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Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR
November 17, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

Submitted by: Allan Abshez, Chair

Subject: Officially Naming the Public Plaza at Adeline and Fairview Streets as Delores Cooper Plaza

RECOMMENDATION
Adopt a Resolution officially naming the public plaza at Adeline and Fairview Streets as Delores Cooper Plaza.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
None

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS
In the Council agenda for April 14, 2026, Councilmember Bartlett made a referral to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission as follows: Refer to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission to explore naming of the public plaza located at the intersection of Adeline Street and Fairview Street within the Lorin District corridor in South Berkeley as Delores Cooper Plaza; including process and directive of coordinating implementation, historical preservation, such as signage, universal design, and public engagement with community partners to document Delores Cooper's historic contributions to the City of Berkeley (see Attachment 2).

In response to the referral, per the Council Naming Policy procedures, on July 8, 2026, the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission conducted a public hearing, and on September 9, 2026, the commission took action to recommend that Council name the plaza as Delores Cooper Plaza. (M/S/C: Philip/ Rybczynski/U) Ayes: Abshez; Granzella; Nash; Philip; Rybczynski ; Samelson; Stewart; Noes: none; Absent: Muszynski; Yeo.

BACKGROUND
The City of Berkeley has continuously recognized individuals whose leadership and service have shaped the City's cultural and civic identity. Public space naming is an important tool that honors community legacy by strengthening neighborhood identity and civic pride.

Delores Cooper's legacy as an educator, advocate, and cultural leader spans decades of service to Berkeley residents, particularly Black youth and families. The naming has received unanimous support from the Lorin Business Association of South Berkeley and strong support from numerous members of the broader Berkeley community. A full biography of Delores Cooper and her contributions to Berkeley is provided in Attachment 2 of this report.

CITY MANAGER

Based on the significant contribution Delores Cooper has made to the South Berkeley community, the City Manager concurs with the recommendation contained in this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No negative environmental impacts were identified as a result of this recommendation.

RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION

See body of report.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CONTACT PERSON

Allan Abshez, Chair, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission, 510-922-7573
Roger Miller, Secretary, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission, 510-981-6704

RESOLUTION NO. _____ -N.S.

OFFICIALLY NAMING THE PUBLIC PLAZA AT ADELINE AND FAIRVIEW STREETS AS DELORES COOPER PLAZA

WHEREAS, in the Council agenda for April 14, 2026, Councilmember Bartlett made a referral to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission as follows: Refer to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission to explore naming of the public plaza located at the intersection of Adeline Street and Fairview Street within the Lorin District corridor in South Berkeley as Delores Cooper Plaza; including process and directive of coordinating implementation, historical preservation, such as signage, universal design, and public engagement with community partners to document Delores Cooper's historic contributions to the City of Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has continuously recognized individuals whose leadership and service have shaped the City's cultural and civic identity. Public space naming is an important tool that honors community legacy by strengthening neighborhood identity and civic pride; and

WHEREAS, Delores Cooper's legacy as an educator, advocate, and cultural leader spans decades of service to Berkeley residents, particularly Black youth and families; and

WHEREAS, the naming has received unanimous support from the Lorin Business Association of South Berkeley and strong support from numerous members of the broader Berkeley community; and

WHEREAS, in response to the referral, per the Council Naming Policy procedures, on July 8, 2026, the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission conducted a public hearing, and on September 9, 2026, the commission took action to recommend that Council name the plaza as Delores Cooper Plaza. (M/S/C: Philip/ Rybczynski/U) Ayes: Abshez; Granzella; Nash; Philip; Rybczynski; Samelson; Stewart; Noes: none; Absent: Muszynski; Yeo.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the public plaza at Adeline and Fairview Streets is officially named as Delores Cooper Plaza.

BEN BARTLETT
CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 14, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett

Subject: Recommendation to Parks and Waterfront Commission to Explore the Naming of a Public Plaza in South Berkeley as Delores Cooper Plaza

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission to explore naming of the public plaza located at the intersection of Adeline Street and Fairview Street within the Lorin District corridor in South Berkeley as Delores Cooper Plaza; including process and directive of coordinating implementation, historical preservation, such as signage, universal design, and public engagement with community partners to document Delores Cooper's historic contributions to the City of Berkeley.

CURRENT SITUATION

The City of Berkeley has continuously recognized individuals whose leadership and service have shaped the City's cultural and civic identity. Public space naming is an important tool that honors community legacy by strengthening neighborhood identity and civic pride.

Delores Nochi Cooper is a founding board member and Executive Manager of Berkeley Juneteenth Cultural Celebrations, a 35-year-old non-profit organization located in Berkeley, California. A retired peace officer with 25 years of experience, Ms. Cooper's professional background includes legal compliance monitoring, investigations, needs assessments, report writing, and drug intervention education. Ms. Cooper's five years as a departmental training manager provided her with experience in strategic planning, policy development, contract negotiation, and production management. Ms. Cooper holds an MA in Legal Analysis and a BA in History from Lone Mountain College in San Francisco.

Ms. Cooper has used her professional expertise to empower and strengthen the community through events such as Juneteenth and Black History Month. Since taking over the helm of Berkeley Juneteenth as its Production Manager ten years ago, the festival has grown in its scope and influence and is hailed as the longest-running Juneteenth event in California. Ms. Cooper's portfolio includes serving as a historical exhibits curator, Vision magazine editor, and graphic designer in charge of web and social media content,

event images, marketing materials, fundraising and proposal writing, budget management, and as the single point of contact for the City, press, and service providers.

Ms. Cooper played a central role in the successful effort to rename Grove Street as Martin Luther King Jr. Way, serving as a member of the Martin Luther King Ad Hoc Committee. She is an active participant in her community and has volunteered her services as a writing coach at Berkeley and Richmond schools through Writer Coach Connection; as a program consultant with the South Berkeley Legacy Project; and as a Police Review Commissioner with the City of Berkeley. In 2021, Ms. Cooper was appointed to serve on the City of Berkeley's Independent Redistricting Commission. In 2024, she published a collection of poetry, "A Sweating Body That is Cooled By A Sometimey Breeze."

South Berkeley, and specifically the Lorin District corridor, is widely recognized as the historic and contemporary epicenter of culture in Berkeley. As displacement pressures continue, it is increasingly important for the City to preserve and affirm Berkeley's legacy through intentional placemaking and cultural recognition.

The proposed Delores Cooper Plaza, located at the intersection of Adeline Street and Fairview Street within the Lorin District corridor in South Berkeley, reflects Ms. Cooper's deep connection to Berkeley and its ongoing cultural and historical significance. The naming has received unanimous support from the Lorin Business Association of South Berkeley and strong support from numerous members of the broader Berkeley community.

BACKGROUND

Delores Cooper's legacy as an educator, advocate, and cultural leader spans decades of service to Berkeley residents, particularly Black youth and families. Born in Oakland, nurtured in Compton, and raised in Berkeley, she believes art, music, and history can serve as vehicles for channeling creative expression and building self-esteem, ultimately addressing the generational emotional trauma of slavery and systemic racism. Her passion is event programming with a community-healing component that builds community, with "ME and WE" as essential participants in a healthy, diverse community.

Cooper's leadership and her continued involvement in cultural institutions, such as the Berkeley Juneteenth Festival, demonstrate her enduring commitment to building the Berkeley community.

This proposal is further supported by Inter-City Services Inc. (ICS), a Bay Area organization that has served marginalized and underserved communities since 1984, which has formally expressed its support for establishing Delores Cooper Plaza and highlighted the appropriateness of the proposed location.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

This action is consistent with the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan's placemaking goals, which emphasize improvements to the public realm, corridor identity, and pedestrian-oriented retail and cultural activity.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No negative impact.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach for this proposal included engagement with the Lorin Business Association, community organizations, and South Berkeley residents. The proposal received unanimous support from the Lorin Business Association and broad endorsement from members of the Berkeley community.

In addition, outreach and consultation were conducted with Kieron Slaughter, former City of Berkeley Office of Economic Development staff member and former Liaison to the Lorin Business Association of South Berkeley. Mr. Slaughter brings extensive experience in public-space renaming and placemaking in Berkeley, as well as several other successful renaming efforts and placemaking installations in Oakland and Richmond. His expertise helped inform the proposed process and community-centered approach for this initiative.

The Commission is asked to review this proposal and, if appropriate, recommend a plan and approval to the City Council.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with the fabrication and installation of plaza signage and interpretive elements are anticipated to be modest and may be covered by existing departmental budgets or through partnerships and donations.

CONTACT PERSON

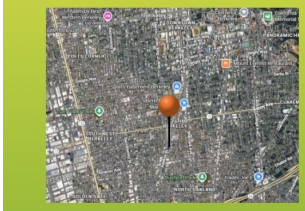
Councilmember Ben Bartlett bbartlett@berkeleyca.gov
James Chang jchang@berkeleyca.gov

Artemisia Spencer Mace aspencermace@berkeleyca.gov

ATTACHMENTS AND MATERIALS

1. Delores Cooper Plaza Proposed Location Map
2. Inter-City Services Inc. Letter of Support
3. The Lorin Business Association Letter of Support
4. Delores Nochi Cooper Biography

Attachment 1:



Attachment 2:

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YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Date: December 04, 2025

Kamau A. Edwards, Attorney
The Edwards Firm
ROW DTLA
777 S. Alameda Street, 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, California 90021

Re: Endorsement — Delores Cooper Honoring Project

Dear Mr. Edwards,

This letter confirms that Inter-City Services Inc. (ICS) fully endorses the proposal to honor Ms. Delores Cooper through the establishment of the Proposed Delores Cooper Plaza, located near Alcatraz Avenue and Adeline Street within the Lorin District corridor in the South Berkeley area of the City of Berkeley.

As a longstanding organization dedicated to serving and elevating marginalized and underserved communities in the Bay Area since 1984, ICS expresses its full support for this meaningful project recognizing Ms. Cooper's enduring legacy and contributions to the Berkeley community. The proposed location reflects her deep connection to South Berkeley and its ongoing cultural and historical significance.

Please accept this letter as formal documentation of ICS's endorsement. We look forward to continued collaboration on the next steps in bringing this project to fruition.

Sincerely,

Mansour Id-Deen
Founder and Executive Director

3282 Adeline Street
Berkeley, CA 94703 (510)
655-3552 www.icsworks.com

Attachment 3:

Date: 11/3/25

Kamau A. Edwards, Attorney
The Edwards Firm
ROW DTLA
777 S. Alameda Street, 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, California 90021

Re: Board Approval — Delores Cooper Honoring Project

Dear Mr. Edwards,

This letter confirms that the **Lorin Business Association** met on **October 17, 2025**, and voted to **approve the proposal to honor Ms. Delores Cooper** through the establishment of the **Proposed Delores Cooper Plaza**, located near **Alcatraz Avenue and Adeline Street** within the Lorin District corridor.

The Lorin Business Association expresses its full support for this meaningful project, recognizing Ms. Cooper's enduring legacy and contributions to the Berkeley community. The proposed location reflects her deep connection to the Lorin District and its ongoing cultural and historical significance.

Please accept this letter as formal documentation of the Board's approval. We look forward to continued collaboration on the next steps in bringing this project to fruition.

Sincerely,
Liz Lisle, Co-Chair
Yavette Holts, Co-Chair

Attachment 4:

DELORES NOCHI COOPER



Delores Nochi Cooper is a founding board member and Executive Manager of the day-to-day operation of Berkeley Juneteenth Cultural Celebrations, a 35-year-old non-profit organization located in Berkeley, California.

Her background as a retired peace officer for 25 years, honed her skills in legal compliance monitoring, investigation, needs assessment, report writing, and as a drug intervention educator; her five years as the departmental training manager provided her with experience in strategic planning, policy development, contract negotiation, and production management. Delores has transitioned her professional expertise in pursuit of her overarching commitment to the emotional well-being of her community through events such as Juneteenth and Black History Month that celebrate the African American experience. Probation work taught her the importance of family, community connectedness, and that change is always possible.

Delores believes merely celebrating Juneteenth is not enough. Her passion is event programming with a community healing component that builds community with “ME and WE” as essential participants in a healthy, diverse community. Delores believes art, music and history can be used as a vehicle to channel creative juices and build self-esteem, that can change norms and behaviors, and ultimately address the generational emotional trauma of slavery and systemic racism.

Since taking over the helm of Berkeley Juneteenth as its Production Manager ten years ago, the festival has grown in its scope and influence and is hailed as the longest running Juneteenth event in California. Delores’ portfolio includes historical exhibits curator, Vision magazine editor, graphic designer in charge of web and social media content, event images, and marketing materials. To that portfolio, add fundraising and proposal writing, budget management, and the single point of contact for the City, press, and service providers.

Delores is an active participant in her community and has volunteered her services as a writing coach at Berkeley and Richmond schools with Writer Coach Connection; as a program consultant with the South Berkeley Legacy Project; as a member of the Martin Luther King Ad Hoc Committee which successfully renamed a major Berkeley thoroughfare in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.; and with the City of Berkeley as a Police Review Commissioner. In 2021, Delores was appointed to serve on the City of Berkeley's Independent Redistricting Commission.

In 2024, Delores published a collection of poetry, "A Sweating Body That is Cooled By A Sometimey Breeze." She is currently working on her memoir.

Born in Oakland, nurtured in Compton, and raised in Berkeley, CA, Delores is a daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin, devoted friend, and a team player with a strong work ethic instilled in her at an early age. She believes in cultivating dreams and ideas to fruition. In her down time, she enjoys, reading, writing, water aerobics, finding treasures at estate sales, sitting in her sacred spot just being and observing, and above all, spending time with loved ones.

Delores received her MA in Legal Analysis and BA in History from Lone Mountain College in San Francisco.