



CONSENT CALENDAR
June 9, 2026

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Adena Ishii (Author)

Subject: Berkeley Poet Laureate Program: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Fund

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$2500 per Councilmember including \$2500 from Mayor Ishii to the Berkeley Poet Laureate Program to support the continuation of the program by covering associated selection panelist fees and stipends for the selected poet laureate with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Mayor Ishii and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley's Poet Laureate Program was formalized as an open competitive process in 2023, as a joint program of the City and Berkeley Public Library. Historically, the Library has provided funding for the Poet Laureate Program, and the city's civic arts staff has administered the selection process.

The purpose of the Poet Laureate program was established to: champion Berkeley's poetry, spoken word, and literary arts communities; honor a Berkeley poet to serve as a creative ambassador of the city and a collaborator with the broader arts community. Over the course of a two-year service term, the Poet Laureate is required to complete an original poem inspired by or related to Berkeley, give at least two public readings, recite poems at City or Berkeley Public Library events, and act as a mentor for Berkeley's Youth Poet Laureate program, a program managed by the Berkeley Public Library.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No General Fund impact; \$2500 is available from Mayor Ishii's budget discretionary accounts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no environmental impacts associated with the recommendations in this report.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Adena Ishii

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Attachments: Resolution for Council Expenditures

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

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

WHEREAS, Mayor Adena Ishii has funds in her office discretionary account; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Poet Laureate Program seeks funds from the City of Berkeley not to exceed \$2500 per Councilmember, including the amount of \$2500 from the office of Mayor Adena Ishii to support the continuation of the City of Berkeley's Poet Laureate Program to underwrite the City's process to select its next Poet Laureate and to pay that person a stipend for their two-year service in that role; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's Poet Laureate Program was formalized as an open competitive process in 2023 as a joint program of the City and Berkeley Public Library; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Poet Laureate program was established to: champion Berkeley's poetry, spoken word, and literary arts communities; and have a Berkeley poet serve as a creative ambassador of the city and a collaborator with the broader arts community.

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 up to \$2500 per office shall be granted to the Berkeley Poet Laureate to fund the following service of having the selected Poet Laureate serve as a champion of Berkeley's poetry & arts communities.

