

Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
February 24, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Budenhagen, City Manager
Submitted by: Terrance Davis, Public Works Director
Subject: 2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution to approve the 2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan, including the addition of five new California native plants to be included in the Suggested Traffic Circle Plantings list and the implementation of a modernized ArcGIS-based registration system for all program participants.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

There are no fiscal impacts associated with this recommendation. The action can be implemented within existing staff resources and does not require additional funding.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City is updating its Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan (2026 Plan) to reflect current operational practices and support consistent maintenance of the City's residential traffic circles. The existing policy governs plant selection, vegetation standards, and volunteer participation in the Adopt-A-Traffic Circle Program. Under City procedures, the policy undergoes review every five years to ensure alignment with safety standards and community needs.

Staff included two updates in the 2026 Plan:

- Plant Palette Expansion: Add five low-growing California native and drought-tolerant plant species to the approved plant list. All proposed species meet visibility and safety requirements while improving long-term site resilience.
- Registration Modernization: Transition volunteer registration to an ArcGIS-based digital platform that enables online sign-up, maintenance activity reporting, and supply requests. This update will standardize participation requirements for all current and future volunteers.

These revisions strengthen the City's ability to maintain safe, attractive, and environmentally supportive traffic circles. Expanded plant options will improve

vegetation consistency and long-term site health, while digital registration tools will streamline coordination among staff, contractors, and volunteers.

The 2026 Plan update supports broader City initiatives, including the Vision Zero Action Plan and the City's Strategic Plan priority to be a global leader in addressing climate change, advancing environmental justice, and protecting the environment.

BACKGROUND

On November 12, 2019, City Council approved Resolution No. 69,164–N.S., replacing the 2012 Traffic Circle Planting Policy with the 2020 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan (2020 Plan).

The City first established vegetation guidelines for traffic circles in 2012 to improve roadway safety, sightline visibility, and ensure consistency in vegetation maintenance across the City's residential traffic-calming network. The 2020 Plan expanded the program to include low-growing California native and drought-tolerant species, supporting the City's Climate Action Plan by promoting pollinator habitats and sustainable landscaping practices.

Since implementation of the 2020 Plan, staff continued to manage and maintain over 57 traffic circles citywide through the Adopt-A-Traffic Circle Volunteer Program in partnership with community groups, neighborhood associations, and individual volunteers. Routine feedback from volunteers and staff identified the need for clearer plant height standards, an expanded list of approved native species, and digital tools to streamline volunteer participation and maintenance reporting.

As part of this update, the department also integrated new ArcGIS- based dashboards and volunteer-management tools to support community engagement. These tools simplify the sign-up process, provide interactive maps of adoptable circles and allow volunteers to record and share maintenance activities. The dashboard also enables volunteers to submit service requests to report issues related to vegetation, signage, supplies or infrastructure, ensuring timely coordination between community volunteers and staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The 2026 Plan enhances environmental sustainability by supporting landscaping and maintenance practices that improve the long-term health, functionality, and ecological performance of the City's traffic circles. It expands the list of approved low-growing, drought-tolerant plant species, which reduces the need for supplemental irrigation, improves soil stability, and provides durable vegetation better suited to the City's changing climate conditions.

Regular traffic circle maintenance helps prevent the accumulation of organic debris and invasive plants, reducing the amount of material entering the storm drain system and improving localized stormwater infiltration. Clear vegetation height standards

also support sustained plant health by ensuring that species appropriate for the site conditions are selected and maintained over time.

The integration of ArcGIS-based volunteer dashboards reduces the need for paper-based reporting and supports more efficient work planning by allowing staff to monitor maintenance activity in real time. Improved coordination and data sharing help minimize unnecessary trips, equipment uses, and duplicate work, thereby reducing associated fuel consumption and operational emissions.

Overall, the 2026 Plan promotes landscape practices that reduce water use, improve stormwater management, and support long-term site health within the City's network of residential traffic circles.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Adopting the updated 2026 Plan will provide clear, current guidelines that support consistent vegetation management, improved sightline visibility, and better coordination among staff, contractors, and volunteers. The 2026 Plan ensures efficiency, and alignment with the tools and workflows now used by the Department, including digital maintenance reporting through ArcGIS.

There is no financial risk to the City if this Resolution is not adopted by a specific date. However, retaining the 2020 Plan may lead to continued inconsistencies in plant selection, maintenance expectations, and volunteer reporting practices.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative actions are recommended. The 2026 Plan update reflects internal operational practices and existing program workflows. This action is administrative and does not involve external procurement.

CONTACT PERSON

Joseph Griffin, Public Works, Community Services Specialist I,
510-981-6486

Attachments:

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: 2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan

Exhibit B: Suggestions for Traffic Circle Plantings

Exhibit C: Quick-Reference Guide for Common Invasive Plants Species in Berkeley

2. 2012 Traffic Circle Planting Policy

3. 2020 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan

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

2026 TRAFFIC CIRCLE VEGETATION POLICY AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City first established the Traffic Circle Planting Policy in 2012 to provide guidelines that support roadway visibility, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and consistent vegetation maintenance across the City's residential traffic-calming network; and

WHEREAS, on November 12, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 69,164-N.S., replacing the 2012 policy with the Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan (2020 Plan) and directing further development of vegetation standards to ensure appropriate plant selection, maintenance practices, and sightline visibility; and

WHEREAS, since adoption of the 2020 Plan, the City has continued to maintain more than 57 traffic circles and has identified the need to update the 2020 Plan to reflect current operational practices, incorporate additional native plant species, and clarify vegetation height and maintenance standards; and

WHEREAS, the department has integrated ArcGIS-based volunteer dashboards and digital reporting tools that streamline sign-ups, support coordination among staff, contractors, and volunteers, and enhance the City's ability to track maintenance activities efficiently and consistently; and

WHEREAS, the updated 2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan will improve program consistency, support long-term site health, maintain sightline safety, and align vegetation guidelines with the workflows and tools currently used by the Department.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council adopts the updated 2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan, attached here as Exhibits A, B, & C.



City of Berkeley – Public Works

2026 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan

Based on Resolution 69,164-N.S., adopted on November 12, 2019, which replaced the 2012 Traffic Circle Planting Policy and guided the development of subsequent updates to the Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy & Maintenance Plan, including the 2026 revision.

The purpose of this policy update is to identify and expand the list of approved types of vegetation and their maintenance for traffic circles that provide traffic calming, beautification, environmental, and other benefits while maintaining pedestrian safety. The goal of this policy is to establish clear guidelines ensuring that traffic circle vegetation and trees are maintained in accordance with safety standards, promote visibility, and enhance neighborhood safety. As part of this update, all volunteer registration, site selection, and activity reporting will be managed through the **Adopt-A-Traffic Circle ArcGIS Hubsite** to ensure consistent data collection and streamlined coordination among Public Works staff, contractors, and community volunteers. This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.

Ongoing Vegetation Maintenance:

Vegetation shall be maintained to not exceed a maximum height of 24 inches from the top of the traffic circle planter curb.

Vegetation Maintenance includes:

- Weeding
- Debris and trash removal
- Pruning to maintain 24" height

New Vegetation Plantings:

Traffic Circle plantings should be durable, diverse, and attractive. New plantings must be drought-tolerant and fully grown be 24 inches or less above the traffic circle curb. Good examples are plants from California and other Mediterranean climates around the world. Plantings should conform to [Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines² and support pollinators.](#) [Plantings](#) with spines or thorns (e.g. cacti), vegetables, or fruits are not permitted. Hoses are considered a trip hazard and a road hazard and are not permitted for irrigation of traffic circles. No use of pesticides or herbicides will be allowed for maintenance.

Traffic circles should be planted with consideration of sightlines and vegetation size and shape at maturity. In addition, a simple Planting Guide for native and pollinator friendly plants was created by the Traffic Circle Task Force. Plants that are on the Planting Guide do not require submittal of a plant list for approval. New proposed Planting List must be submitted to adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info for review and approval when significant revegetation of an existing traffic circle is proposed.

¹ The 2020 policy was informed by extensive community and stakeholder input, including the work of the 2019 Traffic Circle Policy Task Force. The current update reflects additional recommendations from Public Works staff and community volunteers based on program experience since 2020.

² Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines from ReScape can be found here: <https://www.rescapeca.org/resources>

Traffic circles with Green Infrastructure³ will be planted and maintained by the City of Berkeley or their designated representatives to ensure compliance with engineered planting plans to support stormwater quality and system performance. Future green infrastructure installations will be communicated to surrounding residents, including opportunities for community input during design and implementation.

Vegetation Maintenance and Planting activities will be performed according to the Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Agreement and Resolution 69,194-N.S. from the City of Berkeley. Traffic Circles are in the public right of way and may require traffic control for volunteer safety. Maintenance and planting activities can be performed as part of scheduled volunteer events and on an as needed basis. Additionally, in some Traffic Circles, there is City and other Utility infrastructure including maintenance holes. To avoid any incidental damage to plantings, the 1.5 feet around the maintenance hole should be free of vegetation and crews will need a clear path to walk to the maintenance hole. In addition, prior to planting, volunteers will need to contact 811 to avoid disturbing underground utilities - <https://www.usanorth811.org/>.

Ongoing Existing Tree Maintenance:

All tree work will be performed by City Staff or their contractors. Trees with trunks wider than 20 inches will be evaluated for structural safety every three (3) years. Mature tree canopies will be trimmed to provide a minimum height of 7 feet above the top of the traffic circle planter curb. Tree Limbs that extend beyond the curb will be trimmed to provide a minimum height of 14 feet above the road surface.

Traffic Circles with single tree trunks that are less than 20 inches in width, as measured at the point 4 feet above the ground, do not require any additional traffic calming devices at this time. Single tree trunks wider than 20 inches may be permitted with additional traffic calming measures.

Low branches on young trees and/or flower stalks extending above the 24 inch maximum height above the traffic circle curb shall be permitted as long as the total visual obstruction above 24 inches is no more than 20 inches across the circle. If a tree must be removed from a circle and can be transplanted it shall be transplanted. In any event, the City's policy shall be to place a more location-appropriate tree in the circle where a tree has been removed, if possible.

City of Berkeley will inspect Traffic Circles every six (6) months for compliance with this policy, and will inspect community complaints regarding Traffic Circles within two (2) business days of receipt of complaint.

New Trees:

Planting of new trees will be considered for traffic circles that do not have utility conflicts. In addition, any proposed locations must adhere to the [Tree Planting Location Standards](#). These standards shall be refined over time to be more specific for traffic circle locations. A [Tree Planting Application](#) must be completed and submitted to adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info for initial review before it is forwarded on to Forestry for final review.

³ Green Infrastructure requirements referenced in this section are guided by the Alameda County Clean Water Program Technical Guidance, which outlines regional standards for stormwater quality, vegetation selection and maintenance practices. cleanwaterprogram.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/C3TG-8.3-Updated-20250625-full.pdf

Volunteer Maintenance and Requirements:

Landscaped neighborhood traffic circles in Berkeley add beauty, support the environment, and help slow down traffic to make Berkeley a safer place to live. The City will continue to engage existing and new community volunteers to maintain traffic circles. All existing volunteers will be required to register on the Adopt-A-Traffic Circle ArcGIS Hubsite (<https://adopt-a-traffic-circle-berkeley.hub.arcgis.com/>) and sign the Volunteer Agreement and Release from Liability within 30 days of the publication of this plan. All new volunteers must also register on the ArcGIS Hubsite and agree to and sign the Volunteer Agreement and Release before performing any maintenance activities at a traffic circle.

Traffic Circle volunteers will be responsible for caring for the traffic circle vegetation including weeding, pruning and other routine maintenance; being cautious and visible to traffic while in or near the traffic circle; comply with requirements outlined in this document; ensure traffic circle vegetation adheres to sightline requirements; and adopt a traffic circle for at least six months.

Traffic Circles without volunteers will be planted and maintained by the City until volunteers are in place following the Planting Guide.

City will notify volunteers via mail and a courtesy email if corrective action is needed. Volunteers will have seven (7) days⁴ from the date on the mailed notification letter from the City to bring the Traffic Circle into compliance. For any questions, the volunteer should email adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info If not corrected, City Staff or their designee will take corrective action to bring the vegetation into compliance, which may include pruning or removal of vegetation that violates this policy.

In keeping with Title 20 of the Berkeley Municipal Code, no signs are permitted in a Traffic Circle with the exception of City authorized traffic control devices signs. Traffic Circle volunteers may move temporary signage to the parking strips adjacent to the Traffic Circle.

Traffic Circles primary function is for traffic calming, and they are not to be used as parks or for any form of recreation.

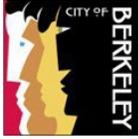
⁴ <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Berkeley/html/Berkeley12/Berkeley1244/Berkeley1244070.html>



Adopt A Spot Traffic Circle Volunteers will:

1. Call 911 in the event of an emergency or 510-981-5900 for non-emergencies.
2. Work only between sunrise and sunset.
3. Wear appropriate protective clothing that could include: work gloves, eye protection, sturdy closed-toed shoes, and long pants to prevent injury from sharp objects, insect stings, and sunburn.
4. Wear a reflective vest required for working in the public right-of-way. The City will provide one to volunteers.
5. Will not plant vegetation that is not on the recommended list without prior authorization from the City.
6. Will not wear ear buds or headphones while performing maintenance activities.
7. Will not use power tools.
8. Will not pick up sharp objects with bare hands.
9. Will not touch medical or hazardous waste (including hypodermic needles, automotive fluids, unknown fluids and materials). Report hazardous waste in the public right of way to the City of Berkeley Public Works at 510-981-6620.
10. Separate collected materials into recycling, green waste, and garbage cart.
11. Dispose of recycling in your residential blue recycling cart.
12. Dispose of small amounts of trash in your residential grey garbage cart.
13. Larger amounts of trash placed in orange plastic City-issued bags will be picked up by Public Works if requested. Bags will be supplied upon request.
14. Dispose of small amounts of green waste, such as leaves and trimmings, in your residential green cart. Larger amounts of green waste placed in City- issued plant debris bags will be picked up by Public Works. Bags will be supplied upon request.
15. Will always provide adult supervision to any volunteer under the age of 18.
16. Only volunteers who have registered on the ArcGIS Hubsite and completed the Volunteer Agreement and Release from Liability Form are permitted to work in the traffic circle.

Note: The City reserves the right to immediately withdraw support for any volunteer if, at the sole discretion of the City, the volunteer's conduct while participating in volunteer activities on City property or right-of-way is determined to be inconsistent with this Policy or violates any local, state or federal law.



Additional City of Berkeley Resources

Tool Lending Library

- Only Berkeley residents or property owners over 18 may borrow tools available from the Berkeley Public Library, Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch, located at 1901 Russell St.

City of Berkeley Free Compost Program

- The City of Berkeley provides free compost to Berkeley residents. Compost is available for pickup year-round at the Berkeley Marina (subject to availability). Located on the East side of Marina Blvd, just South of the Doubletree Hotel.

California Native Plant / Educational Resources Online

- ReScape California – <https://www.rescapeca.org/resources>
- Calscape California Native Plant Society – <https://calscape.org/>
- Alameda County Clean Water Program – [C3TG-8.3-Updated-20250625-full.pdf](#)

ADOPT-A-SPOT
TRAFFIC CIRCLE



Suggestions for Traffic Circle Plantings

To support city staff, contractors hired to maintain unadopted circles, and the public, members of the former Traffic Circles Task Force reviewed and culled the original list of suggested plantings for traffic circles. The resulting suggestions below are intended for those circles that the city will plant and maintain or for adopted circles where volunteers might want additional suggestions for plantings that provide valuable habitat for insects and birds.

The plants below are suggestions and do not represent a finite prescriptive list. Volunteers may and can use other plants as long as they adhere to height specifications.

All plants are California natives, often native to our region. They have been selected for height requirements, drought-tolerance, and habitat value. They should thrive in full sun with little- to no-water (once established). All plants were checked to be widely available from local nursery and seed supply resources.

There are three lists of plants: Tier One and Tier Two each have 10 suggestions; Tier Three has 5 suggestions. Each Tier has been formatted to print on a single sheet, double-sided.

In line with urgings from the Audubon Society, the Xerces Society, the National Wildlife Federation, the California Native Plant Society, and other organizations addressing alarming species decline, Tier One plants focus heavily on CA-native butterfly (caterpillar, or “larval”) host plants. These plants are also valuable sources of pollen and nectar for native bees and hummingbirds. Like most insects, caterpillars are host-plant specific. Since caterpillars are the primary food of most baby birds, planting for caterpillars supports birds. Tier Two suggestions are less focused on butterfly host plants and offer plants that provide valuable pollen and nectar sources for native bees and hummingbirds.

Tier Three plants focus on providing resilient, drought-tolerant structure and long-season ecological support. While these species may not serve as primary larval host plants, they supply reliable pollen and nectar resources for a broad range of native bees, hoverflies, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. Their extended bloom periods and adaptability make them valuable for maintaining pollinator activity throughout the year. By supporting adult pollinators and other beneficial insects, Tier Three plants help sustain the broader urban ecosystem, contributing to improved habitat function and overall traffic circle resilience.

Suggested Plants for Traffic Circles – Tier One (#1-5 of 10)

	Bloom	Plant	Scientific Name	Height	Width	Notes	Wildlife Supported
1		Buckwheat, Coast	Eriogonum latifolium	12-20in	2ft	Compact mound of softly felted blue grey spoon shaped leaves topped by pale pink 1" clusters of flowers blooming summer into fall. Used for erosion control, drought tolerant. Ground nesting native bees scrape fuzz off leaves to use in nest. Loved by bees, butterflies and many pollinators.	 Acmon Blue
2		Buckwheat, Naked	Eriogonum nudum	12-20in	2-3ft	Another keystone Buckwheat. Late blooming, short growing. Drought tolerant, attractive to butterflies and bees.	 Mormon Metalmark
3		Buckwheat, Red	Eriogonum grande var. rubescens	12-20in	2-3ft	Another keystone Buckwheat. Late blooming, short growing. Drought tolerant, attractive to butterflies and bees.	 Silvery Blue
4		California Aster, Point Saint George	Symphotrichum chilensis, 'Point Saint George'	6in	2ft	A low growing vigorous native perennial, reaching up to 6 inches in height and spreading widely. Covered with soft lavender daisies over a long period, summer through fall, often into winter.	 Field Crescent
5		California Lilac (low growing selections)	ex. Ceanothus hearstiorum - San Simeon Ceanothus	3-12in	6ft	Many species and varieties, choose low growing selections. Ceanothus hearstiorum is flat growing, with dark green crinkled leaves and 1" deep blue flower clusters in the spring.	 Pale Swallowtail

Photo Credits (from *Calscape.org* unless otherwise noted): (1) **Coast Buckwheat** (2013 John Doyen)/**Acmon Blue** (2008 Ron Wolf); (2) **Naked Buckwheat** (2016 Steve Matson)/**Mormon Metalmark** (Bill Bouton); (3) **Red Buckwheat** (2006 Steve Matson)/**Silvery Blue** (2014 Ron Wolf); (4) **Aster** (2007 Neal Kramer)/**Field Crescent** (Willem9); (5) **Ceanothus** (2007 Stan Shebs)/**Pale Swallowtail** (2013 Ron Wolf)

Suggested Plants for Traffic Circles – Tier One (#6-10 of 10)

	Bloom	Plant	Scientific Name	Height	Width	Notes	Wildlife Supported
6		California Native Bunch Grasses (ex. Creeping Red Fescue, Blue Grama)	ex. Festuca rubra (Molate Pt), Bouteloua gracilis	1-2ft	2-3ft	CA native and non-native grasses support a wide variety of Skipper butterflies (e.g. Umber Skipper, Fiery Skipper, Rural Skipper, and many more). In urban areas mostly on Bermuda Grass.	 Umber Skipper
7		Gumweed	Grindelia stricta var. platyphylla	1-1.6ft	1-2ft	Low herbaceous perennial, 2" sunny yellow daisies, summer to fall. Drought tolerant, but best with some summer water. Valuable pollen and nectar source.	 Native Bees
8		Lippia	Lippia nodiflora	1-4in	2ft	Evergreen perennial flat groundcover. 1/2" flower clusters like tiny lantana in pink and white. Host for Buckeye Butterfly. Attractive to pollinators.	 Common Buckeye
9		Lupine, dwarf	Lupinus nanus, Lupinus bicolor (or any short lupine)	12-18in	1ft	Also called "Sky Lupine". Annual wildflower that turns California fields blue in the spring. Reseeds. Seeds need moisture to germinate, available at Lamers Seeds	 Gray Hairstreak
10		Manzanita	Low growing selections (exs. Arctostaphylos 'Emerald Carpet', Arctostaphylos edmundsii 'Carmel Sur', see Notes for more)	6-12in	6ft	Low tidy evergreen groundcovers that are drought tolerant with pink to white small urn shaped flowers winter into spring provide bees with nectar early in season. Edible red berries good for migrating birds. Low growing selections (Low growing: Arctostaphylos uva ursi 'Point Reyes'- Point Reyes Bearberry)	 Bumble Bee

Photo Credits (from *Calscape.org* unless otherwise noted): ; (6) **California Red Fescue** (2018 Robert Steers/NPS)/**Umber Skipper** (2011 Ron Wolf); (7) **Gumweed** (2008 Stickpen)/**Dianthidium** (Rusty Burlew, honeybeesuite.com); (8) **Lippia** (2013 Ron Wolf)/**Buckeye** (2015 Gary McDonald); (9) **Lupine** (Lynn Watson)/**Gray Hairstreak** (2014 Ron Wolf); (10) **Manzanita** (2006 Steve Matson)/**Bombus vosnesenskii** (LasPalitas Nursery)

Suggested Plants for Traffic Circles – Tier Two (#11-15 of 20)

	Bloom	Plant	Scientific Name	Height	Width	Notes	Wildlife Supported
11		Bush Monkey Flower	Mimulus aurantiacus	2-3ft	3ft	Very drought tolerant. No water once established. Copious blooms. Hummingbirds attracted. Tends to lean but may need some pruning to keep low growing. Pinch to encourage more compact growth.	 Variable Checkerspot
12		California Fuchsia	Zauschneria or Epilobium canum. (Use Low growing selections, such as 'Everett's Choice' or 'Cloverdale')	1-2ft	2-3ft	Fine textured gray green to silver leaves, mounding habit and bright red orange tubular flowers in clusters later summer into fall. Can be winter deciduous. Best hummingbird attracting plant. Drought tolerant.	 Allen's Hummingbird
13		California Poppy	Eschscholzia californica	1-1.5ft	1ft	Perennial grown as Annual. Reseeds. Start from seeds or plants. The state flower of California. Mainstay pollen source for many native bees.	 Bumble Bee
14		Checkerbloom	Sidalcea malviflora	2ft	1ft	Perennial wildflower. Dense low 6" mound of small round scalloped leaves, 12-20" spikes of bright to dark pink 1" flowers in spring. Native larval host plant for Westcoast Lady Butterfly.	 West Coast Lady
15		Daisy, Wayne Roderick	Erigeron glaucus 'Wayne Roderick'	1ft	1-2ft	Pollen and Nectar source for bees. Profusion of 2" lavender daisies with golden centers, easy tough and reliably perennial. Long blooming Spring to Fall with some deadheading. Drought tolerant. Better with some summer water.	 Sweat Bee

Photo Credits (from *Calscape.org* unless otherwise noted): (11) **Monkeyflower** (2017 Margo Bors)/**Variable Checkerspot** (2017 Gary McDonald); (12) **Fuchsia** (2015 Steve Matson)/**Allen's Hummingbird** (ca.audubon.org); (13) **Poppy** (2012 Gary McDonald)/**Yellow-faced Bumble Bee** (Sean McCann, ibycter.com); (14) **Checkerbloom** (2010 Gary A. Monroe)/**West Coast Lady** (David Hofmann); (15) **Daisy Wayne Roderick** (2010 Calscape)/**Sweat Bee** (Kathy Keatley Garvey, homeorchard.ucanr.edu)

Suggested Plants for Traffic Circles – Tier Two (#16-20 of 20)

	Bloom	Plant	Scientific Name	Height	Width	Notes	Wildlife Supported
16		Farewell-to-Spring	ex. Clarkia amoena, Clarkia williamsonii	1-2ft	12in	Magenta, lavender, pink silky cup shaped flowers in late Spring into Summer. Annual that actively reseeds. Needs good drainage. Appreciates a little supplemental water.	 Leafcutter Bee
17		Bee's Bliss Sage	Salvia x. Bee's Bliss	1-2ft	6-8ft	A beautiful hybrid sage. Excellent ground cover and habitat plant. Grows to around 2 feet high and 6-8 feet wide. Handsome gray foliage topped with a profusion of lavender flowers. A bee and hummingbird favorite. Drought tolerant once established.	 Anna's Hummingbird
18		Phacelia, Bolander's	Phacelia bolanderi	1-1.5ft	0.5ft	Papery inch wide lavender flowers that bloom later than others, late spring thru summer. Perennial groundcover, appreciates some summer water and some shade. Bee pollen and nectar source.	 Mason Bee
19		Phacelia, Great Valley	Phacelia ciliata	4-18in	16in	Beautiful self-sowing annual. Clusters of cupped lavender blue flowers over ferny foliage. Good for bees.	 Membrane Bee
20		Western Yarrow	Achillea millefolium	1-3ft	1-2ft	Choose low growing cultivars. Usually a low spreading ferny leaved perennial with 3-4" clusters of white to pink flowers. Usually full sun, edge of shade under oaks. Attractive to pollinators. Will need pruning if growth gets too high.	 Long-Horned Bee

Photo Credits (from *Calscape.org* unless otherwise noted): (16) **Clarkia** (2017 John Doyen)/**Leafcutter Bee** (2014 Linda Dahlbert, bugguide.net); (17) **Bee's Bliss Sage** (calfloranursery.com)/**Anna's Hummingbird** (Bob Gunderson, goldengateaudubon.org); (18) **Bolander's Phacelia** (2010 Stickpen)/**Mason Bee** (progardentips.com); (19) **Great valley Phacelia** (2006 Steve Matson)/**Membrane Bee** (Colletidae; planetbee.org); (20) **Yarrow** (2009 H. Zell)/**Long-horned Bee** (Melissodes, laspilitas.com)

Suggested Plants for Traffic Circles – Tier Three (#21-25 of 25)

	Bloom	Plant	Scientific Name	Height	Width	Notes	Wildlife Supported
21		Elegant Clarkia	Clarkia unguiculata	1-3ft	3ft	Annual wildflower with tall, delicate stems and pink blooms that attract bees, butterflies, and moths. It flowers in summer when many other wildflowers are spent, providing an important seasonal food source. It readily self-sows and creates a soft, meadow-like display.	 Leafcutter Bee
22		Seaside Daisy	Erigeron glaucus	1-2ft	1-2ft	Sturdy, low-growing plant with very low water needs once established. When planted inland, some supplemental water is beneficial. Place in sunny areas as a groundcover or as part of a pollinator garden where it has room to spread.	 Sweat Bee
23		Common Tidy Tips	Layia platyglossa	6-24in	6-24in	Its daisy-like flowers are attractive, making it a popular garden ornamental and ingredient in commercial wildflower seed mixes. It is especially attractive when massed and combined with other wildflowers	 Native Bee
24		Baby Blue Eyes	Nemophila menziesii	6in	6in	Annual spring-blooming wildflower that gets its name from the bright blue flowers of two of the three varieties that are recognized. Easy to grow from seed along with other annuals.	 Pyrausta Bee
25		Creeping Snowberry	Symphoricarpos mollis	1-3ft	1-2ft	The shrub does well in warm climates and can tolerate both intense sun and constant shade. It is a plant of chaparral ecosystems, especially along coastlines.	 Long-Horned Bee

Photo Credits (from *Calscape.org* unless otherwise noted): (21) **Clarkia** (2008 Ron Wolf)/**Leafcutter Bee** (2014 Linda Dahlbert, bugguide.net); (22) **Seaside Daisy** (2010 Calscape)/**Sweat Bee** (Kathy Keatley Garvey, homeorchard.ucanr.edu); (23) **Layia platyglossa** (2010 Calscape); (24) **Nemophila menziesii** (2015 Keir Morse); (25) **Symphoricarpos mollis** (2014 Neal Kramer)



Quick-Reference Guide for Adopt-A-Traffic Circle Volunteers for Invasive Grasses & Plants in Traffic Circles.

1. Black Mustard (*Brassica nigra*)

Early germinating annual that forms dense stands; displaces native wildflowers and increases fire risk.

Action: Pull before seed set; bag all material.

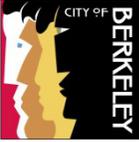


2. Jubata Grass (*Cortaderia jubata*)

Tall plume grass produces over 100,000 wind-dispersed seeds.

Action: Dig out the entire root crown; remove flowering plumes immediately.





3. Iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*)

Coastal groundcover that forms thick mats, alters soil chemistry, and smothers natives.

Action: Uproot mats completely; allow to dry off-ground before binning.



4. French Broom (*Genista monspessulana*)

Woody shrub forming dense thickets; seeds persist for decades.

Action: Cut at base before bloom; bag pods; monitor for regrowth.

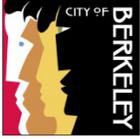


5. Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*)

Ornamental grass turned invasive; promotes wildfire spread.

Action: Remove entire clump, including roots; monitor for resprouting.





6. Bermuda Buttercup / Sourgrass (*Oxalis pes-caprae*)

Winter-blooming yellow flowers that spreads by bulbils.

Action: Dig bulbs when soil is moist; avoid breaking bulb fragments.



7. Wild Oats (*Avena fatua*)

Common roadside annual grass displacing native species.

Action: Hand-pull or mow before seed heads mature.

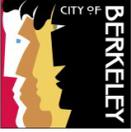


8. English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Climbing vine that smothers trees and walls, harming bark and branches.

Action: Cut vines at base; peel gently; remove berries to prevent spread.





9. Periwinkle (*Vinca ma*)

Shade-tolerant groundcover that quickly spreads and suppresses native plants.

Action: Pull or sheet-mulch; repeat to exhaust roots.

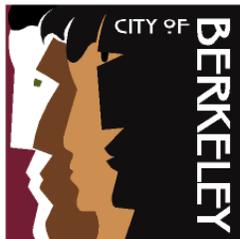


10. Grey Sedge (*Carex divulsa*) — Often mislabeled as “Berkeley sedge”

Non-native Eurasian sedge naturalized in California.

Action: Replace with native *Carex tumulicola*.





Public Works - Transportation Division
Oct 2012

Traffic Circle – Planting Policy

There are two main criteria used as the basis for what landscaping is permitted in traffic circles in the City of Berkeley. Foremost, the circles are and must continue to serve as a device to appropriately guide traffic. The planting and maintenance of traffic circles and traffic islands will be handled by neighborhood volunteers with oversight by Public Works Engineering and Traffic Divisions. Volunteer landscaping will be allowed based on the premise that it would not impact the limited resources for City staff. It is important to recognize that the primary purpose of traffic islands remains traffic control, and any beautification is incidental to and should not interfere with that purpose.

To serve as an appropriate device for guiding traffic the circles must not contain anything that would impede line of sight for and between vehicles and/or pedestrians, nor anything that would likely cause unnecessary harm to the occupants of a vehicle that might leave the road at these locations. The following criteria are to be used:

- A. To preserve adequate visibility, there shall be no vegetation that exceeds two feet in height as measured from the top of the curb on the island. Any vegetation exceeding this height shall be removed or cut back below two feet within two weeks of notice by the City.
- B. There shall be no boulders or other large/fixe object(s) with the intent or potential to abruptly stop the motion of a vehicle leaving the road and entering the traffic island.
- C. Objects to gradually slow the motion of a vehicle or absorb and dissipate the energy of a crash are acceptable, but only if specifically approved in advance by Traffic engineering staff and installed according to applicable standards and specifications. Such objects include crash barrels or guard rails with breakaway posts.

Volunteer installed and maintained landscaping will be allowed as follows:

1. Only plants from the approved list below may be planted or allowed to remain in traffic circles. The following plants were selected by Landscape Maintenance staff as appropriate for traffic circles and islands as they are not expected to exceed two feet in height:

- a. #5 Ceanothus variety Anchor bay (height 18", 6' spread)
- b. #8 Cotoneaster variety Adpressus praecox (height 18", 6' spread)

- c. #18 Trailing lantana (height 24", 2-3' spread)
 - d. #25 Creeping rosemary (height 8 – 18", 4' spread)
 - e. #27 Black sage (height 12 – 24", 4 – 6' spread)
 - f. #28 Creeping sage (height 8 – 12", 3 -4' spread)
2. Planting and watering are the sole responsibility and expense of the neighborhood volunteers.
- a. The City has no budget to purchase plants for traffic circles. Neighborhood volunteers may purchase plants at their own expense from the list above.
 - b. There is no irrigation within the circles. Water may be delivered or supplied by hoses run from private properties. Any hoses may not cross traffic lanes and must be attended at all times.
3. Prior to any landscaping being installed a member of the public involved in that activity must be designated as the responsible contact person and added to the list maintained by Engineering Division staff. Contact information shall include name, address, phone number, and e-mail address (if available). An alternate contact person may also be provided.
- a. The designated contact person shall sign a document acknowledging the criteria under which the landscaping is being allowed and the rules for maintaining it.
 - b. Any noncompliance with the landscape maintenance policies established herein will be communicated to the designated contact person and/or their designated alternate if any.
 - c. Repeated failure to maintain landscaping according to the visibility requirements after proper notice to the designated contact person(s) may result in removal of the vegetation and replacement of the soil with hardscape materials at the discretion of the Public Works Department.



City of Berkeley – Public Works

2020 Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Plan

Based on Resolution 69,164-N.S. and the Annotated Agenda of the Special Meeting of the Berkeley City Council on 11/12/2019¹, and replaces the 2012 Traffic Circle Planting Policy

The purpose of this new policy is to identify the appropriate type of vegetation and its maintenance for traffic circles that provide traffic calming, beautification, environmental, and other benefits while maintaining pedestrian safety. The goal of this policy is to develop guidelines ensuring that traffic circle vegetation and trees are maintained to conform to safety standards to promote visibility and enhance neighborhood safety. This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.

Ongoing Vegetation Maintenance:

Vegetation shall be maintained to not exceed a maximum height of 24 inches from the top of the traffic circle planter curb.

Vegetation Maintenance includes:

- Weeding
- Debris and trash removal
- Pruning to maintain 24" height

New Vegetation Plantings:

Traffic Circle plantings should be durable, diverse, and attractive. New plantings must be drought-tolerant and fully grown be 24 inches or less above the traffic circle curb. Good examples are plants from California and other Mediterranean climates around the world. Plantings should conform to Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines² and support pollinators. Plantings with spines or thorns (e.g. cacti), vegetables, or fruits are not permitted. Hoses are considered a trip hazard and a road hazard, and are not permitted for irrigation of traffic circles. No use of pesticides or herbicides will be allowed for maintenance.

Traffic circles should be planted with consideration of sightlines and vegetation size and shape at maturity. In addition, a simple Planting Guide for native and pollinator friendly plants was created by the Traffic Circle Task Force. Plants that are on the Planting Guide do not require submittal of a plant list for approval. New proposed Planting List must be submitted to adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info for review and approval when significant revegetation of an existing traffic circle is proposed.

¹ The adopted resolution was based on community input gathered before and as part of the Traffic Circle Policy Task Force who met regularly from June 2019 through November 2019 and included subcommittees on Vegetation, Operation and Maintenance, and Policy Alignment.

² Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines from ReScape can be found here: <https://rescapeca.org/resources/for-community-leaders-landscape-professionals/landscape-standards/>

Traffic circles with Green Infrastructure³ will be planted and maintained by the City of Berkeley or their designated representatives to ensure compliance with engineered planting plans to support water quality. Future green infrastructure installations will be communicated to the neighboring community with opportunities for community input.

Vegetation Maintenance and Planting activities will be performed according to the Traffic Circle Vegetation Policy and Maintenance Agreement and Resolution 69,194-N.S. from the City of Berkeley. Traffic Circles are in the public right of way and may require traffic control for volunteer safety. Maintenance and planting activities can be performed as part of scheduled volunteer events and on an as needed basis. Additionally, in some Traffic Circles, there is City and other Utility infrastructure including maintenance holes. To avoid any incidental damage to plantings, the 1.5 feet around the maintenance hole should be free of vegetation and crews will need a clear path to walk to the maintenance hole. In addition, prior to planting, volunteers will need to contact 811 to avoid disturbing underground utilities - <https://www.usanorth811.org/>.

Ongoing Existing Tree Maintenance:

All tree work will be performed by City Staff or their contractors. Trees with trunks wider than 20 inches will be evaluated for structural safety every three (3) years. Mature tree canopies will be trimmed to provide a minimum height of 7 feet above the top of the traffic circle planter curb. Tree Limbs that extend beyond the curb will be trimmed to provide a minimum height of 14 feet above the road surface.

Traffic Circles with single tree trunks that are less than 20 inches in width, as measured at the point 4 feet above the ground, do not require any additional traffic calming devices at this time. Single tree trunks wider than 20 inches may be permitted with additional traffic calming measures.

Low branches on young trees and/or flower stalks extending above the 24 inch maximum height above the traffic circle curb shall be permitted as long as the total visual obstruction above 24 inches is no more than 20 inches across the circle. If a tree must be removed from a circle and can be transplanted it shall be transplanted. In any event, the City's policy shall be to place a more location-appropriate tree in the circle where a tree has been removed, if possible.

City of Berkeley will inspect Traffic Circles every six (6) months for compliance with this policy, and will inspect community complaints regarding Traffic Circles within two (2) business days of receipt of complaint.

New Trees:

Planting of new trees will be considered for traffic circles that do not have utility conflicts. In addition, any proposed locations must adhere to the [Tree Planting Location Standards](#). These standards shall be refined over time to be more specific for traffic circle locations. A [Tree Planting Application](#) must be completed and submitted to adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info for initial review before it is forwarded on to Forestry for final review.

³ Green Infrastructure maintenance and planting guidelines are identified in the City's Green Infrastructure Plan as required by the City's Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit. https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2019/06_June/Documents/2019-06-18_WS_Item_01_City_of_Berkeley_Green_Infrastructure_pdf.aspx

Volunteer Maintenance and Requirements:

Landscaped neighborhood traffic circles in Berkeley add beauty, support the environment, and help slow down traffic to make Berkeley a safer place to live. The City wants to continue to engage existing and new community volunteers to maintain traffic circles. All existing volunteers will be required to sign a Volunteer Agreement and Release from Liability within 30 days from publication of this plan and submit to adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info . All new volunteers will also be required to sign the volunteer agreement and release before performing any maintenance activities at a traffic circle.

Traffic Circle volunteers will be responsible for caring for the traffic circle vegetation including weeding, pruning and other routine maintenance; being cautious and visible to traffic while in or near the traffic circle; comply with requirements outlined in this document; ensure traffic circle vegetation adheres to sightline requirements; and adopt a traffic circle for at least six months.

Traffic Circles without volunteers will be planted and maintained by the City until volunteers are in place following the Planting Guide.

City will notify volunteers via mail and a courtesy email if corrective action is needed. Volunteers will have seven (7) days⁴ from the date on the mailed notification letter from the City to bring the Traffic Circle into compliance. For any questions, the volunteer should email adoptaspot@cityofberkeley.info If not corrected, City Staff or their designee will take corrective action to bring the vegetation into compliance, which may include pruning or removal of vegetation that violates this policy.

In keeping with Title 20 of the Berkeley Municipal Code, no signs are permitted in a Traffic Circle with the exception of City authorized traffic control devices signs. Traffic Circle volunteers may move temporary signage to the parking strips adjacent to the Traffic Circle.

Traffic Circles primary function is for traffic calming, and they are not to be used as parks or for any form of recreation.

⁴ <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Berkeley/html/Berkeley12/Berkeley1244/Berkeley1244070.html>

Adopt a Spot Traffic Circle Volunteers will:

- Call 911 in the event of an emergency or 510-981-5900 for non-emergencies.
- Work only between sunrise and sunset.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing that could include: work gloves, eye protection, sturdy closed toed shoes, and long pants to prevent injury from sharp objects, insect stings, and sunburn.
- Wear a reflective vest required for working in the public right-of-way. The City will provide one to volunteers if requested.
- Will not plant vegetation that is not on the recommended list without prior authorization from the City.
- Will not wear ear buds or headphones while performing maintenance activities.
- Will not use power tools.
- Will not pick up sharp objects with bare hands.
- Will not touch medical or hazardous waste (including hypodermic needles, automotive fluids, unknown fluids and materials). Report hazardous waste in the public right of way to the City of Berkeley Public Works at 510-981-6620.
- Separate collected materials into recycling, green waste, and garbage cart.
- Dispose of recycling in your residential blue recycling cart or agreed upon cart.
- Dispose of small amounts of trash in your residential grey garbage cart or agreed upon cart.
- Larger amounts of trash placed in orange plastic City-issued bags will be picked up by Public Works if requested. Bags will be supplied upon request.
- Dispose of small amounts of green waste, such as leaves and trimmings, in your residential green cart or agreed upon cart. Larger amounts of green waste placed in City-issued paper bags will be picked up by Public Works. Bags will be supplied upon request.
- Will provide adult supervision at all times to any volunteer under the age of 18.
- Individuals who have not signed a volunteer agreement are prohibited from the Traffic Circle.

Note: The City reserves the right to immediately withdraw support for any volunteer if, at the sole discretion of the City, the volunteer's conduct while participating in volunteer activities on City property or right-of-way is determined to be inconsistent with this Policy or violates any local, state or federal law.

