

East Richmond Neighborhood Council

February 5, 2025

Daniel Chavarria, Director
Department of Public Works. City of Richmond
Via email: Daniel_Chavarria@ci.richmond.ca.us

RE: Request Adjustments to Barrett-Key Traffic Calming Installation

Dear Director Chavarria,

Thank you and the Department for implementing the quick-build traffic calming project at Barrett Avenue and Key Boulevard.

Since the project was installed in December, we're not hearing about cars racing in circles at the intersection. At the same time, neighbors are expressing a need to adjust some of the features for the reasons described below.

In Elizabeth Kudo's email on January 15, she acknowledged Fehr & Peers' explanation that the vertical plastic paddles (aka channelizers) are intended to signal oncoming cars to slow down and protect the paddle bases. However, she and others report that drivers are distracted by the maze of reflector-topped vertical paddles, especially at night. There is also no clear and safe pathway for bicyclists.

Therefore, we are also asking that the Department evaluate and make some design adjustments to improve vehicle stops at the intersection, awareness of pedestrians, and passage for bicyclists.

Vehicle Stops – It seems that drivers think they are allowed to pass through the intersection by by slowing, but not stopping, or they become distracted or confused by too many competing visual features and drive through. Here are [video clips](#) taken within 30 minutes one evening showing several examples of cars driving through the intersection without stopping. We request adjustments to the design to improve vehicle stops, including evaluating and implementing any of the following:

- Remove some or all of the paddles (aka channelizers) from the medians and the sidewalk extensions. The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan (**Figure 1**) shows how corner plastic paddles/bollards are only at the outside corners of the sidewalk extensions and lane exclusion area.
- Or, in place of paddles in the sidewalk extensions and medians,



A Quick-build curb extensions in Oakland near the Lake Merritt BART Station.

Figure 1. from City of Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan, Pg. 109

add pavement-level reflectors with higher reflectivity than the current ones,

- Retain the existing reflector paddles in the middle circle,
- Add pavement paint inside the sidewalk extensions and medians. The paint application from **Figure 1** illustrates that overly-bright colors are not required. Here, a maroon color contrasts with the black pavement color.
- Remove the two confusing pavement marker “arcs” just outside of the middle circle
- Replace the faded stop signs on Key.

Highlighting pedestrian crosswalks -

We recommend adding horizontal white “continental stripes” at the edges of the pedestrian crosswalk (**Figure 2**). As you know, striping bands that run perpendicular to the travel direction are commonly used to communicate a clear stopping point to drivers.



Figure 2. from City of Richmond Local Roadway Safety Plan, Pg 18

Safely accommodating bicycles

While observing the Barrett-Key calming installation at night, I noticed two bikes passing through the intersection using the car lanes. Unfortunately, one of the bicyclists took to the pavement after clipping an open car door as he exited the intersection. I and a neighbor went to his aid. He was in the intersection when a car drove through without stopping, shaking him up so he did not notice the open car door in time. (We have this gentleman's phone number if the Department wants more information).

Bicycles are using the vehicle lane because there is currently no separate bicycle passage through the sidewalk extensions. Therefore, we recommend looking into cutting a separated bicycle passage through the pavement extensions (see **Figure 1**).

These are the concerns we’ve heard to date. The neighbors surrounding and close to the intersection remain interested and able to provide the city with valuable observations and suggestions to achieve our joint traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle safety objectives at this location. We also believe their input will be invaluable as the city designs other intersections in the years ahead.

Therefore, we encourage the Department to meet with Barrett-Key neighbors to evaluate to make adjustments as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jim Hanson

Jim Hanson, President

Cc: Shasa Curl, City Manager

Claudia Jimenez, District 6 City Councilmember

Elizabeth Kudo, Barrett-Key, and Shelley, Trask, Barrett-Key, Vice-President ERNC