

**BEN BARTLETT**

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

**18**CONSENT CALENDAR

May 19, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett

Subject: Berkeley Flea Market Art Walk Event: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the expenditure of funds, including \$1,000 from Councilmember Bartlett for the Grand Opening of the South Berkeley Flea Market at Ashby BART (organized by Community Services United, 501(c)3), with funds relinquished to the City's General Fund for this purpose from the discretionary council office budget of Councilmember Bartlett and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The 2026 Berkeley Flea Market Art Walk Event, Saturday, June 13, 2026, in the heart of South Berkeley's historic Lorin District on Adeline Street, located at the Ashby BART parking lot, beginning at 9:00 AM, will welcome residents of Berkeley and the greater Bay Area. The Berkeley Flea Market Art Walk Event Saturday celebration will feature local artisans, food vendors, musical and cultural presentations, and resource information stalls staffed by local organizations.

BACKGROUND:

The Berkeley Flea Market emerged in the early 1970s in Berkeley, California, during a period marked by social activism, cultural expression, and economic experimentation. As the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system expanded, and the land surrounding the Ashby BART Station became an informal gathering place for artists, craftspeople, musicians, and small entrepreneurs. What began as a grassroots vending activity evolved into a recognized community market.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the Berkeley Flea Market had become a major weekend destination in the East Bay. It was known for its diversity of vendors offering handmade goods, vintage items, global foods, and art rooted in African, African-American, Caribbean, and diasporic traditions. Live music, spoken word, and cultural exchange were integral to the market, establishing it as both a commercial and cultural institution. In this context, the Berkeley Flea Market became a community-based economic response, offering self-employment and cultural space near transit-adjacent land.

Despite regulatory changes, land-use pressures, and economic shifts, the Berkeley Flea endured through continued community support and advocacy. Its survival reflects the persistence of vendors and organizers who asserted the market's value as a source of

income, cultural preservation, and community connection. Today, the Berkeley Flea Market continues under the stewardship of Community Services United (CSU). CSU is under NEW management, which consists of all new members of the executive board. Together, the board has revitalized the Berkeley Flea Market objectives and established new community partners to help South Berkeley develop socioeconomically. For example, Berkeley City College creates market materials for the Berkeley Flea Market. Berkeley YouthWorks partners with Berkeley Flea Market for on-site staffing during weekend operations. Visit Berkeley promotes Berkeley Flea Market events on each of their 22 kiosks. Current efforts focus on revitalization through strong governance, transparency, vendor support, and partnerships, while honoring the market's historical role as a community-driven economic space.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No negative impact.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No General Fund impact; \$1,000 is available from the discretionary council office budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett.

CONTACT PERSON:

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ATTACHMENT:

1. Grand Opening Event Flyer
2. Resolution to authorize the expenditure of surplus funds added.

Attachment 1:



Attachment 2:

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

AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS FOR A GRANT TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES FOR A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PURPOSE

WHEREAS, Councilmember Bartlett has surplus funds in his office expenditure account; and

WHEREAS, a California non-profit tax-exempt corporation, Community Services United, will receive the funds; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such services would fulfill the following municipal public purpose: Community Services United Promotes greater societal cohesiveness and well-being by educating and involving the community-at-large in historical, family, and cultural activities; and

WHEREAS, Community Services United hosts various activities, including monthly celebrations and seasonal cultural events such as Art Walk, Music at the Market, and Job Fair at the Market; and

WHEREAS, cultural celebrations are critical to the social and spiritual unity of our community, and are integrated into Community Services United events; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their council office budget, of an amount to be determined by each Councilmember, shall be granted to Community Services United.