision Zero improvements in West Berkeley is expected to increase walking and biking. This is consistent with the 2009 Berkeley Climate Action Plan Policy that calls for expanding and improving Berkeley’s bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The 2009 Berkeley Climate Action Plan sets targets of reducing transportation emissions 33% below year 2000 levels by 2020, and 80% below year 2000 levels by 2050. The Plan further states that transportation modes such as walking, bicycling and public transit must become the primary means of fulfilling the City’s mobility needs in order to meet these targets.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This donation from SteelWave LLC will allow the City to design and implement critical traffic safety improvements at Sixth and Addison streets in support of Berkeley’s Bicycle Plan and Vision Zero Action Plan. The funding will help offset costs of the Addison Bicycle Boulevard Project. This donation is being accepted per City of Berkeley Administrative Regulation 3.19.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Council can opt to refuse accepting this donation, however this would not be consistent with the City’s Strategic Plan, its Climate Action Plan, Bicycle Plan and the Vision Zero Action Plan’s goal to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries by 2028.

CONTACT PERSON

Liam Garland, Director, Department of Public Works (510) 981- 6303

Attachment:

1. Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

STEELWAVE DONATIONS FOR THE BERKELEY VISION ZERO PROGRAM

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley adopted its Vision Zero Action Plan in March 2019 and set a goal of eliminating fatal and severe traffic crashes by 2028; and

WHEREAS, the annual number of traffic fatalities and severe traffic injuries has remained relatively unchanged since; and

WHEREAS, SteelWave LLC is developing theLAB Berkeley life sciences center at 2222 Fifth Street, which will increase visitors, commerce, traffic and risk of collisions on surrounding streets; and

WHEREAS, Addison Street between San Pablo Avenue and Sixth Street is identified as a High-Injury Street in Berkeley's Vision Zero Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, community members, neighborhood businesses and local leaders support improving safety for people walking and biking across the intersection of Sixth and Addison streets; and

WHEREAS, at the June 23, 2022 Zoning Adjustment Board meeting, SteelWave LLC agreed to donate \$40,000 to the City of Berkeley for traffic safety improvements in West Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, the donation will be deposited into the CIP Fund (ERMA Budget Code 501-54-622-668-0000-000-431-664110-) and will be appropriated as part of the First Amendment to the FY 2024 Annual Appropriations Ordinance.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that a donation of \$40,000 to the Addison Bike Boulevard project from SteelWave LLC is accepted to support pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements in West Berkeley.