



Peace and Justice Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR

March 9, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Peace and Justice Commission
 Submitted by: Igor Tregub, Chairperson, Peace and Justice Commission
 Subject: FY 2021-2022 Peace and Justice Commission Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

At its January 25, 2021 meeting, the Peace and Justice Commission adopted its Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 Work Plan (Attachment 1).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On January 25, 2021, the Peace and Justice Commission adopted the attached work plan through the action detailed below.

Work Plan

Motion to adopt and submit to City Council the Peace and Justice Commission Work Plan, with amendments to: (1) authorize the Chair to revise the Plan for clarity (e.g., updating dates), and (2) add language indicating that, "The Commission's ability to do the work identified in the Plan is contingent upon the Commission's ability to meet regularly" and that, "The Commission commits itself to carrying out, in this current year, the work identified in the Plan."

M/S/C: Meola, Pierce

Ayes: Askary, Bohn, Gussmann, Jacquelin, Lippmann, Maran, Meola, Morizawa, Perry, Tregub

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Rodriguez

Excused: None

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the City Council adopted direction to commissioners to submit a work plan annually.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental sustainability impact associated with the adoption of this work plan.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The commission is working on several priorities in alignment with this work plan, and may bring them to the Council for action in the future.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Fiscal impacts will depend on the actions recommended and the Council's decision.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachment 1: FY 2021-2022 Work Plan

Appendix 1: Peace and Justice Committee Fiscal Years 2021-2022 Work Plan

Participation in Community Engagement Process to Develop a New Paradigm of Public Safety and Racial Justice

The Commission shall focus its work in Fiscal Years 2021-2022 on contributing to two priority Council initiatives: “Community Engagement Process to Develop a New Paradigm of Public Safety in Berkeley” and “Declare Racism as a Public Health Crisis, a Threat and Safety Issue in the City of Berkeley.”

The Commission brings to bear on this initiative a history of engagement with subjects at the heart of re-imagining public safety, as well as a practice of community engagement. Over the last decade, it has sponsored community roundtables on such issues as “breaking the prison cycle,” sex-trafficking, immigration, and the international human rights framework. Our practice has been to bring together stakeholders concerned with a common issue but with diverse perspectives. Using a social justice lens, Peace and Justice views community concerns that are typically stovepiped in a holistic manner. The search for positive and non-punitive solutions to social problems such as conflict and anti-social behavior, providing healthcare, education, housing, and counseling at the front end rather than policing at the back end, has been fundamental to the Commission dating back to our founding mandate in 1986.

Some elements of the Commission’s participation in the re-imagining process may include:

1. Participating in the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force if invited, or else in a structured relationship with the Task Force.
2. The Commission’s participation recognizes that the Task Force’s charter integrates public safety with the public’s health. This concept is critical not only because safety and health are integrally connected, and because of the emerging awareness that armed police intervention should be minimized in mental and behavioral health incidents. Most importantly, the Commission will help ensure that a consciousness of public health shall include the social and racial determinants of health. This understanding of the interrelatedness of key human needs has long been an integral part of the Commission’s practice.
3. The Commission will pursue an anti-racist approach, recognizing and committing in our proposals to dismantle the institutional and social structures of white supremacy, and committing in our process to, as the Council has stated, “centering the voices of those who are most impacted by our current system of public safety.”
4. The Council recommended on December 15, 2020 that “Berkeley leverage our commissions and community organizations to provide additional input and research to inform the Task Force’s work.” The Peace and Justice Commission is uniquely situated to assist in coordinating work of other civic boards and commissions due to its holistic social justice

approach, its long history of work with multiple commissions, and its practice of public education on social issues.

5. Recognizing the City's priority of work on the Covid-19 pandemic, city management has asked that all commissions' work have a focus on efforts to fight the pandemic. Under the Council's "holistic, anti-racist approach to community safety," the public's health is key to community safety. Racial disparities in pandemic infection rates are gravely concerning from a human rights perspective. According to City statistics, infection rates per 100,000 of City population are over five times as high for the Latinx population as for White people, and for African Americans, twice as high as for White people. The holistic approach demands of us who seek a new paradigm of public safety that we envision an end to racial discrimination in the pandemic.
6. The "Declare Racism as a Public Health Crisis, a Threat and Safety Issue in the City of Berkeley" proposal, passed by Council on January 19, 2021, provides an additional framework and greater depth for Peace and Justice participation in the Council initiative for a new paradigm in public safety.¹

Ongoing Projects

Nuclear-Free Berkeley

The Nuclear Free Berkeley Act came into force in 1986 (Chapter 12.90.070 Section 030D). The Peace & Justice Commission established the Subcommittee on The Nuclear Free Berkeley Act (NFBA) to oversee and reinforce compliance with the terms of the Act. The Subcommittee's activities have included:

- recommendation against a waiver for continuation of the Berkeley Public Library's contracts with 3M (2009-2010);
- consideration of a waiver for the City of Berkeley Public Health Division's proposal on medical supplies (2012);
- recommendation of a waiver for the SkyDeck Business Incubator-Accelerator Contract

¹ The "Declare Racism as a Public Health Crisis, a Threat and Safety Issue in the City of Berkeley" proposal reflects on both the disparate impact of Covid-19 on Black, Latinx, Native American, and Asian American communities, and the heightened understanding of structural and institutionalized racism nationally. The proposal commits the City to eliminate all socioeconomic barriers to health equity. Specifically, it calls for a series of town hall meetings throughout the sessions to address the concerns of people of color and marginalized community members and to strengthen the anti-racist capacity building; establishment of a working group to promote racial equity; the City Manager to explore greater health disparities that have emerged as a result of the COVID-19 crisis; to propose a Health in All Policies Ordinance; mandatory anti-racist training for City employees; a Strategic Plan for Health Equity; an anti-racism dashboard; work with BUSD to study whether "race-based differential access means that some students have less access to educational opportunities."

(2012);

- recommendation (February 7, 2013) to the Regents of the University of California that it phase out responsibility for operating the Nuclear Weapons Laboratories in Livermore and Los Alamos;
- a letter from the City of Berkeley to President Obama in 2014 urging support of a ban on nuclear weapons.

More recently, in light of the Award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), whose goal is international adherence to and full implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the Treaty), the Peace and Justice Commission will seek to collaborate further with ICAN on activities of mutual concern. We would note that the California State Senate and the California State Assembly voted affirmatively on a bill in September 2018 to urge U.S. Senate adoption of the Treaty. Strong support comes also from the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement; Nuclear Ban US; The City of Los Angeles, California; the City of Takoma Park, Maryland; Physicians for Social Responsibility; and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, among others.

Indigenous Peoples

Between December 2015 and January 2016, the Berkeley City Council, upon the recommendation of the Peace and Justice Commission, adopted five important resolutions supporting the treaty rights of indigenous people in Berkeley. The resolutions included: recognition of the Ohlone people as the original inhabitants of Berkeley and the Bay Area, pledging to work in good faith with Ohlone representatives; implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as municipal policy; endorsing the upgrading of the Declaration to a Convention; honoring the Berkeley Shellmound indigenous site; and urging the East Bay Regional Parks District to protect the Ohlone place of origin sacred site.

The resolution on the Berkeley Shellmound mandated that “free, prior, and informed consent of the Ohlone and other indigenous peoples of the region should be integral to any alteration planning for the Berkeley Shellmound site, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

Socially Responsible investment and Procurement Policy (SRIPP) and Sustainable Sweatshop-Free Berkeley

The SRIPP Subcommittee of the Peace and Justice Commission was chartered by resolution of the Berkeley City Council on July 16, 2019. Its immediate charge is to develop a proposed policy to “govern the Commission’s advisory role in socially responsible investing and socially responsible procurement.” Prior to March 2020, the subcommittee held several meetings

including one discussion with City Finance Department staff and used those conversations to craft a draft SRIPP ordinance that is responsive to the City Council's request.

The Sweatshop-Free Berkeley Policy now has a zero-dollar threshold per supplier per year for textile products purchased by the City. This threshold is an improvement over the previous minimum of \$1,000 purchase per supplier for the Policy to apply. However, the policy is complaint-driven, so the burden is on community members to research the supply chain for each supplier. The SRIPP Subcommittee proposes to establish a mechanism for suppliers to show that they are using Sweatshop Free products for City purchases.

The Policy governs textile purchases only. The goal is to identify sweat-free alternatives for technology purchases so tech can be covered as well.

The BUSD, through the School Board Policy Committee, is in the process of establishing a Sweatshop-Free Schools Policy for athletic supplies. The SRIPP Subcommittee and the Commission are supporting the BUSD to ensure the development of an effective policy.

Subcommittee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The mandate of the Peace & Justice Commission's "Subcommittee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" (CRPD) expired in 2019. During its five years of operations, the Subcommittee educated broadly about the CRPD via public newsletters, public conferences, and initiatives with educators, non-governmental organizations, and legislators of the City of Berkeley, the State of California, and the U.S. Congress.