



2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report

City of Berkeley

Submitted March 23, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
2. Land Use Element	4
3. Transportation	8
4. Housing	11
5. Disaster Preparation and Safety	14
6. Open Space and Recreation	16
7. Environmental Management	18
8. Economic Development	25
9. Urban Design	29
10. Citizen Participation	31

INTRODUCTION

Government Code Section 65400(a)(2) requires planning agencies to provide an annual report to their legislative body, the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the status of their General Plan and progress in its implementation. The report must detail the progress in meeting the jurisdiction's share of the regional housing need and address efforts by the local agency towards removing governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing.

The purpose for the Annual Progress Report is to: 1) assess how the General Plan is being implemented in accordance with adopted goals, policies and implementation measures; 2) identify any necessary adjustments or modifications to the General Plan as a means to improve local implementation; 3) provide a clear correlation between land use decisions that have been made during the 12-month reporting period and the goals, policies, and implementation measures contained in the General Plan; and 4) provide information regarding local agency progress in meeting its share of the regional housing need.

The majority of the City of Berkeley General Plan was originally adopted on **December 18, 2001, and April 23, 2002**. The General Plan contains the seven State-required elements which are Land Use, Transportation (Circulation), Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety. The State allows the combining of elements or the addition of new elements as long as the required seven elements are present in some fashion. The Berkeley General Plan contains the following nine elements:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Disaster Preparedness & Safety
- Open Space & Recreation
- Environmental Management
- Economic Development & Employment
- Urban Design & Preservation
- Citizen Participation

Local governments are required to keep their General Plans current and internally consistent. The Berkeley Housing Element was last updated and adopted by the City Council on January 18, 2023, and certified by HCD on February 28, 2023 for the 2023-2031 planning period. The City has also updated its Land Use Element related to various specific plan and other zoning update efforts and its Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element related to federally required updates to the City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The City is also in the process of comprehensively updating its Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element and creating a new Environmental Justice Element.

The City of Berkeley continues to actively implement the policies of the General Plan including the goals, policies and programs of the Housing Element. The following represents the progress the City has made towards implementing the General Plan and Housing Element during the **Calendar Year (CY) 2025** reporting period, which looks at the 2023-2031 6th Cycle Housing Element that was certified as that was the Housing Element in effect during the CY 2025.

The information to follow is organized to correspond with the elements of the Berkeley General Plan.

LAND USE ELEMENT

AMENDMENTS

State Law limits the number of times each mandatory element of the General Plan, such as the Land Use Element, can be amended to a maximum of four times per calendar year.

The Land Use Element of the Berkeley General Plan was amended twice during CY 2025. These amendments were related to zoning text and map amendments for new manufacturing zoning and residential zoning to accommodate higher density housing.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

- ***San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan:*** In April 2023, the City began a specific plan process for the San Pablo Avenue area, funded in part by an MTC Priority Development Area grant. After extensive community engagement throughout 2024, including stakeholder interviews, small group meetings, multiple pop-up tabling events, intercept surveys and community workshops, staff anticipates bringing the specific plan and associated zoning and General Plan amendments to the Planning Commission and City Council in spring and summer 2026, respectively.
- ***Middle Housing:*** The City Council adopted the Middle Housing Zoning Ordinance amendments in July 2025. These changes allow multi-unit development and residential additions through a Zoning Certificate in the R-1, R-2, R-2A and MU-R zoning districts.

- **Corridors Upzoning Project:** In 2024, Land Use Planning began the initial stages of a preliminary study for the Corridors Upzoning project. This initiative seeks to expand housing capacity, tackle development challenges, and promote equity while preserving each corridor's unique character. Following a competitive bidding process, the City selected Raimi + Associates to lead the project in 2024. Ground Floor Objective Design Standards for the three corridors were developed at the end of 2025 and presented to the Planning Commission in 2026.

The highlights below include additional updates from the Land Use and Housing Elements:

- **Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station Planning.** The City, BART and the community have completed many milestones to advance the transformation of the Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations as vibrant places that include housing, open space and community amenities.
 - North Berkeley BART. In February 2024, the Developer for the North Berkeley Station, North Berkeley Housing Partners submitted a housing project application for streamlined entitlements pursuant to AB 2011. On December 11, 2024, the City approved a land use application under AB 2011 for the North Berkeley BART site. The project includes 739 homes, 381 of which will be affordable to lower-income households, as well as public open space improvements.
 - Ashby BART. In September 2024, the City and BART issued a joint Request for Proposals and Notice of Funding Availability for developers of the Ashby BART West Lot. On December 6, 2024, the City published Preliminary Objective Design Standards for the Ashby BART West Lot, reflecting City and BART policies, state laws, and community input. In July 2025, BART selected a Developer Team for the Ashby BART West Lot. Next steps include: Adoption of Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards, anticipated by November 2026; Ashby BART East Lot Developer Solicitation Process - Spring - Fall 2026.

Density Bonus Projects

In CY 2025, 84% of projects greater than 5 units were approved using State Density Bonus provisions. The following Density Bonus projects were either approved, under construction, or completed this past year.

- 1701 San Pablo Avenue -BUSD Workforce Housing
New permanently affordable residential community with 110 units (99% affordable with one manager's unit), with residential amenities such as a co-working space, management offices and a community room for residents. The community will serve Berkeley Unified School District teachers and staff and their families. Project pursued ministerial approval under SB 35.

- 1740 San Pablo Avenue
New residential development of a 6-story, 54-unit, 100% affordable housing project to be processed under SB-35 (which mandates a streamlined, ministerial approval), and the State Density Bonus (which provides 33' of additional height, no density limit, and 4 concessions for 100% affordable projects within one-half mile of transit).
- 1752 Shattuck Ave
Demolish an existing 2,998 square-foot, one story commercial building and construct a 47,137 square-foot, seven-story mixed-use building containing 68 dwelling units and 1,210 square feet of commercial floor area.
- 2300 Ellsworth Street
Demolish two residential buildings with a total of 12 dwelling units and construct a 7-story residential apartment building (72,500 square feet) and 69 dwelling units (7 Very Low Income and 2 Low-Income units). The 6,500 square commercial building at 2300 Ellsworth will be retained.
- 2902 Adeline Street
Redevelop 3 parcels at 2902 and 2908 Adeline Street and 1946 Russell Street (approximately 14,065 square feet total), which includes the demolition of one single-family dwelling and one mixed-use (commercial and residential) structure; and the construction of a 6-story, mixed-use building with 4,119 sq. ft. of commercial space comprised of: 1 commercial unit, 4 live/work units, and 50 dwelling units, including 2 qualifying units available to very low income households and a commitment to provide 2 additional units on site available to low income households. The project would include 56 bicycle spaces and stacked parking for 24 vehicles.
- 2650 Telegraph Avenue
New Mixed-use Building with 72 units (including 5 Very Low-Income units) and ground floor retail/commercial space. The building consists of 5 floors of Type III-A construction over 2 floors Type I construction with 12 parking spaces on the 1st floor.
- 2000 Dwight
Demolish one existing commercial building; and construct one, five-story, mixed-use building with 45 units (including 4 Very Low-Income units), 1,290 square feet of commercial space, 4,051 square feet of usable open space, as well as 50 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 20 vehicular parking spaces at the ground level.
- 2001 Ashby Avenue
New Mixed-Use Development with 86 dwelling units, ranging in affordability from 20% to 80% AMI, one manager's dwelling unit and approximately 1,963 square feet of ground floor commercial space. Project pursued ministerial approval under SB 35.

- 2440 Shattuck Avenue
Demolish one existing commercial building and construct an eight-story, mixed-use building with 40 dwelling units (including three below market-rate units) and 2,160 square feet of ground floor commercial space.
- 2480 Bancroft Way
Demolish a one-story retail building and construct a 37,492 square foot, eight-story (95 feet) mixed-use building with 2,066 square feet of commercial area and 28 dwelling units, including two Very Low-Income units.
- 2555 College Ave
Demolish two single-story commercial structures with a combined size of 834 square feet and construct a four-story, 10,024 square-foot multifamily residential building with 11 units (including one Very-Low Income unit).
- 2680 Bancroft Way
Demolish the parking lot ancillary to the Bancroft Hotel at 2680 Bancroft Way to construct a 32,241 square-foot, 8-story multifamily building with 79 dwelling units (including 9 Very Low-Income units); and convert the City Landmark Bancroft Hotel (16,216 square feet) on the abutting lot at 2680 Bancroft Way to commercial offices, resulting in a 48,457 square-foot mixed-use project.
- 1974 Shattuck Avenue
Demolish five commercial buildings; merge four lots; and construct a 28-story (312-foot tall, plus 5-foot parapet), 411,610-square-foot, mixed-use building with 599 dwelling units (including 58 Very Low-Income Density Bonus qualifying units), 16,142 square feet of commercial area, and 154 parking spaces.
- 2274 Shattuck Avenue
Demolish the commercial building (preserving and renovating the front facade and lobby), and construct a 17-story, 214,032-square-foot, mixed-use residential building with 227 dwelling units (including 23 Very Low-Income Density Bonus qualifying units), and one ADA parking space.
- 2442 Haste Street
Demolish an existing three-story residential building (including four rent-controlled units) and construct an eight-story (85 feet) 39,646-square-foot residential building with 38 units (including 1 Extremely Low-Income unit, 1 Very Low-Income unit and 2 Low Income Density Bonus qualifying/replacement units).
- 2138 Kittredge Street
Demolish a four-unit residential building (including four rent-controlled units) and construct a 42,893-square-foot, eight-story (85 feet) residential building with 66 units

[including three (3) Very Low Income (VLI) units and two (2) Extremely Low Income (ELI) units] utilizing State Density Bonus, on a 6,750-square-foot lot.

- **2100 Milvia Street**
Demolish an existing three-story non-residential building and parking lot; construct an eight-story (90 feet tall including the parapet) 208,740-square-foot mixed-use building with 201 dwelling units and four live-work units (including 9 Very Low-Income Density Bonus qualifying units), 3,746 square feet of ground floor commercial space and eight off street parking spaces.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

During the CY 2025 reporting period, the City issued building permits for 117 ADUs and issued certificates of occupancy for 92 ADUs.

TRANSPORTATION

AMENDMENTS

The Transportation Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

- **Citywide Demand-Responsive Parking Meter Pricing and SmartSpace Parking Program:** By the end of 2023, all of the City's parking meters were transitioned to the goBerkeley program, which uses demand-responsive pricing and longer time limits to create more parking options and availability. In summer 2023, the City also made the SmartSpace pilot program permanent, which is a program to reduce excess greenhouse gas emissions from visitors frequently re-parking in residential permit areas to avoid posted two-hour time limits. The project includes new long-term paid parking for visitors in a residential permit area immediately south of UC Berkeley campus and parking permits for employees of local neighborhood businesses in the Elmwood neighborhood. In 2026, SmartSpace parking permits, which were physical dashboard permits for the first two years of the program, are being transitioned to digital parking permits where license plate numbers are the permits.
- **Addison Bike Boulevard:** The City applied for and received funding from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant program Cycle 6 to complete the remaining segments of the Addison Street Bicycle Boulevard from Sacramento Street to Aquatic Park and from Milvia Street to the UC Berkeley Campus. When complete, this route will provide the only continuous east-west bikeway connecting the UC Berkeley Campus with Downtown Berkeley, West Berkeley, and the Bay Trail along the San Francisco Bay Shoreline. The grant includes funding for public engagement, environmental clearance, detailed engineering design, and construction activities. Public Works staff are preparing to kick off the project in 2026 and anticipate to complete design within the next two years, followed by construction.

- **Telegraph Corridor Study:** The City has been awarded grants from the Alameda County Transportation Commission to perform preliminary engineering and detailed engineering design for major transit and bikeway improvements along Telegraph Avenue from Dwight Way to the Oakland border. The City kicked off the study process, collecting and analyzing existing conditions data and conducting the first phase of public engagement and concept design by the end of 2022. Project was on hold during 2023 but restarted in 2024 and completed conceptual design, public engagement, environmental clearance, and City Council approval in 2025. Detailed engineering design for the approved protected bikeway and bus infrastructure improvements will begin in 2026. Construction is currently unfunded but will be a priority for upcoming funding cycles.
- **Southside Complete Streets:** This project improved conditions for people walking, biking, and riding transit, while preserving access for driving, and improving commercial loading zones for delivering goods and services in Berkeley's Southside neighborhood along Bancroft Way, Fulton Street, and Dana Street. In February of 2022, the Berkeley City Council approved conceptual designs for each of the four corridors. By the end of 2022 the City completed detailed engineering design and requested allocation of construction funds to be able to begin construction of transportation improvements in 2023. Construction funds were allocated, an open public bid process was conducted, a construction contract was executed, and construction was initiated in mid-December 2023. Construction was completed in 2025.
- **Adeline Complete Streets:** This project will improve conditions for people walking, biking, riding transit, driving, and delivering goods and services along Berkeley's Adeline Street corridor from Ashby Avenue, alongside the Ashby BART station, and down to the Berkeley/Oakland border. The City has received grants from the Alameda County Transportation Commission to conduct preliminary engineering (conceptual design, public engagement, and environmental clearance) and detailed engineering design (100% PS&E construction drawings) for the Adeline Transportation Improvements Project (ATIP), to implement the long-term vision from the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan (ACSP). The City also subsequently received a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Regional Measure 3 program to construct a near-term "quick build" version of the protected bikeways and transit infrastructure improvements recommended in the ACSP. In 2022 the City advertised for a consultant contract for the preliminary engineering phase of the ATIP, including design for the quick build phase of the project, interviewed consultants, and picked a consultant with whom to negotiate scope, schedule, and budget. The project was on hold in 2023 but was restarted in 2024 with City Council award of a consultant contract in the first half of 2024. Construction of the quick build is anticipated in 2027, and data collected from the quick build project will inform the long-term ATIP design effort. Completion of conceptual design, public engagement, environmental clearance, and City Council approval of ATIP is anticipated by end of 2027.

- **Ohlone Greenway Modernization Project:** The goals of the Ohlone Greenway Safety Improvements Project are to upgrade a portion of the existing multi-use pathway, from Virginia Gardens to the south to Santa Fe Avenue to the north, to better accommodate the needs of all users and improve safety, especially at roadway intersections and during non-daylight hours. Upgrades will be focused on the following: Improving safety of pathway/roadway intersections, widening the pathway where feasible, improved connection at pathway gap on Peralta Avenue, enhanced pathway lighting to improve safety and security, and landscaping work to improve lighting and safety. The project completed conceptual design and public engagement in 2023, completed detailed engineering design in 2025 including bidding and awarding the project, and anticipates construction starting in spring 2026.
- **Martin Luther King Jr Way Vision Zero Quick Build:** This project implements elements of one of the high-priority pedestrian crossing safety corridors from the 2020 Berkeley Pedestrian Plan, prioritized according to the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan. The project consists of the installation of median refuge islands, hardened centerlines, solar-powered Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), improved lighting at selected crosswalks, roadway signage, detectable warning surfaces, roadway striping, pavement markings, red curb painting, pavement rehabilitation, and concrete curb ramp construction. The project completed detailed engineering design in late 2022, started construction in July 2023, and was completed in mid-2024.
- **Sacramento Street Pedestrian Safety Project:** This project implements elements of one of the high-priority pedestrian crossing safety corridors from the 2020 Berkeley Pedestrian Plan, prioritized according to the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan. The project consists of the installation of median refuge islands, hardened centerlines, solar-powered Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), improved lighting at selected crosswalks, roadway signage, detectable warning surfaces, roadway striping, pavement markings, red curb painting, pavement rehabilitation, and concrete curb ramp construction. Detailed engineering design was completed in mid-2025, with construction occurring beginning in late 2025.
- **Vision Zero Program:** The Vision Zero program uses Engineering, Education, and Enforcement strategies to try to achieve the Berkeley City Council adopted goal of eliminating severe injury and fatal traffic crashes by 2028. Vision Zero has supported delivery of major grant-funded capital Vision Zero and Complete Streets projects listed above to improve safety for vulnerable users. In 2025, Vision Zero initiated an update to the 2020 Action Plan and is conducting data collection to update the City's High Injury Street (HIS) network including considering a proactive Safety Network analysis. The City reconstituted a Vision Zero Coordinating Committee with representatives from applicable City Commissions (TIC, Accessibility, Youth, Planning, Aging, and Fire). With a dedicated Vision Zero Program Manager, we continue to refine our Vision Zero Rapid Response to fatal and severe injury

crashes and planning out and delivering Quick Build traffic safety implementation programs and projects on high injury streets.

- **Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan:** The City of Berkeley General Plan has a Transit-First Policy (Berkeley General Plan Policy T-4), which gives “priority to alternative transportation and transit over single occupant vehicles on transit routes identified on the [General Plan] Transit Network map.” The Berkeley Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan is intended to create a set of policies and design guidelines that provide procedures for the implementation of the Transit-First Policy and for future planning for the City’s existing transit primary routes. The Berkeley City Council approved the Berkeley Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan in March, 2023.
- **Washington Elementary and Berkeley High School Safe Routes to School Project:** The City applied for and received funding from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant program Cycle 6 to implement recommendations for improving pedestrian safety at twelve intersections in the Downtown area blocks around Washington Elementary School and Berkeley High School. Public Works staff-initiated work on the project in 2025 and anticipate construction will be completed by end of 2029.

HOUSING

AMENDMENTS

The Berkeley Housing Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65400, the City Council is required to prepare an annual report on the status and progress in implementing the City’s Housing Element using forms and definitions adopted by HCD. The completed forms for CY 2025 are attached as **Exhibit A** to this report.

As shown in Table 1, the City of Berkeley’s RHNA for the applicable planning period is 8,934 residential units, broken down by income category. HCD regulations require that excess units in one income category cannot be used to reduce the unaccommodated need from the other categories.

Table 1: Regional Housing Needs Allocation 2023-2031

2023-2031	Income Category
2,446	Very Low Income
1,408	Low Income
1,416	Moderate Income
3,664	Above Moderate Income
8,934	Total

In 2025, the City issued building permits for 463 dwelling units, including 207 above moderate-income units, 46 moderate income units, 126 low-income units, 67 very low-income units and 17 extremely low-income units. Table 2 below shows the City's progress in working towards the 6th Cycle RHNA allocation.

Table 2: Berkeley's Progress in Meeting Regional Housing Needs

Income Level		2022	2023	2024	2025
Acutely Low ¹	Deed Restricted				-
	Non-Deed Restricted				-
Extremely Low	Deed Restricted	-	-	3	17
	Non-Deed Restricted	-	-	-	-
Very Low	Deed Restricted	88	36	44	32
	Non-Deed Restricted	-	25	31	35
Low	Deed Restricted	58	25	4	91
	Non-Deed Restricted	-	24	31	35
Moderate	Deed Restricted	-	-	-	11
	Non-Deed Restricted	-	25	30	35
Above Moderate		741	285	588	207
Total Units		887	420	731	463

As required by state law, the City must zone land to accommodate the RHNA and develop programs and policies that promote an environment where housing construction is encouraged at all income levels.

Additionally, in 2025, the City completed the following notable objectives from the 6th Cycle Housing Element:

Program 10 – Housing Preference Policies

- City Council unanimously adopted a citywide housing preference policy on July 11, 2023. The policy became effective on January 1, 2024. To date (as of 1/12/2026), the preferences have been implemented on eight new properties with affordable housing units. The City implements the policy on an ongoing basis, partnering on outreach, coordinating preferences with online housing portals for applications, and collecting data to assess impact.

Program 12 – Workforce Housing

- The 110-unit Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) Workforce Housing development at 1701 San Pablo Avenue received its planning approvals in March 2023. The project was issued its building permit on May, 6, 2025.

¹ Berkeley received its RHNA determinations for the current cycle prior to the passage of AB 3093 (September 19, 2024) and was not allocated acutely low income and extremely low income RHNA targets. Therefore, the allocations for these categories are "0." Acutely low-income and extremely low-income units reported during the cycle are counted towards very low-income RHNA progress.

Program 19 – Housing Conditions Standards

- The Building & Safety Division launched a pilot Amnesty Program for Unpermitted Dwelling Units January 1, 2025. The 4-year program seeks to promote inspection and legalization of unpermitted ADUs and JADUs on single family lots.

Program 20 – Livable Neighborhoods

- The Southside Complete Streets Project was completed in 2025.

Program 22 – Seismic Safety and Preparedness Programs

- In 2025 and into early 2026, over \$4.3M of grant funding has been disbursed to Berkeley property owners and 121 buildings have been strengthened under the Retrofit Grants Program.

Program 25 – Building Emissions Saving Ordinance (BESO)

- BESO was amended by City Council in April 2025 to require one-to-four-unit buildings to complete energy and resilience upgrades prior to sale or defer upgrades to the buyer to complete within 2 years. If deferred to buyer, the seller and buyer must each put \$2,500 in an escrow account to be used towards the cost of the upgrades. The seller must also complete and disclose an energy assessment and Home Energy Score at the point of listing their home for sale. The new time of sale requirements start January 1, 2026 for one-to-two unit buildings and January 2028 for three-to-four unit buildings.

Program 27 – Priority Development Areas (PDAs), Commercial and Transit Corridors

The City has made substantial progress on three major planning efforts:

- San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. In 2024, the consultant team and City staff have conducted various forms of community outreach including stakeholder interviews, small group meetings, multiple pop-up tabling events, intercept surveys and community workshops. Approximately 62 attendees participated in the community open house and approximately 31 attendees participated in the workshop. The workshop focused on specific plan topics related to transportation, housing, safety, commercial activity and land use policies.
- Update to the General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, a new Environmental Justice Element, and creation of Equitable Climate and Resilience Metrics. In 2025, the project team conducted extensive community engagement and community events to gather input and ideas on how the City can create policies that better prepare Berkeley for natural disasters and climate change and reduce exposure to pollution. Public Drafts of the General Plan Elements are anticipated to be shared in Spring 2026 and considered for recommendation and adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council in summer/fall of 2026, respectively.
- Corridors Upzoning Project. Over the past year, the consultant team and City staff have conducted extensive community engagement including targeted stakeholder meetings, citywide community meetings, pop-up events, and surveys. Staff anticipates bringing

draft zoning amendments, objective development standards to the Planning Commission and City Council for recommendation and adoption by summer 2026.

Program 29 – Middle Housing

- City Council stated, via a 2021 Resolution and a 2019 referral, its desire to review, research and consider rezoning of lower density residential districts to allow for more dense housing. This resolution and referral align with the proposed programs in the Housing Element and the Housing Element EIR assess 770 additional units distributed throughout the R-1 and R-1A districts. The City Council adopted the Middle Housing Zoning Ordinance amendments in July 2025. These changes allow multi-unit development and residential additions through a Zoning Certificate in the R-1, R-2, R-2A and MU-R zoning districts.

Program 37 – Replacement Housing/Demolition Ordinance

- City council adopted revisions to its Demolition Ordinance in July 2024.

For a comprehensive list of Housing Element Implementation, please refer to Table D of the Housing Element APR, which was submitted separately to LCI (found in Exhibit A).

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & SAFETY

AMENDMENTS

The Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element was amended on March 18, 2025 to incorporate by reference the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Resolution #71, 697-N.S.). The LHMP plan addresses natural hazards in Berkeley and their potential impacts, as well as a strategic plan to mitigate those impacts. The Plan was approved by the California Office of Emergency Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in late 2024 and early 2025, prior to council adoption.

In 2025, the City made significant progress in its update to the General Plan Safety Element. Through extensive community engagement and cross-departmental collaboration, the project team developed and submitted a preliminary Draft Safety Element to the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) to fulfill the requirements of the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP) in January 2026. Next steps include sharing Public Review Drafts in Summer 2026.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND SAFETY ELEMENT

- **Berkeley Ready:**
Staff continued work on many community-facing efforts of the Berkeley Ready program. Staff offered four rounds of Community Emergency Response Team classes, five Fire Safety classes, 16 Evacuation Planning classes, and 10 basic disaster preparedness classes. Classes were offered at libraries, in neighborhoods, online, and at special

events. Staff tabled at several community events, including Gilman Street Festival, National Night Out, Great ShakeOut, and the West Berkeley Family Wellness Re-Opening. Staff also secured a Neighbor-to-Neighbor AmeriCorps grant, bringing on two full-time fellows to work on building neighborhood connections and volunteer capacity.

- **Emergency Operations Center and Staff Training:**
104 City of Berkeley staff trained to serve in the Emergency Operations Center during disasters.
- **Evacuation Time Study:**
Staff finalized the Evacuation Time Study, which uses simulations to model a wide array of large-scale evacuations that would be too risky or impractical to conduct in real life. It tests different conditions—like time, location, and evacuee behaviors—and is built on a solid understanding of Berkeley’s hazards, streets, and community. The Study is a useful tool to help responders, residents, and elected leaders better prepare for emergencies.
- **Fire Spread Modeling:**
To better understand how fire might affect evacuations in Berkeley today, staff modeled potential fire spread based on historical geographic data. Analysis modeled how fast a fire could spread in the Berkeley Hills with how long it might take to evacuate. First, staff used data from the 1923 Berkeley Fire—the city’s worst fire—to model how a fire might spread today. Then, evacuation modeling showed traffic and congestion if that same area had to evacuate today. By combining fire spread and traffic patterns, analysis demonstrated the risks the community would face in a modern-day repeat of the 1923 Berkeley Fire.
- **Wildfire Mitigation:**
In 2025, the City established Effective Mitigations for Berkeley’s Ember Resilience (EMBER), a wildfire mitigation initiative aimed at reducing the risk of home ignition from wildfire embers, particularly in areas prone to wind-driven embers. The ordinance establishes new fire safety standards, including a Zone 0 buffer around homes where no combustible materials are allowed within five feet of the structure. This initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance fire safety and resilience in Berkeley's neighborhoods, especially those on the urban-wildland interface. The Fire Department’s WUI Division assumed a leadership role in wildfire mitigation and readiness that extended well beyond Berkeley, including the development and adoption of EMBER, the advancement of Zone 0 standards, supporting original research and testing, and extensive community engagement positioned the City at the forefront of evidence-based wildfire mitigation.
- **Wildfire Mitigation - Resident Support:**
The City launched a Resident Assistance Program, funded by a \$1M CAL FIRE grant, to help homeowners achieve defensible space while setting innovative WUI benchmarks for long-term wildfire risk reduction.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

AMENDMENTS

Space Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

Funding

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) capital funding is made up of Recurring Capital from the Parks Tax, the General Fund, the Marina Fund, and the Camps Fund; and one-time funding sources like grants and insurance. Below are descriptions of some of these funding sources.

- Parks Tax/Measure Y: In 2024, Berkeley voters approved a 20% increase in the Parks Tax to fund a tree planting unit, Waterfront parks and landscaped areas, and an additional \$1.45M for capital projects. This increased the total Parks Tax annual funding for capital projects to approximately \$2.5M. In CY25, the Parks Tax contributed \$3.56 M to projects like the MLK Jr. Youth Services Center/Y.A.P. Seismic Retrofit and Renovation. The Parks Tax also provides a yearly \$475,000 allocation for minor maintenance projects, which in CY25 included new play equipment at Virginia-McGee Totland, sports field renovations, picnic areas at Berkeley Way Park, and exterior painting, floor refinishing, and interior upgrades at Frances Albrier Community Center.
- Measure T1: In 2016 voters approved a \$100 million-dollar bond measure to repair and improve existing city facilities and infrastructure. The City completed \$41 million in Phase 1 projects in 2021 and is now implementing Phase 2 of the bond program in citywide improvements. Approximately half of this funding is going towards improvements in city parks, camps and waterfront. Phase 2 projects are largely focused in South and West Berkeley facility and restroom improvements and include parks projects such as the replacement of the Willard Clubhouse and the renovation of the Martin Luther King Youth Service Center.
- Grants: In 2025, PRW managed 15 grants totaling more than \$21 million. These included a \$5M Prop 68 CA Park Program grant for the Santa Fe Trackbed to Park conversion project; a \$2M State Coastal Conservancy grant for the design of the Bay Trail extension, and the design and construction of the J&K parking lot and recreation area at the Berkeley Waterfront; and a \$1M US Forest Service grant for tree planting in the low-canopy areas of Berkeley.

Completed Capital Improvements/Major Maintenance Park Projects in 2025

- Camps: Tuolumne Cabin and Sports Court Renovation (Camps Fund, General Fund)
- Parks: Civic Center Park Upper Plaza (Parks Tax, T1)
- Parks: Willard Clubhouse Replacement (Parks Tax, T1)
- Pools: West Campus Pool Heater (General Fund)
- Waterfront: South Cove East Dock Piling Repair (Marina Fund)
- Waterfront: South Cove Middle Dock ADA Gangway Replacement (Marina Fund)

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Major Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

The PRW Department has over 50 projects on its CIP list. The following represent some of the largest projects:

- Construction Projects
 - Marina Main Channel Dredging, Completion 2026
 - D and E Dock Replacement, Completion 2026
 - South Cove West Parking Lot, Completion 2026
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Service Center Renovation, Completion 2027
 - Santa Fe Trackbed to Park Conversion, Completion 2027
 - Tom Bates Sports Complex Restroom/Community Space, Completion 2027
- Planning & Design Projects
 - Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project - Design & Environmental Phase
 - Aquatic Park Dreamland – Planning Phase
 - Glendale La Loma Upper Park Improvements – Planning Phase
 - John Hinkel Park Hut – Planning Phase

Berkeley Volunteer Programs

The City of Berkeley has a combination of year-round, monthly or even daily opportunities to volunteer within our department. Below is a brief description of a handful of different opportunities available to Berkeley residents.

- Shoreline Cleanup: The City hosts individuals, families and groups on the third Saturday of each month for small cleanups that meet at the Shorebird Park Nature Center at the Berkeley Waterfront. These events feature a safety talk, a service-learning presentation on the impact of trash and plastics in our oceans and waterways, and how we can help. The City also organizes larger groups for the annual Coastal Cleanup Day.
- Tree Planting: The City hosted 4 major tree planting and maintenance events in 2025. Tree planting sites included Ohlone Park, Aquatic Park, and the Shorebird Park at the Berkeley Marina. Staff and volunteers planted 170 trees.
- Pollinator Gardens & Open Space Beautification: In 2025, Parks staff worked with volunteers to install a pollinator garden at Shorebird Park. Parks staff also worked with volunteers to beautify the South Adeline Corridor through trash pickup, weeding, and mulching.
- Special Events: The Recreation Division hosts large community events every year. Recreation staff recruit the help of community members to facilitate these events. In 2025, 35 community volunteers helped at the Harvest Festival.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

AMENDMENTS

The Environmental Management Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Environmental Programs and Engagement

The City participates, often in leadership roles, in regional environmental management groups including:

- Bay Area Air District (Air District) Indoor Appliance Implementation Working Group
- Bay Area Climate Adaptation Network (BayCAN)
- Bay Area Electric Vehicle Coordinating Council and Steering Committee
- Bay Area Regional Climate Action Planning Initiative (BARCAPI)
- Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)
- Berkeley Lab Community Advisory Group (CAG)
- California Building Decarbonization Coalition
- California Climate and Energy Collaborative (CCEC)
- Green Cities California (GCC)
- High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) for Bay Area Residential Building Decarbonization
- Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC)
- National Building Performance Standard Group
- Resilient Cities Network (R-Cities)
- Ride and Drive Clean
- StopWaste Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)
- U.S. Green Building Council California (USGBC-CA) California Building Performance Standards Group

Grants and Funding

The City actively pursues resources and strategically leverages funding to support and accelerate its sustainability goals.

- **Funding for Regional Sea Level Rise Planning** The City is partnering with The Association of Bay Area Governments/San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP) and the cities of Albany, Emeryville, and Oakland on sea level rise assessment and adaptation plans for land along the East Bay Crescent. The project, led by SFEP, has been approved for a California Ocean Protection Council grant of \$2,240,000 over 2.5 years to produce a regional coastal vulnerability study of the East Bay Crescent (EBC) as well as individual shoreline adaptation plans for Albany, Berkeley, and Emeryville.

- **Funding to Update Berkeley’s General Plan** The City received \$497,042 in funding from the State of California’s Adaptation Planning Grant Program to help update the General Plan Disaster Preparedness & Safety Element, create a new Environmental Justice Element, and develop community-driven climate and resilience metrics. The City’s community partner, the Ecology Center, led the equity-driven engagement with a Community Advisory Committee comprised of organizations serving communities who have been marginalized and are impacted first and hardest by climate change. In 2025, the project team conducted extensive community engagement and community events to gather input and ideas on how the City can create policies that better prepare Berkeley for natural disasters and climate change and reduce exposure to pollution. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2026.

Programs

The City advances equitable climate action by implementing programs and services that reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the community.

- **Climate Equity Fund Pilot Program** In 2021, Berkeley City Council established a Pilot Climate Equity Fund, with a budget of \$600,000, to promote building and transportation electrification for income-qualified residents. There are three Climate Equity Fund program areas:
 - **Program Area 1: Resilient Home Retrofits (\$250,000)** - In 2025, the Climate Equity Fund continues to work with an additional 8-unit deed-restricted affordable multifamily property to implement safety and electrification upgrades, with anticipated completion in 2026. An income-qualified home and 2 multifamily buildings received electrification upgrades in 2024.
 - **Program Area 2: Berkeley Equity E-Bike Program (BEEP) (\$250,000)** - BEEP is an electric bike (e-bike) program for income-qualified Berkeley households, and an e-bike youth education and workforce training program. The [BEEP Report](#) was published in February 2025 and details the program design, implementation, and participant experience including transportation mode shifts and decreased spending on transportation.
 - **Program Area 3: Climate Equity Collaborative (\$100,000)** - Climate Equity Collaborative convened about a dozen community organizations serving Berkeley communities, providing climate change education at community events and distributing resilience measures to income-qualified residents. The final report was completed in 2025.
- **Just Transition Pilot Program.** In 2022 City Council approved a resolution to develop a Just Transition Pilot Program (2022) with a budget of \$1,500,000 for home electrification retrofits coupled with high road labor standards for contractors completing the upgrades. This program aggregates electrification and resilience installations for low-to-moderate

income households (at or below 120% of the Area Median Income) and requires that upgrades be completed by pre-qualified contractors who meet minimum labor standards, to ensure that residential electrification construction work also provides equitable benefits to workers. Through a competitive process the City selected Rebuilding Together East Bay Network as the program implementer. In 2025, the team provided support and training for contractors prior to releasing an RFP to select qualified contractors to complete the electrification upgrades in income-qualified homes. Home retrofits began in 2025 and are slated to be completed in 2026.

Community Events and Engagement

The City leads proactive outreach and engagement efforts that inform, engage, and empower residents, businesses, and stakeholders to participate in sustainability initiatives. Some examples from 2025 include:

- **Berkeley High Green Fair.** On January 13, 2025, Berkeley staff shared information about careers in sustainability and government to over 300 high school students, including information on various career pathways and fellowships.
- **Home Electrification Fair.** On April 19, 2025, the fair convened electrification professionals, all-electric homeowners, and nonprofit and government representatives to share resources and incentives for home electrification. This year's event highlighted actions renters can take to support a cleaner, safer home environment. Agency representatives and contractors provided information on programs and incentives to help residents transition off gas and improve home safety, comfort, and climate performance.
- **Go GREEN! Mobility Fair.** On April 26, 2025, Berkeley joined the City of El Cerrito and BART to host a community event highlighting fun, accessible non-car mobility for traveling around town and the Bay Area.
- **East Bay Green@Home Tour.** On June 7, 2025, more than 200 community members toured 18 homes across Berkeley, Oakland, Piedmont, Albany, El Cerrito, Martinez, and Benicia to learn how to begin home electrification projects. Participants explored a range of electric appliances and received guidance on contractors, permitting, and next steps.
- **Sun Day.** On September 21, Berkeley hosted its first-ever Sun Day as part of an international clean energy and local climate action celebration. The event drew approximately 350 attendees to the newly constructed all-electric Willard Clubhouse and Park and featured electric bike test rides, an exhibition hall with local government, nonprofit, and clean energy organizations, a children's activity area, a speaker panel, and a community picnic.
- **Electric Car Ride and Drive.** On December 13, 2025, community members enjoyed free electric vehicle test rides at the Winter Youth Festival at Aquatic Park. Participants learned

about EV benefits, incentives, and charging options, and received a \$15 gift certificate to Waterside Workshops Street Level Cycles.

Climate Goals

The City aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions and become a fossil-fuel free community while preparing for climate impacts. The City focuses on renewable energy, energy-efficient buildings, clean transportation, and reducing waste, along with adapting to risks like heat and sea level rise.

- **Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory.** On April 15, 2025, staff submitted a [Climate Action Plan and Resilience Update](#) to the Berkeley City Council and community. The report highlighted Berkeley's local action towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and was divided into five sections: Buildings and Infrastructure, Transportation, Waste, Community Engagement, and Adaptation and Resilience. Based on 2023 data (the most recent available data), communitywide greenhouse gas emissions decreased 41% from the 2000 baseline and decreased 12% from 2021. Breaking out the 2023 data by sector and fuel type shows that:
 - **Transportation** accounted for 58% of greenhouse gas emissions. GHG emissions from Berkeley's transportation decreased 14% from 2018 (transportation emissions methodology changed in 2018 and has been consistent since that time). The decrease in emissions outpaced the reduction in miles traveled due to the increase of plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles.
 - **Buildings** accounted for 39% of greenhouse gas emissions. Berkeley's overall greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 10% from 2022 to 2023 and are 53% below 2000 levels. Total community-wide electricity usage has decreased by 36% since 2000. Total community-wide natural gas usage decreased by 6% from 2021 to 2022 and increased by 4% from 2022 to 2023. Community-wide natural gas usage remains 24% below 2000 levels.
 - **Waste** accounted for 3% of greenhouse gas emissions. Total community-wide landfill solid waste and overall emissions from the waste sector decreased by 2% in 2023 compared to 2022, placing current waste sector emissions 47% below the 2000 baseline.
 - **Water** accounted for less than 1% of greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Race to Zero.** On May 11, 2021, Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution committing the City of Berkeley to the C40 Cities Race to Zero Campaign, and on November 30, 2021, established a 2030 emission reduction target that reflects Berkeley's fair share of the 50% global reduction in CO₂e by committing to reduce emissions 60.5% from 2018 levels by 2030.

- **Global Covenant of Mayors.** The City of Berkeley maintained compliance in the Global Covenant of Mayors in 2025.
- **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).** The LHMP is the main document that houses the City's climate adaptation work. The LHMP is an appendix to the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element of the [City of Berkeley General Plan](#). Berkeley created an [interactive story map](#) and [videos](#) (on air quality, extreme heat, landslides, flooding and high wind, tsunamis, earthquakes, utility disruptions, and wildfire risk) to help the community better understand local hazards and the City's work to protect the community from these disasters. The 2024 LHMP was adopted by City Council on March 18, 2025.

Solid and Hazardous Waste and Regulations

- **Construction and Demolition Debris Diversion.** The City requires residential construction projects over a certain value and all nonresidential projects to recycle construction and demolition debris. Through increased collaboration between Zero Waste and Planning Department staff, Zero Waste staff now participate in the New Construction Plan Check process to help architects and contractors understand and comply with all City Zero Waste requirements before breaking ground on new developments or renovations.

Air Quality

- **Indoor Appliances Implementation Working Group for the Bay Area Air District.** Berkeley participated in the Bay Area Air District Indoor Appliances Working Group (IWG). To improve indoor air quality, the Bay Area Air District adopted amendments to Rule 9-4 and Rule 9-6 in March 2023 which establish zero-nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions standards for gas furnaces and water heaters. Beginning in 2027, these rules phase in requirements that will only allow heat pumps (zero NOx appliances) to be sold and installed in the Bay Area for new water heaters and furnaces. The IWG is assisting the Bay Area Air District in identifying and addressing implementation issues including technical and workforce readiness of the market and equitable transition to compliant appliances.
- **Electric Vehicles and Charging.** The City continues to promote the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and facilitate the installation of EV charging stations by offering streamlined permitting, educating property owners about EV charging and grant opportunities, and providing EV charging on municipal property. In 2024, the EV adoption rate showed that 13.5% of the registered vehicles in Berkeley were zero emission (EVs and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles) or near-zero emission (plug-in hybrid electric vehicles) compared to 11.4% in 2023. Based on the most recent field verification, conducted in October 2023, there were currently 129 publicly available EV charging ports in Berkeley (Level 2 and Direct Current Fast Chargers, or DCFC). The City

is partnering with Ava to develop future public DCFC Hubs at two locations in Berkeley. Local amendments to the 2025 California Green Building Standards Code (effective January 2026) require levels of EV charging in new buildings in Berkeley, which exceed state requirements.

- **Electrification of City Fleet Vehicles.** Staff worked with Ava Community Energy to conduct a municipal fleet electrification assessment including a plan for EV deployment and associated charging infrastructure through 2030, presented to City Council in July 2020. In 2025, the City added EV charging for fleet vehicles at the Corporation Yard and has continued to increase the number of EVs in the municipal fleet.

Water Quality and Creeks

- **Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO).** The City of Berkeley continued to enforce the California Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO), regulating the water use of new (500 square feet or more) or rehabilitated (2,500 square ft or more) landscapes in projects applying for zoning or building permits. In 2025, 14 projects were completed in Berkeley that were subject to WELO. An overall total of 29,375 square feet of permitted landscaping was subject to the WELO ordinance.
- **Groundwater Rise.** Shallow groundwater in coastal communities will rise as sea levels rise, increasing the risk of flooding communities from below. The City participated in a project funded through a 2020 – 2022 California Resilience Challenge grant, led by the San Francisco Estuary Institute Aquatic Science Center. The final report provides groundwater mapping for existing and future conditions, suggestions on how to use this dataset for planning purposes, recommendations for additional modeling and assessments, and potential next steps. The City built upon this work in 2025 by evaluating the impact of shallow groundwater rise and sea level rise on toxic materials stored underground, through an analysis conducted as part of the Prepared, Safe & Healthy Berkeley Project. This analysis ranks known contaminated sites within the City based on the potential for new risks to people and the environment (i.e., human and ecological receptors) from projected groundwater rise due to sea level rise. The resulting report presents the background and purpose of the analysis; the relationship between sea level rise, groundwater rise, and contaminated sites; the methodology and results of the analysis, and recommendations for mitigating the identified risks from groundwater rise.

Energy and Lighting

- **Municipal Lighting Upgrades**
 - **Civic Center** In 2025, 1,700 new energy-efficient LED lamps were installed in ceiling fixtures on all six floors of the Civic Center building. The lighting upgrades, completed on November 21, are expected to save the City about \$30,000

- annually. PG&E provided financing through an on-bill program, where the zero-interest loan is repaid with the expected monthly energy savings from the more efficient lighting.
- **South Berkeley Senior Center** In July 2025, a lighting upgrade was completed at South Berkeley Senior Center. Nearly 400 high-efficiency LED lights were installed throughout the building, replacing older fluorescent lighting with failing ballasts. These lights more closely resemble daylight, providing greater visibility for those with low vision.
 - **Building Emissions Saving Ordinance.** The City of Berkeley adopted the Building Emissions Saving Ordinance (BESO) in 2015 to accelerate energy and emissions savings in Berkeley's existing buildings. The goal of BESO is to reduce both energy costs and GHG emissions in Berkeley's existing buildings. BESO consists of a Time of Sale Program and a Large Building Program.
 - **BESO Time of Sale Program.** The BESO Time of Sale Program (for buildings under 25,000 square feet) requires building owners to complete and publicly report comprehensive assessments of their building's energy performance and opportunities for improvement prior to listing a building for sale. In 2025, 496 buildings completed a BESO assessment. BESO was amended by City Council in 2025 to require one-to-four-unit buildings to complete energy and resilience upgrades.
 - **New BESO Time of Sale Energy Upgrade Requirements.** In 2025, Berkeley City Council adopted amendments to BESO to better align with the City's electrification and community resilience goals. The BESO amendments establish flexible energy upgrade requirements for small residential buildings that must be completed prior to sale or within two years of the property transfer. If the upgrades are deferred until after the sale, both the seller and the buyer are required to deposit \$2,500 each into an escrow account to be used toward the cost of the improvements. In addition, sellers must complete and disclose an energy assessment and Home Energy Score at the time the property is listed for sale. The new requirements take effect on January 1, 2026, for one- and two-unit buildings, and in January 2028 for three- and four-unit buildings.
 - **BESO Outreach for New Time of Sale Requirements.** In preparation for implementing the new Time-of-Sale requirements, the City conducted extensive outreach to ensure awareness, understanding, and readiness among key stakeholders. Staff delivered presentations to more than 265 realtors, including two large member forums hosted in partnership with the Bridge Association of Realtors. In addition, staff presented both in person and virtually to 7 real estate brokerage offices and 3 title offices throughout the Berkeley area. To support successful implementation, staff developed comprehensive new website content and launched an enhanced BESO online portal to streamline customer compliance. The City also finalized new administrative regulations outlining

updated policies and procedures, created compliance guides for buyers, sellers, title companies and realtors, and prepared detailed guidance materials and permitting requirements on each of the energy upgrade and resilience measure options.

- **BESO Large Building Program.** The BESO Large Building Program (buildings over 25,000 square feet) requires annual energy benchmarking reports and energy assessments on a five-year recurring cycle for large multifamily and commercial buildings. Benchmarking helps building owners understand and improve their building's energy performance. In 2025, the City launched a new dashboard to help building owners easily view their building's benchmark compliance status and that is updated weekly during the benchmarking season. In 2025, a total of 386 energy benchmarks were submitted, achieving 75.2% compliance.
- **Solar + Storage at Critical Municipal Facilities.** The City is working with Ava Community Energy on a procurement for resilient solar + storage systems at critical municipal facilities. This project will improve resilience by providing clean renewable back-up power for critical facilities when the grid is down and will reduce reliance on polluting diesel generators. Ava conducted a full technical analysis of locations and sizing potential for installing solar + storage at critical municipal facility sites. Ava will lead the procurement on behalf of four cities including Berkeley to reduce the cost and complexity of potential system deployment. In 2024, City Council approved entering into a Power Purchase Agreement with Ava Community Energy for solar + storage installations at the Corporation Yard and Live Oak Community Center. The Power Purchase Agreement was executed in 2025. Construction is scheduled to start and be completed by 2026.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

AMENDMENTS

The Economic Development and Employment Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT ELEMENT

The City of Berkeley's Office of Economic Development (OED) continues to employ a wide range of approaches to support local economic sustainability.

- **Access to Capital (Loans)**
The City's Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and COVID-19 Resiliency Loan Program (RLP) have 25 active loans to Berkeley businesses totaling over \$962,000 in outstanding principal. Both the RLF and RLP programs continue to be a favorable source

of capital for Berkeley's small businesses, and both funds are serviced by Working Solutions, a certified Community Development Financial Institution CDFI lender. In April 2024, the City of Berkeley's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) was defederalized from the funding granted by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1980. In July of 2020, the City was awarded an \$814,000 federal CARES Act grant to provide additional funding to existing businesses. Using the grant, OED launched the COVID-19 Resiliency Loan Program (RLP) for Berkeley businesses that are at least two years old and have less than 50 employees. After defederalization, the City's Loan Administration Board amended the RLF Administrative Plan to allow for a third-party administrator to service and issue both the RLF and RLP loans which has improved the experience for the existing and future Berkeley borrowers.

- **Grants for Artists and Cultural Practitioners**

In 2025 the City of Berkeley Civic Arts program provided grants to support a vibrant arts ecosystem, strengthen diverse cultural expressions, and ensure equitable access to arts and culture throughout Berkeley. In 2025, the Civic Arts Grants program funded 10 individual arts projects (\$50,000 total awarded), 29 festivals (\$158,000 total awarded), and 72 arts organizations (\$449,714 total awarded). Today, the total Civic Arts grants award program is valued at more than half a million dollars (\$660,000).

- **Investment in Public Art**

In 2025, the Civic Arts Program implemented a portfolio of public art projects in Berkeley including rotating exhibits, public visual art, and maintenance of existing projects. Some of the projects included: the commission of a large mosaic by Sorell Raino-Tsui entitled *South Berkeley Shines 2* for the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/ Young Adult Project (MLK/YAP) building in Grove Park at 1730 Oregon Street, and the rotating exhibits at the Cube Space Gallery on Allston Avenue in the Downtown Arts District. The Cube Space hosted four shows in 2025, including: *Après moi, le déluge* by Mary Anne Kluth, *I call her and ask for a little magic / La llamo y le pido por un poco de magia* by Carolina Cuevas, *The Architectural Veil* by Joanna Keane Lopez, and *Rock Paper Scissors* by Anamaya Farthing-Kohl.

- **Business Outreach and Technical Assistance**

In calendar year 2025, the Office of Economic Development (OED) conducted the following outreach and technical assistance activities:

- Fielded thousands of direct business inquiries by phone & email
- Issued [OED newsletters](#) and [Berkeley Startup Cluster newsletters](#) with relevant information and opportunities for businesses
- Partnered with the Berkeley Chamber to organize Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) Forums for the business community at large to gain information, ask questions and share resources related to ongoing commercial district management and special events.

- OED partnered with other staff sections to provide easy-to-digest information on how to engage with the city and work, invest, and grow a business in Berkeley. A [Doing Business in Berkeley webpage](#), webinars, and downloadable materials from the City of Berkeley website were published now help local business leaders navigate government requirements for launching or expanding a business in Berkeley.
 - OED continued to offer assistance with Green Business Certification at the end of calendar year 2025, 184 Berkeley companies have registered for California Green Business Program certification, and 81 Berkeley businesses are currently green business certified. In 2025, 13 new green businesses were certified in Berkeley, and 11 green businesses were recertified.
 - OED also expanded support for a variety of economic sectors, including celebrating national manufacturing day and manufacturing week, by hosting 500 attendees at 30 Manufacturing Week tours featuring Berkeley firms (Oct. 2025)
- **Updated Zoning to Permit and Encourage Innovation Companies to Stay Local**
In 2025, the *Keep Innovation in Berkeley* zoning update went into effect, enabling over-the-counter zoning approvals for research and development (R&D) uses under 20,000 square feet in key commercial corridors near campus. In addition, an entirely new zoning district, *Manufacturing - Research and Development (M-RD)*, was established to encourage redevelopment of the 11.5-acre site in West Berkeley at the former Berkeley Forge & Tool and Pacific Steel Casting plant at Gilman Street and Eastshore Highway. The M-RD zoning district supports a wide range of modern manufacturing activities and positions the site for long-term economic revitalization. These changes increase opportunities for firms seeking to establish or expand operations in Berkeley.
 - **Small Business Forum - *Doing Business in Uncertain Times***
In September of 2025, in partnership with the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, OED revived the Small Business Forum with the theme “*doing business in uncertain times.*” Over 100 Berkeley businesses attended and learned about the unique programs the City offers registered Berkeley businesses. Attendees also received expert guidance on marketing resources ([Visit Berkeley](#), [Berkeley Chamber](#), [Discovered in Berkeley](#) and the [Green Business Network](#)), access to capital ([Working Solutions](#)), disaster preparedness ([Berkeley Office of Emergency Services](#)) and succession planning ([Project Equity](#)). The event offered valuable insights, practical tools, and connections to help Berkeley’s small businesses adapt and thrive.
 - **Equity-focused Programming for the Innovation Sector**
Berkeley Ventures, Berkeley Values was launched in 2019 to align the growth of Berkeley’s innovation sector with the community values of diversity, equity and inclusion. *Berkeley Ventures Berkeley Values* programming includes activities that engage Berkeley startup founders, funders, and STEM industry professionals to build a local

economy that benefits our entire community. Programs include: STEM CareerX Day tours for Berkeley High School students at local startups and innovation companies, developing a community of practice for Berkeley investors focused on implementing diversity, equity and inclusion best practices. In 2025, dozens of Berkeley High School students saw how their science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills apply in Berkeley's workplaces during the 10 STEM CareerX Tours that took 200 Berkeley High School students to Berkeley companies in 2025. The tours, organized in partnership with the Institute for STEM Education at Cal State University, provided an opportunity for students to see how their science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills apply in the workplace.

- **#BerkeleyHolidays Gift Fair, Berkeley Bucks Marketing Campaign – Local Shopping**
A partnership between OED, the Berkeley Chamber, Visit Berkeley and business districts citywide, the #BerkeleyHolidays Gift Guide, local scrip Berkeley Bucks, and marketing campaign promoted local shopping during the holiday season and featured an in-person holiday fair in Downtown Berkeley in December of 2025.
- **Discovered in Berkeley – Local Business Marketing and Advertising**
The #DiscoveredinBerkeley business marketing campaign was launched in 2019 to, “inspire pride among Berkeley residents and business owners alike about the amazing commercial activity happening in the neighborhoods where they live and work, encourage local shopping, raise awareness of the business services offered by the City’s Office of Economic Development and enhance Berkeley’s reputation as a good place to do business.” In 2025, funding was allocated to Cityside, the publisher of the local independent online news publication, Berkeleyside, to support the creation of sponsored stories, banner ads, and graphics for social media and the DiscoveredinBerkeley.com website highlighting exceptional businesses in Berkeley. Remaining funds were spent in 2025 on events, social media, and additional media channels that will increase local businesses’ sales, visibility in the region, reputation, and community pride. In 2025, the City continued its marketing initiatives to highlight businesses in several districts, around many relevant and seasonal themes. The ‘Discovered in Berkeley’ local marketing campaign featured a thoughtful roster of unique local-serving storefront businesses and the business districts in which they reside, by highlighting Berkeley businesses that fall into the categories of “Food Forward,” “The Upcycle,” “Dare to Share”, and “Local Love.” Other efforts include the development of a sophisticated marketing campaign to increase visibility, sales, and recognition for local Berkeley enterprises and their employees. In 2025, the [#DiscoveredinBerkeley campaign](#) continued to spotlight exceptional, values-driven Berkeley companies that make Berkeley residents, business owners, community members, and workers proud. To date, the campaign has made nearly 4.6 million impressions and registered more than 187,000 concrete engagements online.
- **Business Improvement Districts**

The City facilitates five business improvement districts (BIDs) in the Downtown, Telegraph, Elmwood, North Shattuck, and Solano commercial districts that generate funds through a self-assessment to help promote and maintain their districts. There is also a city-wide Tourism BID which is funded by the self-assessment of Berkeley's hotels and motels and directly supports Visit Berkeley, the City's Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Over the past year, the City has continued to provide technical assistance to each of the BIDs, with particular focus on bolstering the wider Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) (an organization which all commercial districts participate in), increasing the frequency of meetings to allow for improved communication and sharing across district networks.

URBAN DESIGN AND PRESERVATION

AMENDMENTS

The Urban Design and Preservation Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE URBAN DESIGN & PRESERVATION ELEMENT

The City continues to review projects on a case-by-case basis for conformance with the principles, policies and implementation measures of the Urban Design and Preservation Element to ensure that they are designed to enhance the livability of Berkeley and encourage a high level of quality design while encouraging well designed sustainability measures.

Urban Design

There were no new ordinance changes for design review in 2025. Both Staff and the Design Review Committee (DRC) continued the General Plan Policies already set in place.

The DRC was able to forward a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) on thirteen (13) residential projects in 2025. Please see the list of project addresses below:

- 2614 Telegraph Avenue
- 2029 University Avenue
- 2449 Dwight Way
- 2138 Kittredge Street
- 1899 Oxford Street
- 2942 College Avenue
- 2442 Haste Street
- 2109 Virginia Street
- 2680 Bancroft Way

- 2100 Milvia Street
- 2147 San Pablo Avenue
- 2655 Shattuck Avenue
- 1950 - 1998 Shattuck Avenue

Preservation

- In CY 2025, eight properties were designated as City Landmarks or Structures of Merit and added to the local register: 2231 McKinley Avenue, 21 Mosswood Road, 2845 Woolsey Street, 2500-2512 San Pablo Avenue, 2033-2035 Francisco Street, 2939 Dwight Way, 2000 Blake Street, and 1929 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
- The Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) was maintained in 2025 with no changes, revisions or updates. Some minor changes to the Ordinance are proposed for CY 2026.
- The existing referral process prior to demolition continues with seven referrals in 2025; no Demolition Ordinance changes occurred in 2025.
- The City of Berkeley continues to serve as a Certified Local Government (CLG); no CLG grant applications were submitted in 2025. The City continues to maintain a formal partnership with SHPO. Other organizations, such as BAHA, communicated regularly with the City in 2025 through correspondence and presentations to LPC.
- In 2025, a seismic retrofit program continued to provide incentives for the owners of “soft story” properties, including several historically significant properties, to complete seismic upgrades.
- The City Manager continues to maintain cooperative relations with UC Berkeley leadership and confer regularly on the implementation of the Long-Range Development Plan where specific activities relate to the preservation and treatment of historical resources.
- In 2025, City staff continued to encourage project proponents to make use of the State Historical Building Code; most often this occurs during building permit application review.
- The City received three and granted one request for a Mills Act contract in 2025.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

AMENDMENTS

The Citizen Participation Element was not amended during CY 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

New Environmental Justice Element

In 2025, significant progress was made towards the creation of a new Environmental Justice (EJ) Element. The new EJ element will include new programs and policies that aim to add to and improve upon existing policies relating to civic engagement. The civic engagement topics in the new Environmental Justice Element will replace the Citizen Participation Element, which has not been updated since 2002. Public drafts of the EJ Element are anticipated to be circulated for public review and comment, the Planning Commission and the City Council in the summer of 2026.

Land Use Planning Commissions and Bodies

Citizen participation takes place in the arena of policy-making and advisory citizen bodies, such as the Berkeley City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Adjustments Board. The following commissions held over 100 public meetings where projects and land use policies were discussed:

- Zoning Adjustments Board
- Planning Commission
- Landmarks Preservation Commission
- Design Review Committee