



Cecilia Lunaparra

Councilmember, District 7

CONSENT CALENDAR

July 30, 2024

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Lunaparra (Author), Councilmember Wengraf (Co-Sponsor), Mayor Arreguin (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Berkeley Student Cooperative (BSC): Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$500 per Councilmember, including \$500 from Councilmember Lunaparra's discretionary fund and funds from any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute, to the Berkeley Student Cooperative (BSC) for the repair of the glass skylights above Casa Zimbabwe (CZ) with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose.

BACKGROUND

The Berkeley Student Cooperative (BSC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit student housing organization that has served students of the City of Berkeley and the greater Bay Area by providing low-cost cooperative housing to over 1,300 students who otherwise would not be able to afford a college education. With 20 units ranging from large and small houses, themed housing, apartments, and graduate student housing, the BSC has worked to ensure diverse housing options for the differing needs of all students. For over 90 years the BSC has been a place for students to find community through house events, member ownership, and the cooperative experience. In the Spring of 2024, the City Council celebrated the BSC's 90 years of service to the community by presenting BSC with a proclamation in honor of its decades of commitment to housing equity. BSC has also received city funding in the past, demonstrating the longstanding relationship that the City of Berkeley has had with BSC.

CZ has a rich history of providing for the community. With its opening in 1966, CZ became one of the first co-ed student housing in the nation, as well as the first building intentionally built as a co-op. Casa Zimbabwe's namesake represents the community's commitment to the struggle for decolonization by honoring South Rhodesia's fight for independence from British rule and the subsequent creation of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Furthermore, CZ is the second largest house in the BSC, offering housing to

120 students and providing numerous opportunities for community-building and personal/professional development.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The BSC is still recovering from the widespread effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes completing delayed maintenance projects on select units, managing the exodus that came with remote learning, and navigating the impacts of the COVID-19 rent moratorium in Berkeley, all of which heavily impacted BSC's ability to thrive. Additionally, during the Winter of 2023, Kingman Hall, a property owned by BSC, incurred over \$1 million dollars in unforeseen recovery maintenance expenses as a result of the Bomb Cyclone Storm.

The BSC's Casa Zimbabwe is in critical need of skylight repair above the dining area. The BSC Maintenance Department estimated that the total cost of renovation would be about \$6,000. The BSC is seeking support from the City to help reduce the cost of the project. BSC members currently face the impact of the skylight dysfunction by water coming into the unit through cracks around the skylight when it rains. This skylight is in the CZ dining area where many members congregate on a daily basis for meals, to do homework, conduct meetings, and much more. As we come into the fall and winter, the BSC is seeking partnership now on this project to ensure the common space is functional in the upcoming rainy season.





Images of broken skylights in Casa Zimbabwe common areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACTS

No General Fund impact. \$500 is available from the Councilmember's office budget discretionary account.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Cecilia Lunaparra (510) 981-7170

Attachments:

1. Resolution

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

SUPPORT FOR BERKELEY STUDENT COOPERATIVE (BSC) SKYLIGHT REPAIR
AT CASA ZIMBABWE (CZ)

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Student Cooperative (BSC) is a 501(c3) nonprofit providing over 90 years of low-cost student housing to those experiencing financial strain; and

WHEREAS, the BSC will utilize such funds to repair the glass skylights above Casa Zimbabwe; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and the BSC have a long history of collaboration and partnership, most recently demonstrated by the City's proclamation recognizing 90 years of the BSC in February 2024; and

WHEREAS, Councilmember Lunaparra has surplus funds in her office expenditure account; and

WHEREAS, the BSC seeks funds in the amount of \$500 from each Councilmember to help cover the cost of the project of repairing the glass skylights above Casa Zimbabwe; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such services would help ensure 90 more years of affordable housing in the face of rampant inflation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Berkeley City Council that up to \$500 relinquished by Councilmembers – including \$500 from Councilmember Lunaparra – shall be granted to the Berkeley Student Cooperative for helping cover maintenance costs.