



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 14, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager
Submitted by: David White, Deputy City Manager
Subject: Appointment of Director of Public Works

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution confirming the appointment of James (Jamie) Parks as the Director of Public Works to be effective August 17, 2026, at an annual salary of \$270,000.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The salary and benefits for the Director of Public Works are included in the Department's budget. The position is funded through a combination of funding sources as follows: three percent from Public Works Special Funds, 81 percent from Enterprise Funds, and 16 percent from Internal Service Funds.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

In accordance with the City Charter, Section 28(b) of Article VII, City Council is being asked to confirm the appointment of James (Jamie) Parks to the position of Director of Public Works with an annual salary of \$270,000. Upon Council confirmation, the City will finalize the employment offer with an effective start date of August 17, 2026. The Director of Public Works is an at-will, benefitted department head position reporting to the Deputy City Manager.

To identify the City's next Director of Public Works, the Human Resources Department conducted a comprehensive nationwide executive search. This process included key stakeholder meetings to develop the ideal candidate profile and recruitment brochure; extensive direct and indirect outreach in addition to traditional advertising; and targeted engagement with public works professionals nationwide. The City leveraged professional networks such as American Public Works Association (APWA), regional public works associations, Municipal Management Association of Northern California, and other public sector leadership organizations. Using tools like LinkedIn Recruiter, Human Resources also conducted direct outreach to current and emerging public works and transportation leaders in comparable jurisdictions to ensure a robust and diverse candidate pool.

As a result of this multifaceted search effort, the City received 58 applications for the position. Following an extensive screening and evaluation process, the most competitive applicants advanced to oral board examinations conducted by panels of technical experts, internal department directors, and community stakeholders. Top candidates were then invited to final interviews with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager.

Jamie Parks brings over 20 years of experience in transportation planning, capital project delivery, and public administration. He currently serves as Assistant Director for the Oakland Department of Transportation, where he oversees operations and administration, including capital funding strategy, personnel and labor relations, parking enforcement, construction inspection, and street maintenance.

Previously, Jamie managed the Livable Streets Division at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), leading the City's \$300 million capital program to improve street safety. Under his leadership, the division launched the nationally recognized Quick Build Program, implemented more than 45 miles of protected bike lanes, and led development of San Francisco's Vision Zero Action Strategy.

Jamie has consistently prioritized organizational capacity building as the foundation for advancing policy and infrastructure improvements. His accomplishments include reducing vacancy rates in both Oakland and San Francisco, streamlining project approval and funding processes through code amendments, and securing more than \$200 million in competitive capital grants.

Jamie holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and History from Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Science in Transportation Engineering from Northwestern University.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Public Works provides essential services to the community each day. Its mission is to deliver high-quality services with pride, courtesy, and excellence. Through efficient, cost-effective service delivery and strong partnerships with residents, Public Works supports Berkeley's reputation as a leading city for sustainable and innovative municipal operations.

Refuse and Recycling – Berkeley has a long-standing commitment to reducing and ultimately eliminating landfill waste. The City established one of the nation's first municipal recycling programs and, in 2019, adopted one of California's most comprehensive ordinances regulating single-use foodware and litter. Berkeley operates its own transfer station and waste-collection franchise – an uncommon model in the region.

Streets and Utilities – Responsible for street maintenance, sewer maintenance, the Clean City Program (illegal dumping, litter removal, encampment support), and street sweeping.

Facilities Management – Provides electrical maintenance and Radio Shop services; building and janitorial services; and property-management support. The division maintains public facilities, traffic signals, pedestrian control devices, and streetlights.

Public Works Administration – Responsible for departmental leadership, strategic planning, policy development, budget and financial administration, human resources, payroll, legislative coordination, and information-systems support.

Engineering and Capital Infrastructure – Oversees the Sidewalk Program, Sanitary Sewer Program, Pavement Rehabilitation Program, Stormwater, Utilities, Land-Use Permitting, and capital improvements to City facilities. Berkeley voters approved the \$100 million T1 Infrastructure Bond in 2016, and more than \$40 million in capital projects are currently underway. In 2024, voters approved Measure FF, a parcel tax expected to generate \$15 million annually for repairs to streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian paths.

Transportation Division – Manages transportation planning, traffic engineering, parking, bicycle and pedestrian planning, and alternative transportation programs. The division collaborates extensively with neighborhoods, community groups, and business associations to implement programs that support a safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation network.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Appointing James (Jamie) Parks as the Director of Public Works will provide the City with an experienced and effective leader to guide one of Berkeley's most critical service-delivery departments. Following a comprehensive nationwide search, Jamie emerged as the top candidate due to his strong record in municipal operations, capital program delivery, organizational improvement, and transportation safety initiatives. His proven leadership experience in Oakland and San Francisco, combined with his technical expertise and commitment to public service, make him well-qualified to lead the department and support the City's long-term infrastructure and service-delivery goals.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

David White, Deputy City Manager, (510) 981-7000

Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF JAMES PARKS
AS DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley conducted a comprehensive nationwide executive search to identify the most qualified candidates for the Director of Public Works position, which included key stakeholder meetings, extensive direct and indirect outreach beyond traditional advertising, and targeted engagement with public works professionals across the country, as well as direct outreach to emerging and established public works leaders to create a qualified and diverse candidate pool; and

WHEREAS, James Parks has over twenty years of experience in transportation planning, capital project delivery, and public administration, and currently serves as Assistant Director for the Oakland Department of Transportation, where he oversees department operations and administration including capital funding strategy, personnel and labor relations, parking enforcement, construction inspection, and street maintenance; and

WHEREAS, while serving as Assistant Director at the Oakland Department of Transportation, James Parks has prioritized organizational capacity building, reducing vacancy rates, shepherding code amendments to streamline project approval and funding processes, and leading successful efforts to secure over \$200 million in competitive capital grants; and

WHEREAS, James Parks previously managed the Livable Streets Division at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), where he oversaw a \$300 million capital program to improve street safety, initiated the agency's Quick Build Program, implemented over 45 miles of protected bikeways, and led the development of San Francisco's Vision Zero Action Strategy; and

WHEREAS, James Parks holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and History from Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Science in Transportation Engineering from Northwestern University; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager has selected James Parks as the most qualified candidate for the position of Director of Public Works, and recommends his appointment based on his extensive experience, strong record in municipal operations, capital program delivery, organizational improvement, and transportation safety initiatives.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it hereby confirms the City Manager's appointment of James Parks as Director of Public Works with an annual salary of \$270,000, effective August 17, 2026, on the same terms and conditions as other regular at-will employees.

