



Kate Harrison
Vice Mayor, District 4

ACTION CALENDAR
May 31, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Harrison

Subject: Referral to the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability Policy Committee Policy Committee to Consider Strategies and Make Recommendations to Council and Staff to Ensure Potential Infrastructure Bond Expenditure Is Consistent With Climate Action Goals and Other Environmental Policies

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability (FITES) Policy Committee Policy Committee to consider strategies and make recommendations to the Council and staff to ensure that potential infrastructure bond is consistent with Climate Action goals and other environmental policies.

POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On May 4, 2022, the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability Committee adopted the following action: M/S/C (Robinson/Taplin) to send the enclosed non-binding recommendations to Council with a qualified positive recommendation and support for Staff's ongoing work to establish public-facing metrics to measure projected and actual outcomes around potential bond projects that support Climate Action goals and other environmental policies. Vote: All Ayes.

CURRENT SITUATION, EFFECTS, AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The City is facing a historic crisis of underinvestment in its infrastructure. Perhaps the most visible area is the City's streets, sidewalks, and other infrastructure vulnerable to climate change.

Council agreed at its January 20, 2022 special Council meeting to provide direction to staff to explore and prepare a draft \$300-\$600 million infrastructure bond and/or parcel tax ahead of the November 2022 election.

While the condition of the City's streets is of paramount concern to the Berkeley community, in the spirit of the Vision 2050 report, the Climate Action Plan, Climate Emergency Declaration and various other policies, Berkeley cannot afford to merely rebuild the same infrastructure dating from the past century. Rather, new expenditures on infrastructure should holistically contribute to building a Berkeley of the future, which

is much less carbon intensive, greener, modern, and more equitable. Doing so will require intentional policies and consideration.

To this end, it is in the public interest to refer to the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability (FITES) Policy Committee Policy Committee to consider strategies and make recommendations to the Council and staff to ensure that potential infrastructure bond is consistent with Climate Action goals and other environmental policies.

BACKGROUND

At the Council's direction, the Facilities, Infrastructure, Transportation, Environment & Sustainability (FITES) Policy Committee has spent two years investigating the overall paving situation, paving policies, and multi-faceted paving funding/bonding solutions. As part of its work, the Committee collaborated with staff and the Public Works Commission to update the City's Paving Policy to include certain environmental and green paving considerations. However, the Paving Policy was largely adopted in light of status quo paving funding levels, and was not designed for a potential once in a generation opportunity to envision the City's infrastructure.

If carefully crafted, the Bond could simultaneously stabilize PCI and include critical complimentary upgrades that support health, safety, and the environment/climate.

For example, the Committee should consider investigating and making recommendations with respect to the following concepts:

- **Future-proofing / Curbside EV** Integrate conduit and infrastructure to support public curbside EV charging, fiber optic cables, and electrification infrastructure upgrades (e.g., transformers) with paving work. Work with regional agencies such as EBCE to explore opportunities to leverage capital and other resources;
- **Green Paving Techniques** Explore how the bond expenditures can be structured to maximize durability/lifecycle and minimize greenhouse gasses, to include concrete, pavers and potentially stabilized gravel or hybrid. For example, Marin Avenue has not been substantially paved for nearly a half century because of its design;
- **Efficiency** Consider strategies to pave whole neighborhoods or sections of the City at once to capitalize on equipment and labor economies of scale, reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with repositioning equipment, and as an opportunity to make projects attractive to unionized labor;
- **Bike/Pedestrian/Transit Upgrades** Explore the maximum amount of mobility goals we can accomplish as part of the Bond and how to best achieve Vision 2050, Vision Zero, and Climate Action goals;

- **Trees and Bio Diversity** Explore how to integrate street trees and plants into upgrades to improve local air quality and urban canopy as well as reduce heat islanding;
- **Road Diets** Explore narrowing certain wider streets by extending curbs and reducing maintenance and paving costs overtime, calming traffic, and reducing embodied greenhouse gases;
- **Car-free Zones** Carefully, strategically, and equitably consider whether and which streets might be made vehicle-free (e.g., Telegraph) except for emergency, certain delivery, and senior/disabled access;
- **Climate Adaptation** Provide feedback and input on climate impacts and resilience aspects of the bond, including identifying areas vulnerable to sea level rise.
- **Tax Equity** Consider applying any parcel taxes to unimproved spaces and garages to broaden base and ensure a more progressive and equitable distribution of potential tax impacts.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Carefully considering the potential infrastructure bond in the context of existing climate and infrastructure policies could lead to cost savings in terms of lifecycle and upfront expenditures.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

FITES recommendations can help guide how potential bond funds are spent to further accelerate mode shifts away from fossil fuel vehicles, reduce embodied carbon, and enhance urban bio diversity.

CONTACT PERSON

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