



BERKELEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER
TERRY TAPLÍN
DISTRICT 2

**SUPPLEMENTAL
AGENDA MATERIAL
For Supplemental Packet 3**

Meeting Date: March 30, 2021

Item Number: 22

Item Description: Letter to Google Requesting Commercial Truck Routes on Google Maps

Submitted by: Councilmember Taplin

Amendment would make the following additions to the referral:

- Adding bicycle boulevards to request for inclusion on maps
- Inclusion of the Waze navigation app to the covered request



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CONSENT CALENDAR
DATE: March 30, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Terry Taplin, Councilmember Hahn, Councilmember Harrison

Subject: Letter to Google Requesting Commercial Truck Routes on Google Maps

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to Google headquarters in Mountain View, CA, to request the inclusion of commercial truck routes and Bicycle Boulevard Network on the Google Maps and Waze platforms.

BACKGROUND

Berkeley Municipal Code 14.56.060 establishes “designated commercial truck route system requiring such vehicles exceeding seven tons gross vehicle weight to use the following streets or portions of streets within the City of Berkeley except when taking the shortest possible route between the truck route system and the point of origin or destination in the City of Berkeley:

1. Adeline Avenue between Martin Luther King Jr. Way (62nd Street) and Shattuck Avenue;
2. Ashby Avenue/Tunnel Road (SR13) between I-80 and east city limit;
3. Gilman Street between West Frontage Road and San Pablo Avenue (SR123);
4. Henry Street between Rose Street and Eunice Street;
5. Martin Luther King Jr. Way between Adeline Avenue (62nd Street) and south city limits;
6. San Pablo Avenue (SR123) between south city limits and north city limits;
7. Shattuck Avenue between Adeline Avenue and Shattuck Place;
8. Shattuck Place between Shattuck Avenue and Rose Street;

9. Solano Avenue between Del Norte Street and west city limits;
10. Sutter Street between Eunice Street and Del Norte Street;
11. University Avenue between I-80 and Oxford Street.”

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also provides an official Caltrans Truck Network Map for all of its 12 districts across the state.

However, Google Maps and Waze, which is also a Google-owned application, currently **does** not offer any feature to filter streets for commercial truck routes when determining optimal driving directions to a specific destination.

Unfortunately, Berkeley residents have reported reckless behavior by truck drivers on residential streets where multi-axle commercial vehicles are discouraged or restricted, which endangers public safety.

In a March 8, 2021 letter to the Berkeley City Council, local resident Scott Schwalbach wrote:

Addison between San Pablo and 10th is constantly blocked by completing delivery vehicles who aren't allowed to block San Pablo. By construction blocking the street without permits for dumpsters and the like. Drivers of those vehicles do not care and have stated such since there is no enforcement.

I continued to watch large vehicles attempt to make turns on the corner of Addison and 10th, often having to back up, adjust, back up, adjust, to make the turn and avoid hitting a legally parked vehicle. This corner is not designed to handle 53 foot tractor trailer[s]. We have many pedestrians, bicycles, strollers and mobility impaired people using the streets and sidewalks constantly put in danger.

And I have been calling this out with city staff from nearly day I moved in, warning that people and property would be hurt, killed or damaged. And on Feb 27th, that happened when an out of state Car Carrier Semi Tractor Trailer, drove down 9th Street from University, turned onto Addison headed east (driving over and damaging the traffic circle) and then attempted to turn from Addison to 10th Street southbound. Please see the video:

<https://share.icloud.com/photos/0IBFA23Nyu6Ew7sWS2e95rohQ>

That car being dragged by the truck was mine. Legally parked. The driver's excuse was that he was wanting to go eat on San Pablo at Gallego's and he's not allowed to park his truck on San Pablo. 5 minutes prior to him hitting the car, two women were walking their children in strollers. If you watch the video closely, you will see a small black truck zooming through the intersection past the semitruck on

the wrong side of the street to beat the truck from turning. You can see how close he came to hitting other vehicles and people.

He caused over \$4000 in damages.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

While there are some proprietary truck route guides available in the state of California, none are as ubiquitous or easily available to the general public as Google Maps or Waze. Google Maps ~~This platform~~ comes installed by default on new Android smartphones and tablets.

The OpenStreetMap (OSM) platform, an open source data project that maps streets worldwide, already includes data on state truck routes. The Overpass turbo¹ tool queries the OpenStreetMap API to visualize this data, and includes data on “HGV” (heavy goods vehicle) routes with reference to the Caltrans truck routes. Mapping truck routes is therefore well within the capabilities of a multi-billion-dollar corporation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Improvements to public safety and potential reductions in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by large commercial vehicles.

FISCAL IMPACTS

None.

CONTACT

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ATTACHMENTS/SUPPORTING MATERIALS

1. Letter
2. BMC Chapter 14
3. Berkeley Bicycle Boulevard Network

¹ <https://overpass-turbo.eu/>



Google HQ
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

March 30, 2021

Google Maps [and Waze](#) teams:

Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code 14.56.060, the city's designated commercial truck route system requires "vehicles exceeding seven tons gross vehicle weight" to use these routes "except when taking the shortest possible route between the truck route system and the point of origin or destination in the City of Berkeley." Additionally, BMC 14.56.070 lists fifty-five street segments that prohibit "vehicles exceeding three tons gross vehicle weight." A list of those streets is included in the text of the code chapter attached with this letter. Unfortunately, many of our constituents have reported large trucks and other commercial vehicles driving through and parking on smaller residential streets, jeopardizing public safety and the structural integrity of our pavement. While there are some proprietary truck route guides available in the state of California, none enjoy the ubiquitous popularity and ease of access of Google Maps, which comes installed by default on new Android smartphones. Your platform offers a potential tool for alerting commercial vehicle drivers of these restrictions and directing them to designated truck routes, and we request that you develop this feature on Google Maps [and Waze](#) with all deliberate haste.

Google Maps [and Waze](#) currently allows users to filter for bike routes or avoiding highways, tolls, and ferries on the way to their destination. However, no option is available for drivers of large commercial vehicles to avoid restricted streets or adhere to truck routes. Providing truck drivers with the same routes as a small sedan presents significant hazards for the public.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) provides an official Caltrans Truck Network Map for all of its 12 districts across the state. This data is already available in maps using the OpenStreetMap API. We request that you incorporate commercial vehicle restrictions from *both* state *and* local jurisdictions in Google Maps [and Waze](#) as soon as possible. Additionally, we request the inclusion of Berkeley's Bicycle Boulevard Network (attached) in bike routes.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent public safety matter.

City Council, City of Berkeley

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