



Office of the City Manager

RECESS ITEM
CONSENT CALENDAR
 January 20, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Scott Ferris, Director, Parks Recreation & Waterfront

Subject: Amending Contract 32600020: Throne Lab Portable Toilet Pilot Program

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution ratifying the action taken by the City Manager during recess to execute an amendment to contract 32600020 with Throne Lab, Inc. to extend the pilot program by four months for a total not to exceed contract amount of \$130,000.

NEGATIVE EFFECT IF ACTION IS DELAYED UNTIL AFTER COUNCIL RECESS

The current funding for the Throne smart portable toilet pilot program would have expired on January 5, 2026. The pilot has been extremely successful based on data on the effectiveness of smart portable toilets at two City parks – Cesar Chavez and Civic Center. It is critical that the City continue to collect this type of information, especially at a high-volume non-park location such as the 4th Street business district to better understand the City's needs for public restroom services. A delay would interrupt this highly effective and essential public service and restarting the service after an interruption would result in the City incurring additional mobilization costs.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Funds for the four-month contract extension will be provided by the General Fund (011) (\$30,000) and Parks Tax Fund (138) (\$30,000).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On September 5, 2025, the City began a four (4) month pilot program to operate two Throne Lab smart portable restrooms and collect usage data at two high-volume City parks – Cesar Chavez and Civic Center. The City currently has sufficient funds to continue the pilot program whereby the current smart portable restroom at Civic Center Park will remain in-place and the smart portable toilet at Cesar Chavez Park will be relocated to a high-volume non-park location at the 4th Street business district. At the conclusion of the pilot program, city staff will have the data to evaluate the effectiveness of smart portable restrooms in various locations and help the City develop next steps to improve the provision of essential public restroom service in Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

The Citywide Restroom Study of 2020 performed an evaluation of existing public restrooms, a community input process, and research into ecologically-friendly restrooms with the goal of providing recommended locations and types and conceptual designs for upgrades of existing and new public restroom solutions in Berkeley.¹ The study recommended monitoring permanent and portable restrooms to provide information about how many people use which restrooms when, and what was their experience. This information can help the City better meet the needs of the public with optimized hours of operation and frequency of cleaning.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Providing public restrooms may help reduce open defecation which impacts stormwater and public health. There are no identifiable negative climate impacts associated with the recommendation contained in this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Throne Labs, Inc. has been successful in providing effective smart portable public toilets with electronic access controls and data monitoring capabilities in Los Angeles, Michigan, and Washington, D.C., and the Bay Area. The four-month pilot program in two Berkeley parks has been highly successful and there remains a need to understand their utility in nonpark settings to evaluate how best meet the City's needs in the future.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CONTACT PERSON

Scott Ferris, Director, Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department, 981-6700

Attachments:

1: Resolution

1

<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Citywide%20Restroom%20Study%20and%20Executive%20Summary%20-%202020-10-06%20-%20Final.pdf>

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

AMENDING CONTRACT 32600020: THRONE LAB PORTABLE TOILET
PILOT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Citywide Restroom Study of 2020 performed an evaluation of existing public restrooms, a community input process, and research into ecologically-friendly restrooms with the goal of providing recommended locations and types and conceptual designs for upgrades of existing and new public restroom solutions in Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, the study recommends understanding how many people use which restrooms when, and what was their experience. This information can help the City better meet the needs of the public with optimized hours of operation and frequency of cleaning; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2025, after reviewing a range of vendors of portable restrooms, staff found Throne Labs, Inc., a vendor with high quality smart portable restrooms with electronic access controls and data monitoring capabilities already being successfully operated in Los Angeles, Michigan, and Washington D.C., and the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, on September 5, 2025, the City began a four (4) month pilot program to operate two Throne Lab smart portable restrooms and collect usage data at two high-volume City parks – Cesar Chavez and Civic Center; and

WHEREAS, the City currently has sufficient funds to continue the pilot program whereby the current smart portable restroom at Civic Center Park will remain in-place and the smart portable toilet at Cesar Chavez Park will be relocated to a high-volume non-park location at the 4th Street business district using the General Fund 011 (\$30,000) and the Parks Tax Fund 138 (\$30,000).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council ratifies the action taken by the City Manager during recess to execute an amendment to contract 32600020 with Throne Lab, Inc. to extend the pilot program by four months for a total not to exceed contract amount of \$130,000. A record signature copy of said contract and any amendments to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

