



Office of the City Manager

02

RECESS ITEM
CONSENT CALENDAR
January 20, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager
Submitted by: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office
Subject: Ratification of City Manager Action to Execute a Contract with Lake Research Partners for Community Survey Services in Support of Potential November 2026 Ballot Measures

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution ratifying the action taken by the City Manager during Council recess to execute a contract in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 with Lake Research Partners to develop and administer up to two community surveys of registered Berkeley voters in support of potential ballot measures for the November 3, 2026, General Municipal Election, with a contract term of January 5, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

NEGATIVE EFFECT IF ACTION IS DELAYED UNTIL AFTER COUNCIL RECESS

Delaying ratification of the contract until after Council recess would slow the City's ballot-measure development timeline by delaying survey design, fielding, and analysis. Such delay would limit the City Council's ability to receive survey results in time to inform decisions regarding potential ballot measures.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The contract with Lake Research Partners has a not-to-exceed amount of \$100,000 for a contract term of January 5, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Funds are available within existing appropriations in the General Fund. No additional appropriation is required because of this action.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City is evaluating potential initiatives and revenue measures for possible placement on the November 3, 2026, ballot. Consistent with prior ballot cycles, the City relies on professionally administered community surveys to assess voter satisfaction with City services, identify community priorities, and evaluate voter support for potential funding mechanisms.

To maintain alignment with the City Council's ballot-measure schedule and ensure sufficient time for survey development and analysis, the City Manager executed a

contract during Council recess with Lake Research Partners, following a competitive solicitation process, to conduct up to two community surveys.

This effort advances the City's Strategic Plan goal to be a customer-focused organization that provides excellent, timely, easily-accessible service and information to the community, by ensuring major policy and funding decisions are informed by transparent, data-driven public input.

BACKGROUND

The City Manager's Office oversees periodic community surveys to inform City Council consideration of potential ballot measures and broader policy priorities. For the November 2026 election cycle, the City will initiate a community survey process to assess voter satisfaction with City services, identify community investment priorities, and evaluate voter support for potential funding mechanisms.

On November 18, 2025, the City Council authorized issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2026 Community Survey (Specification No. 26-11772-C). The RFP was issued to potential bidders on November 19, 2025, with questions due on December 2, 2025, and proposals due on December 9, 2025.

The city received four completed proposals in response to the RFP. A city staff evaluation panel reviewed the proposals and identified two (2) finalist firms to advance to interviews. Finalist interviews were conducted during the week of December 15, 2025, and the selection process was completed on December 19, 2025.

Following the evaluation process, the City Manager selected Lake Research Partners based on demonstrated understanding of the scope of services, proposed methodology, relevant experience, qualifications of key staff, references, and overall value to the City. To maintain alignment with the City Council's ballot-measure development timeline and ensure sufficient time for survey design, fielding, analysis, and presentation of results, the City Manager executed a contract with Lake Research Partners during Council recess.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

While this action does not directly fund or construct infrastructure, the community survey will inform City Council decisions regarding potential investments that advance Berkeley's climate and sustainability goals, consistent with the Climate Action Plan and Vision 2050 Framework. The survey will be conducted using electronic and/or telephone methodologies, minimizing paper use and supporting the City's environmental sustainability objectives.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Ratifying the City Manager's action ensures continuity in the City's ballot-measure planning process, preserves critical election timelines, and supports informed City Council decision-making. Proceeding during Council recess was necessary to avoid

delays that could compromise the City's ability to engage voters and meet required election deadlines.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City Council could decline to ratify the City Manager's action, which would delay the community survey process and risk limiting the City's ability to develop informed and viable ballot measures for the November 2026 election.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

RATIFYING ACTION TAKEN BY THE CITY MANAGER DURING COUNCIL RECESS
TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS IN AN AMOUNT
NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000 FOR COMMUNITY SURVEY SERVICES IN SUPPORT
OF POTENTIAL NOVEMBER 2026 BALLOT MEASURES

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is evaluating potential initiatives and revenue measures for possible placement on the November 3, 2026, General Municipal Election; and

WHEREAS, professionally administered community surveys are an important tool to assess voter satisfaction with City services, identify community priorities, and evaluate voter support for potential funding mechanisms; and

WHEREAS, on November 18, 2025, the City Council authorized issuance of a Request for Proposals for the 2026 Community Survey (Specification No. 26-11772-C); and

WHEREAS, following a competitive solicitation process, the City received four proposals, interviewed two finalist firms, and selected Lake Research Partners based on qualifications, experience, methodology, and overall value to the City; and

WHEREAS, to maintain alignment with the City Council's ballot-measure development timeline and meet statutory deadlines for the November 2026 election, the City Manager executed a contract with Lake Research Partners during Council recess.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council ratifies the action taken by the City Manager to execute a contract with Lake Research, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 to develop and administer up to two community surveys of registered Berkeley voters in support of potential ballot measures for the November 2026 General Municipal Election, with a contract term of January 5, 2026, through December 31, 2026.