



Office of the City Manager

## INFORMATION CALENDAR

September 29, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Planning Commission

Submitted by: Emily Marthinsen, Chair, Planning Commission

Subject: Planning Commission Fiscal Year 2026-27 Work Plan

### INTRODUCTION

The City of Berkeley Planning Commission (PC) hereby submits a work plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27. The spreadsheet within Attachment 1 identifies the specific items prioritized.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At its meeting on July 1, 2026, the Commission reviewed and approved its FY 2026-27 Work Plan (Attachment 1).<sup>1</sup> The Commission also provided additional guidance for Council referrals that staff identified that could be started without additional funding, prioritizing the Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH), Neighborhood-serving retail in residential zones (particularly in areas where these non-conforming uses already exist), and to develop an Efficiency Unit Ordinance.

### BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission is providing this informational report about its FY 2026-27 Work Plan pursuant to the City Council's 2016 formal action to require commissions to annually submit a work plan to Council in this format. At the July 1, 2026 meeting, the Planning Commission considered information prepared by staff, including actions completed to date from the previous work plan, available staff resources, and the proposed work plan for FY 2026-2027.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The Planning Commission's work plan advances the City's sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction goals by focusing on creating housing and business opportunities in areas of high resources and frequent transit.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning Commission vote to approve workplan and send to Council: Motion/Second: Kahn/Sanderson. Ayes: Bechtolsheim, Marthinsen, Kahn, Owens, Sanderson, Twu. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Hauser, Oatfield, Wang [6-0-0-3].

The FY 2026-27 Planning Commission Work Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), in that it is solely administrative in nature and would have no adverse effect on the environment.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Based on recommendations received from PC, City Council may refer additional work to the City Manager.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

As identified by staff, some referrals already adopted by Council would require additional funding prior to starting work. Future new referrals to the City Manager may require additional staff and/or funding.

CONTACT PERSON(S)

Alisa Shen, Co-Secretary to the Planning Commission, Planning and Development Department, 510-981-7489.

Justin Horner, Co-Secretary to the Planning Commission, Planning and Development Department, 510-981-7476.

Attachment:

1. Staff report regarding FY 2026-27 Planning Commission Work Plan (Planning Commission Meeting of July 1, 2026)



Planning and Development Department  
Land Use Planning Division

## STAFF REPORT

DATE: July 1, 2026  
To: Members of the Planning Commission  
From: Alisa Shen, Principal Planner  
Subject: FY 2026 – 2027 Planning Commission (PC) Work Plan

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Planning Commission review and approve the proposed Planning Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 - 2027.

### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

This report provides background information about the work plan, including an update about work from the previous work plan completed to date, available staff resources, and the proposed work plan for FY 2026-2027.

In 2016 the City Council took formal action directing all boards and commissions to submit a work plan to the City Council in the form of an informational report. A Commission's work plan should contain the Commission's mission statement, goals, and resources. Pursuant to the City Charter, the mission of the Planning Commission is as follows:

*“The Commission recommends modifications to the City of Berkeley General Plan and related policy documents. All Zoning Ordinance amendments are developed through this Commission and recommended to the City Council. Other purviews include subdivision map consideration and review and comments on substantial projects from surrounding jurisdictions.”*

### FY 2025-2026 Work Plan Update

The following projects included in the FY 2025-2026 workplan have been completed:

- ADU State Law Compliance (Planning Commission: March 3, 2025; City Council: July 27, 2025)
- Middle Housing Zoning and General Plan Amendments (Planning Commission: February 27 and October 9, 2024; City Council June 26, 2025)

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- Assembly Bill 1033 Implementation: ADU Condominium Ordinance (Planning Commission: May 7, 2025; City Council: September 16, 2025)
- Amendments to Allow the Retail Sale of Alcohol in the Telegraph Avenue Commercial (C-T) Zoning District (Planning Commission: November 5, 2025; City Council December 2, 2025)
- Senate Bill 684 Implementation: Amendments to Title 21 Subdivisions and Title 23 Zoning (Planning Commission: October 8, 2025; City Council February 24, 2026)
- Amendments to Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (Landmarks Preservation Commission: February 5 and April 6, 2026; City Council April 14, 2026)

### Staff Resources

The policy team currently consists of four full-time employees: two Principal Planners and two Associate Planners. From 2023 through 2026, the team consisted of eight full-time employees (FTE). However, over the past year, one temporary, grant-funded Senior Planner position expired, and three additional positions (a Senior Planner, an Associate Planner and an Assistant Planner) became vacant. Due to the City's current budget shortfall, the Planning and Development Department anticipates filling only two of the vacant positions within the policy team—a Senior Planner and Assistant Planner—and plans to share an Associate position with the project planning team. Once these recruitment efforts are complete, the policy team will consist of 6.5 FTE. The policy team is funded through the City's General Fund and from the Permit Service Center Fund and may receive additional funding from outside grants.

### FY 2026-2027 Planning Commission Work Plan

The proposed FY 2026-2027 Planning Commission work plan, summarized below, reflects existing staffing levels and other resources (**Attachment 1**).

- **Ongoing Annual Reporting, Implementation and Administration.** Staff have ongoing administrative responsibilities, including staffing the zoning counter at the Permit Service Center, staffing the Planning Commission, and internal administration, including staff meetings, supporting interdepartmental and interagency planning efforts, professional development, and other related activities. In addition, the Planning and Development (PDD) Department regularly provides support to other City Departments and/or needs to respond to outside agencies, which require detailed policy analysis, the preparation of formal responses, and oftentimes consultation with the City Attorney, the City Council, and other staff.

PDD also has an ongoing requirement to produce General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Reports for the California Department of Housing Community Development (HCD), the Department of Finance (DOF) and Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI). Staff also periodically prepare staff-initiated zoning amendments and/or General Plan amendments that are necessary to ensure consistency with new State laws and/or clarify or correct non-substantive errors.

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In addition, several recently completed projects referred by City Council require substantial staff time to train staff and inform the public about new processes, such as ministerial permit pathways for SB 684-compliant small-lot subdivisions and middle housing zoning applications.

- **Active Projects Continuing in FY 2026-2027.** There are several complex, multi-year planning projects underway that implement State mandates and/or Housing Element policies and programs. Projects in this category include the update to the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element of the General Plan, the preparation of the City's first Environmental Justice Element, the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Ashby BART station area planning, and the Corridors Zoning Update. Staff also anticipate completing other smaller projects including requirements for undergrounding utilities and reporting back on Home Occupation amendments (enacted in February 2021).
- **Projects Anticipated to Start in FY 2026-2027.** Staff have identified the projects listed below that can be *started* with existing staff and budget resources in FY 2026-2027 as staff capacity becomes available with completion of active projects and the filling of vacant positions.
  - State-mandated Projects:
    - Historic Context Statement pursuant to the City's 2023-2031 Housing Element Environmental Impact Report.
    - Update to the General Plan Open Space Element.
  - Projects Implementing City Plans:
    - Local Density Bonus for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area.
  - City Council-referred Projects:

The following projects were ranked by the City Council as part of their referral prioritization using "Re-Weighted Range Voting (RRV), adopted on February 10, 2026:

    - Neighborhood Scale Commercial in Residential Zones (RRV #8).
    - Affordable Housing for Artists: AB-812 Implementation and Cultural District Statutory Standardization (RRV #12).
    - Efficiency Unit Ordinance: study and propose standards for Efficiency Units (RRV #24).

The City Council also approved the following Council referral on March 10, 2026, and recommended funding it through the FY27 budget process on June 16, 2026: the Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) Rezoning (**Attachment 2**).
- **Question for the Planning Commission:** *Given that PITCH has been budgeted by the City Council, how should this project be prioritized relative to the other Council-referred projects?*
- **Projects to Be Started, Pending Additional Funding.** Staff have determined that several outstanding referrals cannot be initiated without budgeted funding for consultant services for legally required environmental review, specialized design

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activities, and other technical work that we do not have the capacity to implement at current staffing levels. These projects include:

- Rezoning Gilman from San Pablo Avenue to I-80 for Commercial Uses (RRV #4).
- Explore zoning modifications for added density as way to help offset costs added to projects by new HARDHATS ordinance (RRV #5).
- Objective Design Standards in Middle Housing zoning districts (RRV #21).

**CONTACT PERSON**

Alisa Shen, Co-Secretary to the Planning Commission, Principal Planner  
[ashen@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:ashen@berkeleyca.gov), (510) 981-7409.

**Attachments:**

1. Proposed FY 2026-2027 Planning Commission Work Plan
2. Council Referral: Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) Rezoning, approved March 10, 2026.

| Source                             | Core Responsibilities                                                                                                                                                            | RRV 2026 Ranking* |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Administration                     | Planning Commission                                                                                                                                                              | n/a               |
|                                    | Permit Service Center and Other Planning and Zoning Support                                                                                                                      | n/a               |
|                                    | Implementation & Research                                                                                                                                                        | n/a               |
| Source                             | Annual Reporting/Recurring Projects                                                                                                                                              | RRV 2026 Ranking  |
| State Law                          | State General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report                                                                                                                    | n/a               |
| State Law                          | State Law Technical Edits to Zoning Ordinance                                                                                                                                    | n/a               |
| Source                             | Active Projects                                                                                                                                                                  | RRV 2026 Ranking  |
| State Law                          | General Plan: Update Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, New Environmental Justice Element, and Climate Resilience Metrics                                                 | n/a               |
| Housing Element (Program 28)       | BART Station Area Planning: Ashby and North Berkeley BART                                                                                                                        | n/a               |
| Housing Element (Programs 27 & 33) | Corridors Rezoning (College, Solano, North Shattuck Avenues)                                                                                                                     | n/a               |
| Housing Element (Program 27)       | San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan                                                                                                                                                   | n/a               |
| Council                            | Referral to the Planning Commission and Housing Advisory Commission to research and recommend policies to prevent displacement and gentrification of Berkeley residents of color | n/a               |
| Council                            | Report back on Home Occupation amendments enacted in February 2021                                                                                                               | n/a               |
| Source                             | Projects Anticipated to Start in FY 2026-2027                                                                                                                                    | RRV 2026 Ranking  |
| HE EIR Mitigation Measure Cul-1    | Historical Context Statement                                                                                                                                                     | n/a               |
| HE (Program 27)                    | General Plan Open Space Element Update                                                                                                                                           | n/a               |
| San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan     | Local Density Bonus for the SPASP                                                                                                                                                | n/a               |
| Council                            | Neighborhood-scale Commercial in Residential Zones                                                                                                                               | 8                 |
| Council                            | Affordable Housing for Artists: AB-812 implementation and Cultural District statutory standardization                                                                            | 12                |
| Council                            | Efficiency Unit Ordinance: study and propose standards for Efficiency Units                                                                                                      | 24                |
| Council                            | Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH)                                                                                                                      | **                |
| Source                             | Projects Requiring Additional Funding to Start                                                                                                                                   | RRV 2026 Ranking  |
| Council                            | Rezone Gilman for commercial uses from San Pablo Ave to I-80 to maximize revenue generation                                                                                      | 4                 |
| Council                            | Explore zoning modifications for added density as way to help offset costs added to projects by new HARDHATS ordinance                                                           | 5                 |
| Council                            | Objective Design Standards in Middle Housing zoning districts                                                                                                                    | 21                |

\*City Council Referral Ranking using the Re-Weighted Range Voting (RRV) system, approved February 10, 2026.

\*\*City Council-referred on March 10, 2026 and recommended for funding through the FY27 budget process on June 16, 2026.



**Berkeley City Councilmember**  
**Mark Humbert, District 8**  
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Berkeley, CA 94704  
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## **SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 2**

**Meeting Date:**        **March 10, 2026**

**Item Number:**        **13**

**Item Description:** **Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing  
(PITCH) Rezoning**

**Submitted by:**        **Councilmember Humbert, Mayor Ishii, Councilmember  
Bartlett**

The attached revises Item 13, *Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) Rezoning*, to add flexibility to the proposed goal base height along Telegraph Avenue in order to explore base height options that optimize for the provision of inclusionary affordable housing units. It also revises the item to specify that any necessary General Plan amendments would be part of the planning process.

ACTION-CONSENT CALENDAR

January 27~~March 10~~, 2026

To: Members of the Berkeley City Council

From: Councilmember Mark Humbert (Author);  
 Mayor Adena Ishii (Co-Author);  
 Councilmember Ben Bartlett (Co-Author)

Subject: Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) Rezoning

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the City Manager the Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) as a standalone rezoning effort to proactively and equitably increase housing stock in southeast Berkeley's high-resource areas. This project would seek to:

1. Rezone the Telegraph Avenue corridor south of Parker Street to the Oakland border at Woolsey Street from the current C-C (Commercial-Corridor) district to the C-T (Telegraph Avenue Commercial) district (or similar), allowing for taller mixed-use housing development, with a goal of base zoning of 8 stories/85 feet, potentially adjusted to optimize production of affordable inclusionary units.
2. Identify and upzone specific auto-oriented C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) parcels in the Claremont and Ashby area (near Domingo Avenue) from their current 2–3 story limits to 4–6 stories using existing or new zoning districts.
3. Allocate funding from the District 8 office budget to begin required planning, General Plan amendments, and/or California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review for the proposed zoning changes.

SUMMARY

This item proposes a new, targeted rezoning effort to deliver a substantial and equitable increase in zoned housing capacity in District 8 (and limited portions of District 3 along Telegraph). The Project to Increase Telegraph and Claremont Housing (PITCH) focuses on the under-utilized Telegraph Avenue corridor, which offers significant capacity (estimated up to 5,700 new units), excellent transit access, and larger, more easily developable parcels.

By simultaneously applying targeted upzoning to auto-oriented sites in the highest-resource Claremont neighborhood, the project would fulfill Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) and other Housing Element goals by expanding housing opportunities into the highest-resource parts of Berkeley. This strategic approach ensures a significant and geographically equitable

contribution to Berkeley's housing goals, while potentially relieving pressure on more commercially and architecturally sensitive areas.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost to execute the necessary initial planning, staff time, any General Plan amendments, and comprehensive environmental review (CEQA) for PITCH is \$250,000. To ensure the viability and timely commencement of this project, Councilmember Humbert commits to funding:

- ~~\$100,000~~ 180,000 from his Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 office budget.
- ~~\$50,000~~ 70,000 from his FY 2027 office budget.

The total contribution of ~~\$1250,000~~ \$250,000 helps make the project viable for immediate launch, allowing ~~the any unexpected balance or contingency~~ to be secured from ~~other general City funds~~ the City's general fund and/or grant opportunities in FY 2027/2028.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Telegraph Avenue, from Parker Street south to the Oakland border, is currently zoned C-C, which sets a base zoning for development of 3-story mixed-use or residential buildings. This represents a severe under-utilization of a key corridor located in a High Resource zone (slated to be upgraded to a Highest Resource area by 2026 TCAC maps) and which features wide street sections (~66' of traffic lanes) and large parcels ideal for higher-density housing.

Furthermore, new housing production has been disproportionately low in the highest-resource neighborhoods of District 8, such as Claremont. Although certain portions of the Claremont area have recently seen their housing capacity increase due to the City's Middle Housing efforts, fire risks and a limited number of underutilized non-residential parcels mean that, absent this project, this area is unlikely to contribute appreciably to the creation of new homes in Berkeley.

### BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley has a State mandate and made local commitments to increase housing production in high-resource, transit-rich areas. Telegraph Avenue's length, infrastructure, and under-developed parcels present an excellent opportunity for high-density housing. The State of California's new law (SB 79) will already require upzoning near Ashby BART (District 3) and the adjacent Telegraph/Alcatraz area, making a comprehensive upzoning of the entire Telegraph corridor both a logical and proactive step.

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This project is an effective approach to better meeting Berkeley's housing and equity goals:

- Increasing Housing Capacity on Telegraph: Rezoning Telegraph to C-T (8-stories) is projected to create a zoned housing capacity of up to around 5,700 units—a vital contribution to Berkeley’s housing stock.
- Equitable Development:
  - The Telegraph corridor is located in a High Resource area and the project will better satisfy Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing goals.
  - Including the Claremont area (targeting auto-oriented uses near Ashby and Domingo) creates new housing opportunities in one of Berkeley’s highest resource neighborhoods, diversifying housing options and providing walkable retail access to residents.
- Infrastructure Alignment: The project aligns new development with the City's investment in the Telegraph Multimodal Corridors project, which includes bus lanes and a protected cycletrack to improve transit and cycling infrastructure.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The project promotes environmental sustainability and climate action by increasing housing development along the high-frequency 6-Telegraph AC Transit bus route, which also features good access to jobs, shopping, and other urban amenities. This location encourages car-free or car-lite living and would serve to reduce the carbon footprint associated with auto use relative to housing in other areas of Berkeley and especially outside Berkeley.

Encouraging infill development also has the effect of reducing development pressure on agricultural and wildland areas, helping preserve them as natural and working lands.

Subsequent completion of any required General Plan amendments and/or CEQA review will ensure all environmental impacts are fully assessed and, if necessary, mitigated before zoning changes are enacted.

### POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

This referral represents the first step in a longer process that would involve substantial additional staff work, public engagement, subsequent Council input, environmental review, and subsequent Council votes to approve any rezoning, General Plan amendments, and associated CEQA documentation.

### FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The project is made more fiscally viable by the immediate financial commitment from Councilmember Humbert’s office. Subsequent fiscal impacts include increased property tax revenue from new housing development, increased sales tax revenue from more residents and subsequent foot traffic, and increased transit ridership on the 6-line, which will help AC Transit address its fiscal shortfall.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Mark Humbert — mhumbert@berkeleyca.gov, 510-981-7180

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment 1 Preliminary Buildout Analysis](#)