



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 25, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From:  Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Claudette Ford, Acting Director, Department of Public Works

Subject: Pavement Markings and Motorcycle Parking on Telegraph Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to remove the 17 small channelization islands on Telegraph Avenue in order to straighten the alignment of the lane lines on Telegraph Avenue, between Ashby Avenue and Dwight Way, and to reinstate the car parking spaces where they were removed to accommodate the lane configuration.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The estimated cost to remove the 17 small islands is approximately \$50,000. The funds for this work are available in the FY 2007 budget in the Building Purchases and Management Fund (Code: 850-4997-431-6560-07TP10) pending approval of carryover of FY 2006 funds.

The cost to remove the pavement marking “jogs” in proximity to intersections, to remove the controversial motorcycle parking pavement markings, and to reinstate the lane lines so they are straight, is approximately \$15,000 (Code: 610-4960-431-6520-06TP14). The city has recently hired a pavement marking contractor and this work will be added to their scope of work, which has an upper limit of \$400,000 in the first year of the contract.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At the present time, Telegraph Avenue between Ashby Avenue and Dwight Way is marked with two motor vehicle lanes and a bike lane, and curbside parking in each direction. In order to maintain this lane arrangement through the intersections, the lane lines “jog” as they approach most intersections, and the parking is discontinued. The lane alignment changes are necessitated by the presence of small channelizing islands at most of the intersections.

Where the car parking is discontinued, narrow motorcycle parking areas were created, as opposed to simply marking the curb red.

There are 17 small islands, and 14 marked motorcycle parking areas. If the lane lines could be uniformly straight, approximately 22 metered car parking spaces would be reinstated along this corridor.

BACKGROUND

At their meeting of February 21, 2006, Council approved the following motion:

That the Berkeley City Council refer to the Transportation Commission and the City Manager the feasibility of corrective action to the unintended consequences of a recent Telegraph Avenue street project.

The Transportation Commission discussed the issue at their meetings of April 20, 2006 and June 22, 2006. At the April meeting, the Commission discussed the value of retaining the small, narrow channelization islands on Telegraph Avenue, and determined that they are not of adequate size to be safe pedestrian refuge islands, and in fact could give pedestrians a false sense of security in the middle of the road. The Commission determined that the uniform alignment of the lane lines on this section of Telegraph Avenue would be of greater benefit than the retention of the small, median islands. In a unanimous vote, the Commission recommended staff develop a restriping plan for this portion of Telegraph Avenue that would also take into account public feedback on the current roadway configuration and its effect on parking.

On June 22, 2006, the Transportation Commission reviewed a restriping plan, and adopted the following recommendation:

To support the staff proposal for reconfiguring Telegraph Avenue lanes between Ashby and Dwight Way, as an interim measure pending Bus Rapid Transit, which could affect all aspects of the Telegraph Avenue right-of-way.

Moved, seconded by Haselsteiner and Greenhut. Ayes: Greenhut, Haselsteiner, Issel, Landau, Smulka
Abstain: Alfsen Absent: Campbell, Syed, Wrenn

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In response to a request from the Berkeley City Council to determine the feasibility of taking corrective action to adjust lane lines and motorcycle parking on Telegraph Avenue, between Ashby Avenue and Dwight Way, the Transportation Commission discussed the various elements of the road right-of-way. The Commission agreed that the benefits of a uniformly straight traffic lane arrangement, with bike lanes, and reinstatement of car parking, were of greater value than the retention of the existing small, median islands that are not large enough to provide proper refuge for pedestrians.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Removal of the bike lanes was discussed and rejected as a preferred option, because Telegraph Avenue provides a direct bike link between destinations in the City of Berkeley, including the UCB campus, and points south. The bike lanes are a superior facility for bicyclist safety on a major road. Discontinuance of bike lanes in close proximity to intersections was also rejected because numerous hazardous "pinch points" would be created as a result.

CONTACT PERSON

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