

Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

November 19, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín (Author)
Subject: Referral to City Manager: Equity for Black Berkeley (E4BB) Initiative

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution, recognizing the vision and goals of the Equity for Black Berkeley (E4BB, previously referred to as EBB), historicizing the work that has been completed to date, recognizing the current and past City staff and external stakeholders involved with E4BB, and maintaining E4BB as a priority of the City.

Refer to the City Manager the following actions to be taken:

1. Establish a representative for E4BB (the “E4BB Representative”) with the following responsibilities:
 - a. Represent the City’s interests when relating to matters of the E4BB initiative;
 - b. Liaise between City officials and external partners and parties associated with E4BB;
 - c. Draft policies that advance the work aligned with vision and goals of E4BB in connection with the Mayor’s Office and other legislators within the City and across jurisdictions and agencies, as needed;
 - d. Oversee and coordinate the implementation of work related to E4BB across the City and with external stakeholders, providing updates to the Mayor’s Office, as appropriate; and
 - e. Pursue internal and external resources and funding opportunities to advance the work of E4BB in the near- (1-2 years) and long-term (3+ years).
2. Determine the appropriate staffing and financial resources needed to monitor and communicate the implementation of the following existing and future projects and policies related to E4BB with the E4BB Representative:
 - a. Implementation of Ashby BART TOD;
 - b. Data collection and analysis of the impact of the Preference Policy;
 - c. Implementation of Housing Element, with particular attention in identifying priorities sites for expanding the efficacy of the Preference Policy and

- what unmet needs may be invested in through the establishment of a non-governmental organization outside of the City;
- d. Improvements to establish cultural vibrancy and accessibility in South Berkeley, creating recommendations for what potential EIFD funds can be used towards;
 - e. Growth opportunities to expand the economic viability of small businesses and commerce in the South Berkeley area, including support to sustain and grow the success of the Berkeley Flea Market;
 - f. Facilitating the intersection of the African American Holistic Resource Center (AAHRC) with relevant work in South Berkeley, particularly the new Ashby TOD residents and EIFD related projects;
 - g. Management of financing, expenditures, and balance sheets received by the City related to E4BB including but not limited to grants, City investments from the General Fund, and an EIFD fund;
 - h. Legal representation and support with negotiations, contracts, and MOUs with outside jurisdictions, external E4BB partners, and internal discussions of authority and governance; and
 - i. Provide 1) supervision of an unpaid staff person offered by the Partnership for the Bay's Future (PBF) grant program (should the City of Berkeley become selected as a government host site) and 2) communication on the progress and connection of projects relating to E4BB including but not limited to the Ashby BART TOD, Black Arts and Cultural District, Small Sites, EIFD, Black Health Equity Zone, Berkeley Flea Market and AAHRC.
3. With assistance from the E4BB representative, create a template MOU to be drafted and circulated with outside groups engaged in E4BB, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Berkeley Flea Market;
 - b. Healthy Black Families;
 - c. San Francisco Foundation; and
 - d. External Consultants (Ndidi Love, Randolph Belle aka Creative Development Partners, communications experts, etc).
 4. Work with the E4BB Representative to pursue additional external and internal investments to help with creating a non-governmental organization to manage a community investment fund beyond 2026 and transition the work of E4BB to be managed within this entity.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None explicitly requested. The investment of staff will be given at the discretion of the City Manager. Additional resourcing of staff and financing can be requested by Council at a future date, at their discretion. Current investments made come from the Mayor's staff and office budget and successfully awarded philanthropic grants.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Equity 4 Black Berkeley (E4BB, previously referred to as EBB) is an initiative started in Mayor Arreguín's Office in partnership with community, philanthropic, and government

partners with the goal of addressing historical harm and injustices while committing to community wellness and generational wealth building into the future. This multi-year, multi-stage, cross-industry, cross-sectoral, multi-departmental collaboration between partners in South Berkeley, the East Bay, and the greater Bay Area region demonstrates a commitment to advancing racial equity, promoting progressive housing and social policies, and advancing the outcomes and opportunities of those formerly and currently displaced by historical redlining, BART development and property seizure, and gentrification.

In anticipation of the upcoming mayoral and council transition, it is necessary to 1) enshrine the vision, goals, and work of E4BB so that its prioritization can be maintained, 2) lay the groundwork for the initiative to permanently transition out of the Mayor's Office (and eventually the City), and 3) outline the remaining work and potential resources needed to accomplish the goals and vision of E4BB.

BACKGROUND

In 2020, the City of Berkeley Mayor's Office was selected as the government partner in connection to the first¹ San Francisco Foundation's Partnership for the Bay's Future (PBF) cohort with the stated goals of building out a housing preference policy and Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) with the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), the selected community partner in this work. Additional community partners included Healthy Black Families (HBF) the Northern California Land Trust (NCLT), and Bay Area Community Land Trust (BACLt). During this two-year grant period, Equity 4 Black Berkeley was conceived as an initiative that could nest this opportunity along with ongoing and future community grassroots and grassroots efforts to advance housing, economic, and social opportunities for current and displaced Black residents.

In 2022, the Mayor's Office was once again selected as the government partner for the second PBF grant² to work on three stated goals with HBF, the selection community partner: 1) community-driven, equitable development recommendations at the North Berkeley and Ashby BART stations in conjunction with supportive policies such as Right to Return and Local Preference policy³ 2) innovative financing to raise \$500M for development at BART sites, and 3) building a replicable model for reparative work. This funding, allowed the Mayor's Office to build upon its previous E4BB concept, working with HBF to collect data from community members on what priority policy activities they would like to pursue, synthesize data into categories that could promote policy creation. The community identified housing as the leading priority. Within this priority category, affordable home ownership opportunities and affordable housing were identified as chief needs. Central to these priorities are the achievement of E4BB's five values:

- The Right to Return for displaced residents and/or their descendants;
- The Right to Remain for residents at all income-levels and housing needs;
- The Right to Own properties of all types and at all pricing levels; and

¹ The first PBF grant was referred to as the Challenge grant.

² The second PBF grant was referred to as the Breakthrough grant.

³ The [Affordable Housing Preference Policy](#) was adopted by Council on July 11, 2023.

- The Right to Thrive, an affirmative commitment to valuing and elevating the active well being of Black residents.
- To secure members of the historically Black community as large an equity stake in the Adeline Corridor redevelopment project as possible.

In 2022, the Berkeley Mayor's office paired this second PBF grant opportunity with additional investments from the Mayor's Office budget and the SFF's Power and Place grantmaking portfolio, increasing the capacity for the E4BB team⁴ to include expertise from an innovative real estate investment and development company,⁵ a communications expert,⁶ technical assistance,⁷ strategic planning,⁸ and project management along with additional research support.⁹ These supports gave capacity for the Mayor's Office to:

- Build a reparative framework to be incorporated in negotiations with BART related to the Ashby BART Transit Oriented Development term sheet, developer selection process, and community benefit prioritization;
- Create and deploy near-term, medium-term, and long-term visioning and strategic planning to revitalize, sustain, and grow the Berkeley Flea Market (BFM) through modernization efforts including new governance, board, and financing strategies, in addition to guidance to assist the BFM in its temporary and permanent relocation and economic growth strategy in connection with the Ashby BART TOD;
- Research to support policy development and targeted investments to expand opportunity for missing middle housing;¹⁰
- Research to investigate finance structures that can support E4BB's Right to Stay and Right to Own pillars through the creation of investment funds, such as the Institutional Fund¹¹, a Community Fund¹², and an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) fund¹³; and
- Draft governance documents to assist with the conceptualization of a community-led, non-governmental organization that can house E4BB activities, one or more

⁴ Mayor's Office Staff and HBF.

⁵ Provided by Creative Development Partners (CDP), represented by Randolph Belle.

⁶ Provided by Planet DMA Inc., represented by Donna Marie Anderson (DMA).

⁷ Provided by Schuyler Karr, MPA student, now graduate from UC Berkeley Goldman School's of Public Policy.

⁸ Provided by CDP and Ndidi Love.

⁹ Provided by a number of paid short-term consultants, such as Amy Gao and Gail McGuire, and Anthony Rodriguez, staff member in the Office of the Mayor of Berkeley.

¹⁰ Missing middle housing refers to the concept of needing to provide housing at all affordability levels, including middle-income housing opportunities that are typically under-supported through income-driven rental and homeowner assistance programs and policies and market-rate housing solutions.

¹¹ The Institutional Fund has been conceived as \$500M private fund to invest in affordable housing development.

¹² The Community Fund is a community-driven, funded, and governed fund to invest in economic opportunities for new and emerging businesses.

¹³ The EIFD fund would be grown from transfer taxes in a specific and/or discontinuous area to be earmarked for infrastructure improvements (beautifying, placemaking, cultural expression, etc) for a geographic area.

of these funds, and organize for the development of community-led policy making.

For four years, the Mayor's Office has worked with community partners to actively seek out, engage, and center Black leadership, Black organizations, Black community members to include them in policy-making processes and decisions to collect data on and feedback from displaced residents and residents who are or might be impacted by or eligible for housing opportunities.¹⁴ This inclusive and participatory process, demonstrates an intentional experience is being pursued to advance policymaking through effective partnership cultivation and constituent engagement. Advancing E4BB's work will require further ingenuity in how policies, programs, and collaborative efforts generate systemic change to identify, address, heal from, and overturn systemic inequities that disproportionately affect marginalized communities historically underinvested, deprived, and extracted from.

E4BB is presently poised to become a catalyst for change, improving the current housing ecosystem that creates and perpetuates an existing multi-generational wealth gap. In its next phase of work, E4BB aims to explore opportunities to increase Black homeownership in South Berkeley within a generation, build sustainable economic engines in the area, and move the fulcrum of power determining the future of residents' lives to the center of community. Coordinated efforts with the Planning Department to support the revitalization of the BFM are in place and will continue through January 2025. The Mayor's Office is a finalist for the third PBF grant¹⁵ which will focus on conceiving homeownership opportunities in partnership with HBF. Through coordinated efforts by CDP, the Northern California Grantmakers, San Francisco Foundation, and East Bay Community Foundation will host a funders forum in February 2025 to bring greater regional support to E4BB, with a goal of generating \$4M over 5 years to assist with permanently transitioning E4BB out of the City of Berkeley. To help ensure the continued success and pursuit of E4BB's vision from one administration to the next, Mayor Arreguín hired a dedicated team member to focus on managing the E4BB's initiative across internal and external stakeholders.¹⁶ This person will serve as the E4BB Representative on behalf of the City.

¹⁴ HBF held 14 People's Assembly's in 2022 and 2023 to help garner input, collect quantitative and qualitative data, and generate community priorities for E4BB among Black residents. Using philanthropic funding, the Mayor's Office hosted a set of Strategy Sessions, led by Planet DMA, to create a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) in support of ideating around one meaningful, low-intensity action to be taken to advance the needs of the community in line with E4BB's goals and vision.

¹⁵ The third PBF grant will be considered a grant from the Policy grantmaking portfolio. Decisions will be made in November/December 2024, with work commencing in February 2025.

¹⁶ The maintenance of this position is left at the discretion of future Mayoral administrations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects associated with adopting this recommendation, however there are opportunities to improving the social determinants of health through community investments in housing¹⁷ and social inclusion¹⁸.

CONTACT PERSON

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Gail McGuire	GMcGuire@berkeleyca.gov

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: E4BB Narrative
3. E4BB Reparative Framework
4. Healthy Black Families' Case Study

¹⁷ See “Optimizing Investment in Housing as a Social Determinant of Health” by Dr. Stuart M. Butler via the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2796572>

¹⁸ See National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s The Future of Nursing 2020-2030 journal, chapter 2: “Social Determinants of Health and Health Equity”. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK573923/>

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

ENRISHING EQUITY 4 BLACK BERKELEY (E4BB) AS A PRIORITY OF THE
MAYOR'S OFFICE AND CITY

WHEREAS, Equity 4 Black Berkeley (E4BB, previously referred to as EBB), is an initiative conceived out of Mayor Jesse Arreguín's Office in partnership with Healthy Black Families (HBF) and other Black community members to address historical injustices and commit to community wellness and generational wealth building; and

WHEREAS, since Mayor Arreguín's election in 2016, equitable and affordable housing has been a core focus of his administration; and

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley acknowledges the historical and current harm to cultural vibrancy, economic vitality, population growth, and generational wealth building among Black and other melanated residents through the systemic, intentional, and unintentional consequences from institutional redlining during the 1960's and 1970's, the planned and ongoing construction of BART stations and infrastructure leading to mass displacement via eminent domain and property purchasing, and modern forms of gentrification causing increases to cost-of-living that disrupt the life of those who remain; and

WHEREAS, through E4BB, the City of Berkeley commits to and acts to become a place where former and current Black residents can live, work, engage with community, and personally, financially, and healthily thrive in an effort to address and repair aforementioned institutional harm, with particular attention given to those having resided in the South Berkeley Area; and

WHEREAS, E4BB maintains four main pillars or work including: A Right to Return for displaced residents or their descendants, A Right to Remain in Berkeley for residents at all income-levels and housing needs, A Right to Own properties of all types and at all pricing levels in connection to homeownership and building generational wealth, and A Right to Thrive, an affirmative commitment to valuing and elevating the active well-being of Black residents; and

WHEREAS, a three-pronged approach to the E4BB initiative was used in community stakeholders and partners, including 1) engaging community members, 2) enacting critical policy measures, and 3) ensuring measurable impact; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has taken major actions in the form of policy referrals and adoptions that advance the goals and activities of E4BB including: the Affordable Housing Policy, the Housing Preference Policy, the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, the Small Sites Program, the Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District (EIFD) referral, the establishment of a Black Arts and Culture District, and the Ashby BART Transit Oriented Development (TOD) term sheet adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor's Office has generated resources, guided partnerships, and advocated for the advancement of E4BB's work across public, private, and non-profit partnerships, including a set of direct investments from the San Francisco Foundation's Place and Power grantmaking, the selection to participate in the first two San Francisco Foundation's Partnership for the Bay's Future (PBF) grant program cohorts with Healthy Black Families, the investment of monies from the General Fund to revitalize, sustain, and grow the Berkeley Flea Market (BFM), and a pending budget referral to HBF in support of the creation of a Community Advisory Group to provide thought leadership around implementation of a Black Cultural Zone and Health Equity Zone; and

WHEREAS, from 2020-2024 the City of Berkeley's Eviction Defense Center served 939 unduplicated households. 36% of those households were Black/African American; and

WHEREAS, \$111 million of Measure O's \$135 million already has been allocated, providing 784 units of affordable housing that have either been completed, under construction, or in pre-development (including Berkeley Unified School District Workforce Housing and affordable housing at Ashby and North Berkeley BART); and

WHEREAS, for four years, through E4BB, the Mayor's office and community partners (led by HBF) have actively sought out, engaged, and centered Black leadership, Black organizations, Black community members to include them in policy-making processes and decisions, collected data on and feedback from displaced residents and residents who are or might be impacted by or eligible for housing opportunities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley establishes a representative for E4BB (the "E4BB Representative") with the following responsibilities:

- a. Represent the City's interests when relating to matters of the E4BB initiative;
- b. Liaise between City Officials and external partners and parties associated with E4BB;
- c. Draft policies that advance the work aligned with vision and goals of E4BB in connection with the Mayor's Office and other legislators within the City and across jurisdictions and agencies, as needed; and
- d. Oversee and coordinate the implementation of work related to E4BB across the City and with external stakeholders, providing updates to the Mayor's Office, as appropriate; and
- e. Pursue internal and external resources and funding opportunities to advance the work of E4BB in the near- (1-2 years) and long-term (3+ year).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager will determine the appropriate staffing and financial resources needed to monitor and communicate the implementation of the following existing and future projects and policies related to E4BB with the E4BB Representative:

- a. Implementation of Ashby BART TOD;
- b. Data collection and analysis of the impact of the Preference Policy;
- c. Implementation of Housing Element, with particular attention in identifying priorities sites for expanding the efficacy of the Preference Policy and what unmet needs may be invested in through the establishment of a non-governmental organization outside of the City;
- d. Improvements to establish cultural vibrancy and accessibility in South Berkeley, creating recommendations for what potential EIFD funds can be used towards;
- e. Growth opportunities to expand the economic viability of small businesses and commerce in the South Berkeley area, including support to sustain and grow the success of the Berkeley Flea Market;
- f. Facilitating the intersection of the African American Holistic Resource Center (AAHRC) with relevant work in South Berkeley, particularly the new Ashby TOD residents and EIFD related projects;
- g. Management of financing, expenditures, and balance sheets received by the City related to E4BB including but not limited to grants, City investments from the General Fund, and an EIFD fund;
- h. Legal representation and support with negotiations, contracts, and MOUs with outside jurisdictions, external E4BB partners, and internal discussions of authority and governance; and
- i. Provide 1) supervision of an unpaid staff person offered by the Partnership for the Bay's Future (PBF) grant program (should the City of Berkeley become selected as a government host site) and 2) communication on the progress and connection of projects relating to E4BB including but not limited to the Ashby BART TOD, Black Arts and Cultural District, Small Sites, EIFD, Black Health Equity Zone, Berkeley Flea Market and AAHRC.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, with assistance from the E4BB representative, the City Manager shall create a template Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be drafted and circulated with outside groups engaged in E4BB, including, but not limited to:

- a. Berkeley Flea Market;
- b. Healthy Black Families;
- c. San Francisco Foundation; and

- d. External Consultants (Nddi Love, Randolph Belle aka Creative Development Partners, communications experts, etc); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager will work with the E4BB Representative to pursue additional external and internal investments to help with creating a non-governmental organization to manage a community investment fund beyond 2026 and transition the work of E4BB to be managed within this entity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley acknowledges that E4BB has been spearheaded by Mayor Jesse Arreguin and his office, with immeasurable contributions provided through the involvement of city leaders and public servants including Jacquelyn McCormick, Anthony Rodriguez, Gail McGuire, Anna Cash, Mike Urbeti, Lisa Warhuus, Alisa Shen, Jordan Klein, Babalwa Kwanele, Paul Buddenhagen, Councilmember Ben Bartlett, James Chang, Dyana Delfin Polk, Hank Levy, Amy Shrago, Demisha Burns, Secretary Tomiquia Moss, Michelle Starratt, and countless others.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley acknowledges the following partners and community stakeholders involved in bringing E4BB to life, fostering its advancement, and supporting its current position for growth and expansion, including: Randolph Belle of Creative Development Partners (CDP); Donna Michelle Anderson (DMA) of Planet DMA; Schuyler Karr; Wilhelmina Wilson, (Mama) Ayanna Davis, Erin Alexander, Suzette Chaumette, Derethia DuVal, Deborah Hailu, and Yusef Herbert of Healthy Black Families (HBF); Alan Dones of Strategic Urban Development Alliance (SUDA); Nikki Beasley of Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services; Willie Phillips of Resources for Community Development (RCD); Michael Trujillo of the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC); Ms. Ritchie of the Friends of Adeline and the Friends of Adeline Board; Aysha Pamukcu, Ella Zimbalist, Demitrius Burnett, and Rodney Nickens, and Judith Bell of the San Francisco Foundation (SFF); Matt Gustafson of the Bay Area Community Land Trust (BACLt); Phillip Palmer of Berkshire Hathaway Realty; Charles Wilson of BDO; Arthur Summerville; Moni Law; Ambrose Carroll of Green the Church; Michael McBride of The Way Christian Church; Aisha Brown of BART; Eli Moore of UC Berkeley's Othering and Belonging Institute; Nathan Brostrom of the UC Office of the President; Dr. Jovan Scott Lewis, PhD; Christine "Chris" Schildt; Dan Lindheim; Aleks Vorobets; Rick Jacobus; Sameer Sood; Josh Prasad; Amy Gao; the Center for Food, Faith & Justice (CCFJ); Coro Northern California; numerous faith-based groups; and additional unnamed contributors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley recognizes E4BB as a priority of the City to be maintained until the initiative is transitioned outside of the City and under the responsibility of an outside City entity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that E4BB is poised to become a catalyst for change, improving the current housing ecosystem that creates and perpetuates an existing

multi-generational wealth gap, and in its next phase of work, E4BB aims to explore opportunities to increase Black homeownership in South Berkeley within a generation, build sustainable economic engines in the area, and move the fulcrum of power determining the future of residents' lives to the center of community.

EQUITY 4 BLACK BERKELEY



NARRATIVE & NEXT STEPS

AUGUST 2024
For the City of Berkeley



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EQUITY 4 BLACK BERKELEY

Equity 4 Black Berkeley (E4BB), originally known as Equitable Black Berkeley (EBB), is a four-year initiative of the City of Berkeley Mayor's Office, in partnership with Healthy Black Families (HBF) and other Black community members, to address historical injustices and commit to community wellness and generation wealth. This report sets forth a foundation and framework for transitioning E4BB into an independent, non-governmental entity.

01. THE VISION

Through E4BB, the City of Berkeley commits to and acts to become a place where former and current Black residents can live, work, engage with community, and personally, financially, and healthily thrive.

Per the directive of Black community leaders and members engaged with E4BB, the current priority lens of this vision is housing, particularly affordable housing, with the City emphasizing and ensuring:

- A Right to **Return** (for displaced residents or their descendants)
- A Right to **Remain** (for residents at all income-levels and housing needs)
- A Right to **Own** (properties of all types and at all pricing levels)
- A Right to **Thrive** (an affirmative commitment to valuing and elevating the active well-being of Black residents)

The current priority lens of this vision is housing.



02. THE ECOSYSTEM

Dozens of independent entities impact the lives and housing experiences of Berkeley's Black residents. These entities vary by:

- **Sector**
 - Public
 - Private
 - Non-profit organizations
- **Levels** (public sector)
 - Local: neighborhood, city, county, tribal, regional
 - State
 - Federal
- **Spheres of influence**
 - Policy
 - Health care
 - Employment
 - Law enforcement
- **Platforms of engagement**
 - Online portals
 - In-person meetings
 - Video conferencing
 - Emails, letters, phone calls

There are 22 discrete web sites to seek affordable housing in Berkeley.

03. THE RESIDENT'S JOURNEY

In order to find or retain housing, individual residents are charged with navigating dozens of entities, processes, and policies, learning as they go. Their success and failure is relegated to the individuals themselves.

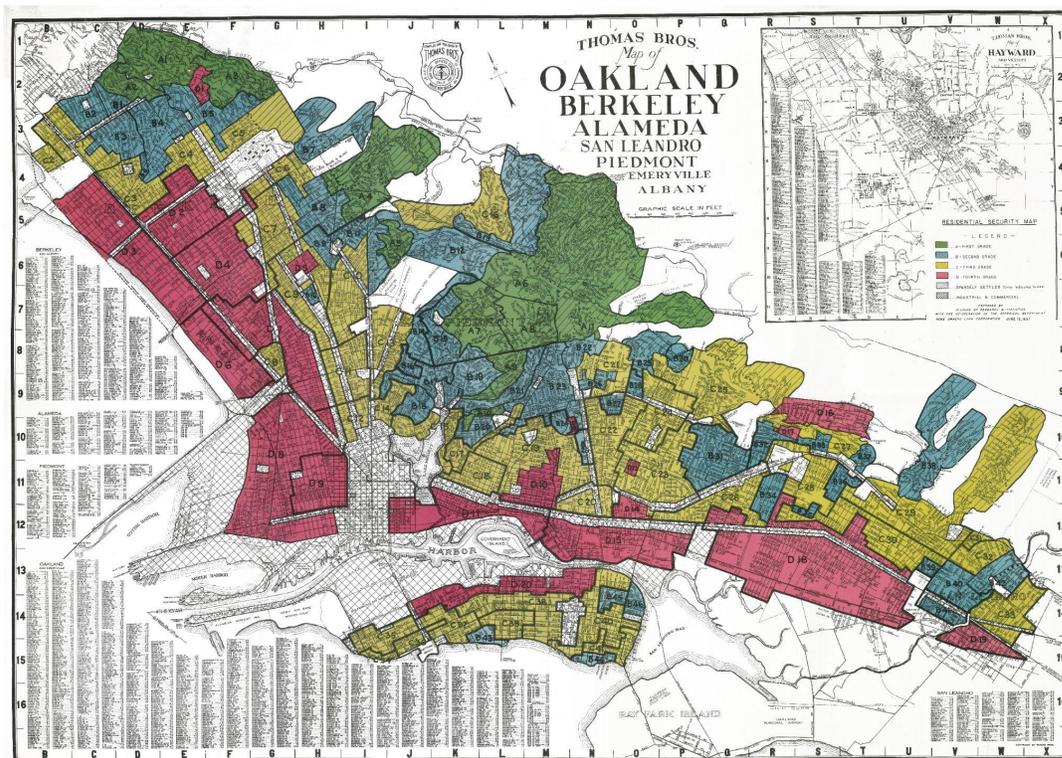
- **Unassigned.** No entity or individual currently is charged with ensuring Black residents (or any residents) reach the E4BB vision of returning to housing after displacement, remaining in current housing, owning a home, or thriving as individuals, families, and community members. It is no one's affirmative responsibility to ensure Black residents experience equity – or to mitigate harm that's been or being done to them.
- **Under-resourced.** Functionally specific entities serve many Black residents effectively but can be understaffed, underpaid, and under-resourced for the size and needs of their service population.
- **De-centered.** In a recent call regarding short-term plans and priorities for Black residents and housing, none of the City departments and elected leaders in attendance actively advocated for, or articulated a passionate, prioritized vision for, the well-being of Black residents.

Ultimately, the resident-facing entities, services, processes, and resources are deeply decentralized. Residents cannot quickly and effectively succeed in finding and leveraging their best-fit opportunities and resources, from finding housing and services, to protecting their housing rights, to creating and sharing generational wealth.

It's no one's responsibility to ensure Black residents experience equity.

04. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- **1933 to 1977:** Berkeley is one of many cities nationwide institutionally redlined in the government-sponsored Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps.
- **1960s and 1970s:** The planned and ongoing construction of BART stations caused a loss of businesses, community and culture, and displaced many Black residents of Berkeley (either via eminent domain or, more commonly, property purchase).
- **1980s+:** Gentrification, cost-of-living, and continued structural and institutionalism racism continue to reduce the number of Black residents and disrupt quality of life for those who remain.



05. KEY MILESTONES

1973 Berkeley adopts Inclusionary Housing policy as part of Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance.

1980 The Rent Stabilization and Good Cause for Eviction Ordinance regulates rent increases and evictions.

1987 Berkeley adopts Inclusionary Ordinance (expands over time to include Affordable Housing Mitigation Fees), governing multi-unit rental and ownership properties (5 or more)

2012 Governor Jerry Brown dissolves California's multi-billion dollar redevelopment agencies.

1977 The Housing Element of the Berkeley Master Plan affirms the right to decent, affordable, adequate, pleasant housing options for Berkeley residents

1990 City establishes the Housing Trust Fund to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Berkeley.

2010 Community members and organizations, especially in South Berkeley, begin advocacy to establish local preferences for Berkeley's affordable housing, including a right to return and right to stay.

2016 Berkeley City Council's first discussion of a Housing Preference policy to reduce displacement.

06. MAYORAL FOCUS

Since Mayor Arreguín's election in 2016, affordable and equitable housing has been a core focus of the administration – including establishing the E4BB initiative. The three-pronged approach has been to:

- Engage community members
- Enact critical policy
- Assure measurable impact

The four central arenas of action have been:

- **Affordable Housing Policy.** The administration has proposed, shepherded, and signed off on transformative legislation.
- **Housing Preference Policy.** A cross-sector effort delivered an implemented a preference framework for displaced residents, and the first housing development to apply the policy has opened.
- **Adeline Corridor Specific Plan.** Negotiations are ongoing for the housing, commerce, community, and cultural opportunities connected to the development surrounding the North Berkeley and Ashby BART Stations.
- **Small Sites Program.** The City has funded two pilots for shorter-term, lower-budget housing developments with community partners.

Participants in the E4BB initiative have contributed to research, development, and execution of all of these arenas.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

2017-2018

- The City reconstitutes and bolsters the 2008 Housing Retention Program and rental assistance grants through the Eviction Defense Center.
- The City prioritizes developing the Berkeley Way project.
- Measure P, a tax increase on the transfer of real property was on the ballot for Berkeley voters in Alameda County, California, on November 6, 2018. It was approved.
- Measure O provides \$135 million of funding from bond revenue to pay for affordable housing projects. Berkeley voters passed Measure O in November 2018 with 77.5% approval. The original ballot question read:
- The city passes an affordable housing bond.

2020-23

- 2020: Berkeley Housing Authority (BHA) incorporates Affordable Housing Berkeley to facilitate the creation of new affordable housing through both acquisition and new construction. (BHA administers \$32 million annually in Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and Project-Based Vouchers, and has \$15.5 million from sale proceeds that can be invested in affordable housing in Berkeley.)
- 2020: The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee and methodology are updated.
- 2021: \$60 million still uncommitted from City's affordable housing bond.
- 2022: Berkeley Opens Doors to Largest Affordable Housing Development and Homeless Services Center in City History - BRIDGE Housing.
- 2022: The city issues a request for proposals to conduct a fair housing analysis.

2024

- BHA is selected as a participating Move To Work (MTW) agency in the landlord incentive cohort.
- City earns a Pro-housing designation from the State of CA
- The City funds Eviction Defense Center to provide housing retention grants to households that are at imminent risk of homelessness.

HOUSING PREFERENCE POLICY

2019-22

- 2019: The City Council makes a referral to create policies to develop a right to return for displaced residents, with a priority to support displaced Black residents.
- 2020: Berkeley receives two-year PBF Challenge Grant for fellow to develop preference policy.
- 2020: EBCLC and the PBF Fellow conduct historical and legal research on racial discrimination in the City of Berkeley's housing policies and potential pathways for a race-specific housing preference

2023-24

- 2023: The Preference Policy is unanimously adopted by the Berkeley City Council on July 11, 2023.
- 2023: The City receives HCD approval to apply the preferences to Maudelle Miller Shirek Community in December 2023.
- 2024: Maudelle Miller Shirek housing development in South Berkeley opened for applications, with the first implementation of the Housing Preference Policy. Almost 10,000 applications were submitted for 75 units.
- 2024: The Health, Housing, and Community Services Department receives a referral to look at city-wide historical data for preference policy-eligible residents, with anticipated assistance from E4BB partner Healthy Black Families.
- 2024: The Health, Housing, and Community Services Department builds the first database of displaced residents due to BART/transit development.

ADELINE CORRIDOR

2020

- Memorandum of Understanding between BART and City, signed on March 3, 2020
- Community Advisory Group and community meetings begin re the BART developments.
- HBF, EBCLC, and other community partners begin engaging with the broader community through a community leaders' group, focus groups, surveys and town halls. (continues for next four years)
- In October, Street Level Advisors are contracted to do a study regarding the plan for new housing in the Adeline Corridor plan.
- The City dedicates \$7 million in infrastructure bond funds to the creation of an African American Holistic Resource Center in South Berkeley.
- HBF and other community leaders develop a steering committee to secure additional funding for both the physical site and programming through a Black-led process.)
- The city adopts the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, which recommended developing a local Housing Preference Policy for future affordable units at Ashby BART (December), which names a goal of striving for 100% affordable housing at the Ashby BART station development.

2021-2024

- 2021: Per Street Level Advisors' models and recommendation, City Council reserves \$53m for Adeline Corridor plan housing founding (\$26.5 for No Berkeley and Ashby each), with a recommendation of 35% affordable housing (and explanations for the tradeoffs required for 100% affordable, including no longer being eligible for an EIFD).
- 2021: Equitable Black Berkeley Project statement that it's policies will be embedded into the Ashby BART RFQ.
- 2021: Joint Vision & Priorities for Transit-Oriented Development for Ashby and North Berkeley BART Stations.
- 2022: Joint Vision and Priorities Document is approved by the City on June 2, 2022 and by BART on June 9, 2022.
- 2022: MOA re North Berkeley and Ashby Transit-Oriented Developments (June 30)
- 2024: Rick Jacobis Report and Century Urban report re EIFD

SMALL SITES PROGRAM

2018

- On October 2, 2018, the City Council approves guidelines for the Small Sites Program, which was established to fund the acquisition and renovation of small multifamily properties.

2024

- Small Sites Program : \$10M approved by City Council
- Planning Department piloting two projects with the Bay Area Community Land Trust and Northern California Community Land Trust, respectively.

OUTCOMES

From 2020-24, Berkeley's Eviction Defense Center served 939 unduplicated households. 36% of those households were African-American.

\$111 million of Measure O's \$135 million already has been allocated, providing 784 units of affordable housing that have either been completed, under construction, or in pre-development (including Berkeley Unified School District Workforce Housing and affordable housing at Ashby and North Berkeley BART).

07. E4BB TIMELINE

For four years, through E4BB, the Mayor's office and community partners (led by Healthy Black Families, or HBF) have actively sought out, engaged, and centered Black leadership, Black organizations, Black community members to include them in policy-making processes and decisions, collecting data on and feedback from displaced residents and residents who are or might be impacted by or eligible for housing opportunities:

- **2020** E4BB created a funding-focused proposal, and engaged funding consultants/advisors, to assess options to raise and administer a community development and housing fund and/or create an EIFD in connection with the Ashby BART transit development. E4BB Partner, Healthy Black Families, continued surveying and leading community forums for engagement regarding housing displacement and policy.
- **2020** E4BB engaged consultants to shepherd and engage around the Berkeley Flea Market and business district opportunity outlined in the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan.
- **2023** E4BB engaged a consultant to review, update, and socialize a current strategy, including community and civic leadership sessions, and to assist in developing a clear path forward for E4BB as a separate entity.
- **2024** The E4BB team and HBF worked with the administration to collect and review historical data; evaluate “missing middle housing” as a tool for housing justice; and re-engage the community and City in community-facing and cross-sector Strategy Sessions.
- **2024** E4BB will present a proposal to select funders to fund an independent entity to continue, expand, and institutionalize its work.

08. FRAMES OF REFERENCE

E4BB's **current priority focus** is on housing – the Right to Return, Right to Remain, Right to Own, and Right to Thrive:

- for prior or current residents;
- at all income levels (with a priority on affordable housing);
- for renters and owners;
- inclusive of the community and cultural influences that drive and derive from housing (education, open spaces, transportation, employment, etc.)

E4BB's **lens** is through the surfacing and centering Black voices, needs, experiences, and outcomes in Berkeley, recognizing that:

- Black residents of Berkeley were specifically targeted for discrimination. In historical practices and continue to experience both legacy impact and present-day discrimination and obstruction.
- Black residents, similar to other community segments, have specific experiences that require specific activations to remedy and repair.
- Historically and statistically, general community uplift does not sufficiently elevate Black community members because there have been and continue to be specific perspectives and practices that actively oppress them and must be directly countered and overcome. “All Lives Matter” approaches cannot dismantle targeted anti-Black sentiments and actions.
- Uplift for Black residents ultimately is an uplift for all residents, because policies that protect and uplift Black residents inherently benefit others in similar situations.
- E4BB's scope can't be sustained over time via an elected administration or public entity. It requires a cross-sector, independent organization.

09. THE GOAL

E4BB is not forming an entity to become the initiator, executor, or leader of this work, but to structurally and visibly exist as a nexus to and for the Black community for the work its many partners already do. It will serve as both a champion of wellness and a beacon for accountability for Berkeley's African-American community and all who serve it.

10. THE URGENCY

E4BB's outreach and opportunities for impact are being limited by:

- Confusion among multiple governmental and communities partners about the structure, focus, and benefits of E4BB.
 - In interviews with an E4BB consultant, several departmental staff members thought it was an organization rather than an initiative.
 - The Doorways regional housing portal was designed and implemented over the past 18 months without notice to or input from E4BB's community partners.
- The end of the Mayor's second and final term, which will end the shepherding of the E4BB initiative. Note: the administration has created a transition plan for the next administration to continue these efforts.
- The immediate timeline of decisions and funding for the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, and particularly the Ashby BART transit development, which greatly impacts Black residents and is directly tied to historical displacement of the community.
- Imminent deadlines for critical grants that would advance E4BB's mission priorities, particularly two Department of Transportation opportunities and a Partnership for the Bay's Future grant.
- Ongoing community challenges regarding income, employment, affordable housing levels, waiting lists and displacement or exodus.

Black residents of Berkeley need near-term strategies and measurable outcomes to balance/supplement the multiple large-scale, long-term projects already underway to make sure more people don't slip into crisis levels in the immediate months and years to come.

RESIDENTS SNAPSHOT

Source: Berkeley 2023-2031 Housing Element Redlined 02-17-2023v2_1

“Based on student populations and poverty rates, Black or African American and American Indian or Alaska Native residents are most disproportionately affected by poverty in Berkeley.”

POPULATION

The population declined 5.6% from 2010 to 2019.

% of Population

9,324 (7.7%)

INCOME

The Black population has the second lowest median income (above American Indian or Alaskan Native residents) and the second highest poverty rate* (2019).

*The large population of Asian/API students in the City likely contributes to tier having the highest poverty rate.

Median Income

\$39,441

vs highest

White NH: \$107,660

Poverty rate

25.4%

vs lowest

White NH: 12.1%

% of HH <80% AMI

70%

vs lowest

API: 11%

HOUSING

% of originated mortgage apps

47%

vs highest

White NH: 65.6% (2019)

% of denied mortgage apps

23.9%

vs lowest

AINA: 13.3% (2019)

% of unhoused population

57%

7.7% of total pop (2019)

EDUCATION

Berkeley's African-American high school students are the **least likely to complete UC/CSU required courses** with a C or better (at 37% vs 88% of White NH - the most likely - 2016).

They comprise 4.1% of the UC Berkeley (vs 33.8% AAPI, the highest) and 15% of the Berkeley City College population.

11. THE ENTITY

E4BB will form a non-profit entity that serves as the nexus to and for Black residents of Berkeley across the many sectors, organizations, processes, resources, and events they must engage with to live and thrive.

The entity will launch with a series of Short-Term (1-6 months), Near-Term (6-12 months), and Longer-Term (a year or greater) activations.

SHORT-TERM

In its first six months, E4BB will:

- Create and minimally staff an entity to navigate the ecosystem and centralize information and stay connected and current on the issues and events that affect housing.
- Recap, reframe, and re-introduce E4BB to Black residents and leaders, Berkeley residents at large, City and other public sector divisions and officials (regional, state and federal), non-profit sector partners, and potential private sector partners and investors.
- Immediately prioritize grant writing technical and staffing support for upcoming grants.
- Collaborate with the Doorways Regional Housing Portal to engage Black community voices in the project and raise awareness.
- Prepare and socialize a community update on the Ashby BART negotiations, the three presented models for levels of affordable housing, and why the current plan is 35% and will not be 100%.
- Join and help lead, a small, cross-sector Working Group (formed by the Mayor's office) for an EIFD at or non-contiguous to the BART-owned Ashby BART.
- Debrief with City Manager about communications and opportunities to grow, including sharing public data, creating points of contact, and sharing of even complex decisions with residents.
- Host a (standing) gathering of Berkeley's Black community-facing service organization, to check in, find partners and fiscal sponsors, eliminate duplication, and support and promote each other's upcoming efforts.

NEAR-TERM

In its first year, E4BB will additionally:

- Develop and adopt a strategic plan (at least a one-pager).
- Actively curate or independently collect valid baseline data on Black residents and housing, including:
 - The distribution, among Black residents, of those: seeking to rent vs buy; housing stable or at-risk; eligible for each level of affordable housing/BMR vs AMR offerings, etc.
 - The demographics of Black residents of Berkeley. and all residents of Berkeley, in terms of income, employment, current housing status, and desired housing status
 - A mapping of all existing housing in the City of Berkeley, including available vs not available units, level of affordability, rental vs owned, vacant not vacant, BMR vs AMR, tax-credit larger development vs small sites and CLT-level opportunities
 - Clear and detailed user journeys of Black Berkeley's: 1) median/most common resident who is navigating housing needs, 2) most at risk residents in that space; 3) most easily elevated residents in that space.
- Act as a main participant in the remaining Adeline Corridor negotiations, including Ashby BART development.
- Support the African-American Holistic Resource Center.
- Devise and execute 2-3 small pilots reflecting the values and requests from both strategy sessions for immediate/shorter-term impact on Black residents and housing (e.g., navigators, educational offerings, etc.).

LONGER-TERM

In its first two years and beyond, E4BB will additionally:

- Expand E4BB by recruiting, researching, and staffing it as an independent, third-party entity, with a mix of staff experience that includes but is not limited to: Black community advocacy, housing investment, housing development, and housing law and policy.
- Actively compete for or raise and disseminate initial smaller funds (e.g., of \$10-15 million) for small sites - potentially in partnership with PBF.
- Actively expand the scale of operations to seek and receive 9-figure level of funding.
- Build out a replicable model for other communities to stop harm and create new ways of living for their own residents.

Incorporating an Equitable Black Berkeley (EBB) in the Ashby Station Development

Developing the Ashby BART Station provides a chance to do something incredible. Not doing all that can be done, now, will only serve to repeat historic harms; there are no “do-overs”.

This project must begin to reverse and repair the inter-generational harm that was inflicted from the development of the station and redlining. The only way to do that, is to do something different in terms of who gets the opportunity to develop the site, the level of partnership between BART, the City of Berkeley, the impacted communities, the community at large, and how the project is financed.

EBB is not simply asking for developer contributions that will drive up costs for the selected developer and jeopardize the feasibility of the project, although the developer will certainly have a role to play. A countervailing narrative must be embraced as to the framing of what community benefits are, what they mean or their cost to a project, based on preconceptions, precedents, and business as usual.

We are talking about economic participation and enterprise with a community investment and reasonable return on that investment to achieve harm repair and community restoration. City of Berkeley’s goal, which should be a mutual goal, is lifting up a new model for all BART stations, as other regions will have their own unique needs that can be satisfied by innovation in the way we all work together. A solution that rises to the magnitude of the harm, the ongoing challenges, and the vision for the future must be foremost. That is not something that anybody has done before, given the unique opportunity and context that stands before us with this project.

Developer Selection Process - EBB participation

1. A three (3) member “Vision of Community Repair Team” composed of the City of Berkeley, BART and EBB will make a qualitative assessment of the submittals, not based on technical or programmatic proposal materials, but based on the Community Repair Narrative proposal materials, including EBB goals, value alignment and adherence to the reparations framework, to determine if the proposal teams meet the threshold and standards of EBB.
2. The Developer Selection Team, will include one (1) EBB representative-. The Developer Selection Team will select the finalists based on review of technical and programmatic submission materials.
3. The community/public will have two opportunities (weekend and evening) to hear finalist presentations and vote for their favorite. Community preference will have considerable weight in the scoring and selection process.

Reparative EBB Framework Consideration

- Recognition of harm and embracing the need for repair in the design and operational lifespan of the project
 - The respondents will be asked to demonstrate how their proposal addresses a reparative framework that redresses the BART’s historic negative impacts and lasting harms on the Black residents, businesses, and cultural institutions in the neighboring communities.

- How the proposer defines harm, the impacted community and the need for harm repair
- How the project achieves cessation of harm
- How the project assures the non-repetition of harm based on historical practices by BART
- How the project serves to restore the community through permanent and sustainable support for community serving organizations
- How the project enables economic inclusion, participation and enterprise development by the community
- How the project serves as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization
- How the project honors those who have been harmed
- Environmental and culturally appropriate infrastructure and site planning
- Ongoing community engagement for feedback and priority setting
 - Incorporating feedback from HBF People’s Assembly meetings
 - Conforming to the JVP goals
 - EBB engagement in City objective standards process, and EBB involvement in future City participation in shaping the design and construction of the project
- Promoting neighborhood support and synergy
 - How the design will incorporate adequate open space for community gathering to support the arts, neighborhood/community events and how the management/use of that space will be equitable.
 - Placemaking (culturally appropriate with historical reference)
- Wealth building and reinvestment
 - Opportunities for individuals/family wealth building
 - A mechanism that provides for the City of Berkeley on behalf of EBB to contribute investment capital and receive a reasonable return on investment.
 - Developer capital sources will be measured against existing City of Berkeley ESG principles with a priority to capital sources that have local impact.
- Promoting health, education and community support services (child care, etc)
 - Any non-residential space provided on all Ashby Station parcels will prioritize lessees such as community based organizations supporting the EBB framework and local artists, artisans and food entrepreneurs with a priority given to Ashby Flea Market vendors.
- Future Flexibility
 - Although the current opportunity allows for the development of 8-12 floors, the solicitation will encourage respondents to consider and analyze the feasibility of engineering buildings to allow for vertically phased future development to achieve additional future value, based on established principles, precedent projects, and future need, and contingent upon a separate planning process. Inclusion of enhanced engineering for vertically phased future development does not constitute or preclude a right of the respondent to develop future phases.

- The City of Berkeley reserves the right to capture the additional value of unused air rights to EBB for future development should at any point in the future the project densifies. Any such densification revenue may benefit EBB.

EBB requested clarifications to the Term Sheet:

- **Public Art and Open Space**
 - The project will incorporate the public artwork by Mildred Howard that was recently commissioned by the City of Berkeley. If the artwork is installed prior to project implementation, the City of Berkeley will cover relocation and installation costs.
 - The selected developer will include on-site publicly accessible artwork valued at 1.75% of construction costs.
 - Respondents will receive additional points for identifying additional opportunities for local artisans and craftspeople to participate in professional opportunities i.e. FFE, architectural elements, landscaping/hardscaping, interior design, etc. to achieve higher levels of local small business utilization and workforce development targets.
 - The project will incorporate adequate open space for community gathering to support the arts, neighborhood/community events and a system provided to support those events.
- **Commercial/Retail**
 - The Ashby Project will include 25,000 square feet of 'warm shell' commercial component, for the purposes of use by EBB stakeholder organizations and Berkeley Flea Market graduates.
- A portion of net project profit from the Ashby mixed income or market rate development parcels shall be allocated to create a reparative community benefits fund for South Berkeley. Upon achievement of a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy ("TCO"), each mixed-income development parcel (excluding the 100% affordable parcels) shall be required to fund \$50,000 per project, post TCO in years 1 through 3, and by the earlier of (i) the beginning of year 4 or (ii) parcel stabilization (i.e., 95% occupancy), each mixed income parcel at the Ashby TOD development shall be required to fund its pro rata share of \$250,000 allocated by mixed income parcel net rentable square footage, with annual cost of living adjustments no less than 3.0% per annum.
- A community advisory committee composed of EBB and other community stakeholders will be created to direct the fund expenditures.
- **Community Investment/Economic Participation**
 - The City of Berkeley reserves the right on behalf of EBB to contribute investment capital and receive pari passu return on investment.
 - A community advisory committee composed of EBB stakeholders will be created to direct the EBB fund expenditures.
 - Developer capital sources will be measured against existing City of Berkeley ESG principles with a priority to capital sources that have local impact.
- **Additional Justification for Harm Repair as the primary objective of the Project:**
 - Traditional financing will generate returns that go back to those traditional sources, wherever they may be, so we need to look at additional and alternative sources of

financing that provide local returns that will positively impact the local community.

- The competing and sometimes conflicting dynamics of project feasibility vs. high levels of community benefits can be solved for in this project. As we work together, we'll show that there's a business case for innovation in the way BART and the City of Berkeley do business, and all stakeholders need to understand what the community already knows in terms of why this harm repair initiative is so vital.



Healthy Black Families and the Fight for a Thriving Black Berkeley



This is the story of the Berkeley Black community's experience of decades of displacement and disinvestment, and how a small, grassroots community organization helped to advance the right to stay, right to return and right to thrive in South Berkeley.

Acknowledgements

MESU STRATEGIES

Mesu Strategies, LLC is a research and strategy firm committed to realizing a more just and inclusive society. Based in Oakland, California / Huchiuñ, the unceded land of the Lisjan Ohlone, Mesu Strategies works nationally to advance healthy, resilient and equitable community environments for low-income people and communities of color. Mesu Strategies partners with leaders in communities and organizations to operationalize equity and catalyze transformational change through action research, policy advocacy and organizational development approaches rooted in the principles of cultural humility.

HEALTHY BLACK FAMILIES

Healthy Black Families, Inc. provides people with knowledge, skills and strategies to make social systems and policies more equitable for Black people and communities. Healthy Black Families' vision is to organize individuals, families and the organizations that serve them into communities empowered with skills to advance social equity and justice, with a focus on Black individuals and families. Healthy Black Families is located in South Berkeley, California.

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This report is dedicated to the memory of Rahwa Neguse, without whom Healthy Black Families' housing advocacy efforts would not have been possible.



PHOTO CREDITS

Cover: Dancers at Berkeley's 2019 Juneteenth Festival by Liliana Michelena at KQED

Page 7: Historic postcard of Claremont Court Gates from the Anthony Bruce Collection; Family photo in front of California house from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland Photograph Collection, MS189_1234

Page 8: Redlining map by Jesse Barber, [Berkeleyside](#), 2018; Rainbow Sign flyer from the private collection of [Odette Pollar](#), 1972

Page 9: Family photo, E.F. Joseph, [Calisphere](#), 1960s; Boys pose with Black Peoples Free Store sign, Bob Fitch, 1960s, Ticky-tacky photo from [Darrell Owens](#), Twitter, 2020

Page 10: Rare BART photos from Barney Peterson, [SF Chronicle](#)

Page 11: Chart from Kaiser Family Foundation; Ashby Flea Market photo source unknown

Page 12: Homeless encampment photo by David Katayama, [KQED](#), 2017

Page 17: Photo of Mildred Howard and mother by Pam Uzell via [Berkeleyside](#) and video still from [the Daily Californian](#)

Page 18: Photo by Marissa Leshnov, [San Francisco Chronicle](#)

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Pages 3, 14, 24, 26, 28, 31: Photos from the City of Berkeley

Pages 16, 18, 22, 25, 27, 29, 30: Community photos provided by Healthy Black Families, Inc.

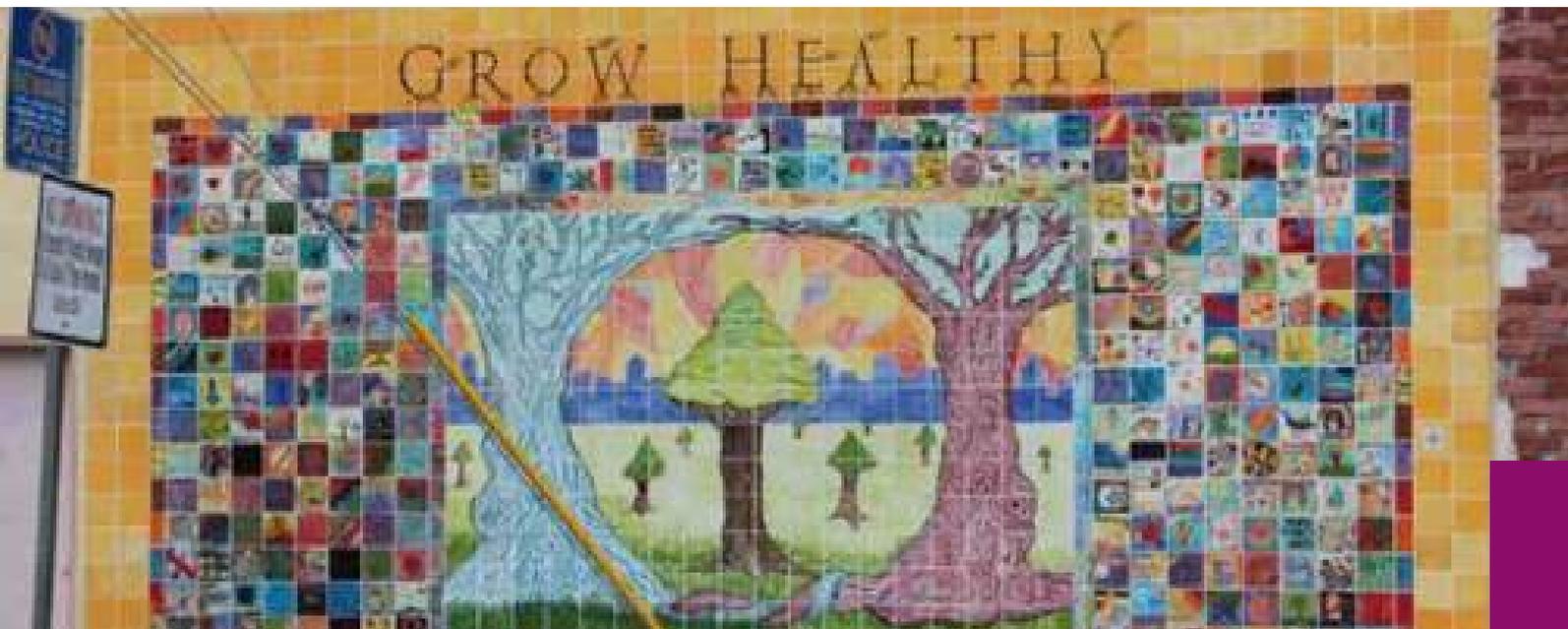
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01 Executive Summary



Mural on Adeline Street by Youth Spirit Artworks

Development, Displacement and the Black Community in Berkeley

Although Berkeley is widely considered to be one of the most progressive cities in the United States, like many other places in the nation, racism is baked into its design. In the early- and mid-20th century, exclusionary policies and practices kept Black families and other people of color from moving into the beautiful, park-like residences in the hills and near the university. Non-white people had little choice but to live in South Berkeley, an area in the “flatlands” bound by Telegraph Avenue to the east, the San Francisco Bay to the west, Dwight Way to the north, and Oakland to the south. Over time, restrictive covenants, redlining and single family zoning led to calcified patterns of residential racial segregation.

Segregation brought many challenges, including chronic disinvestment and the concentration of poverty. In the face of these hardships, however, the Black residents of South Berkeley built a robust community with diverse social and cultural offerings. South Berkeley became not just a home for the Black community in Berkeley; it was a cultural center and attraction. At its peak in 1970, when the Black population comprised 25% of the city’s overall population, South Berkeley was home to nearly 75% of the city’s Black residents, and a number of art centers, schools, and social clubs led by and dedicated to Black people.

The community faced a dire turning point, however, when city and regional planning decisions in the 1960s helped drive many Black families out of South Berkeley and the city altogether. Decisions to build the Ashby BART Station took many homes from South Berkeley residents by eminent domain in the 1970s. Decisions to limit housing development citywide led to constraints in the housing supply and affordability in the decades that

followed. The Black population suffered a precipitous drop. Today, Berkeley's overall population is only 6% Black, with the majority of Black residents residing in South Berkeley.

The Fight for Equity for Black Berkeley

Despite many existing social and economic challenges, and the new obstacle of distance brought by displacement, the Berkeley Black community remained connected across geographies. Families continued to work with one another for mutual aid and support, and to remain politically active in Berkeley politics. When the timing was right, Black leaders in the Berkeley community sought the support of Healthy Black Families, Inc. (HBF) to help advance its fight against displacement and for the community's survival and right to thrive.

HBF is a grassroots community-based organization located in South Berkeley founded by local public health leaders who have long fought for improved environments, systems and resources for the health of Black women and their families. HBF leads efforts to educate and organize communities to promote systems changes to support Black community health. HBF facilitates community connections across geographic and general boundaries, and fosters trust across diverse Black community members. They also work to educate Berkeley leaders and the Berkeley community at large on the priorities of the Black community, emphasizing the importance of addressing the social determinants of health: the environmental factors like housing and food access that shape community well-being.

In 2022, HBF, the City of Berkeley, East Bay Community Law Center, and other allies (see Figure 1, page 6) worked together with Berkeley's Black community to stem displacement in Berkeley, and repair historical harms. The "Equity 4 Black Berkeley" campaign involved the coordination of allies, funders, and other community leaders to prioritize the voices of South Berkeley residents affected by historical planning decisions. Targeted organizing, communications and research activities in this campaign led to a number of gains, including a big policy win in 2023 called the Affordable Housing Preference Policy (AHPP).

The AHPP addresses plans for the development of new affordable housing units to alleviate patterns of displacement. It includes guidelines for who will receive preference in accessing new units when they become available. Recognizing the "right to stay and right to return" of all communities that have long called Berkeley home, the policy includes specific considerations that give priority in new affordable housing to people who were systematically displaced from Berkeley.

Though the AHPP does not solve all issues related to displacement over many decades in Berkeley, it presents an important step toward equitable change.

Toward the Vision of a Thriving Black Berkeley ... and Beyond

The challenges of displacement are not unique to Black communities in Berkeley. HBF's story provides an example of how communities and their partners can work toward equitable changes in both challenging times and times of opportunity. Communities of color, professionals working for philanthropic or government organizations, and members of the broader public can all draw lessons from this example about advancing equitable housing changes. In particular:

- *Communities and leaders of color* can work at all times to create and harness power in numbers, to build power through continuous learning and information-sharing across generations and borders, to value and lift up the community connectors and caretakers, to adopt a stance of readiness in their work, and to leverage partnerships with allies
- *Allies to communities of color* -- including individuals, organizations or agencies -- can work to earn the trust of communities of color, offer needed skills and resources to center the community's leadership, seek creative ways to foster and formalize community-driven change, and socialize community stories to build will for change
- *Philanthropic funders* do more than provide resources for communities -- they can lift up true community leadership, support innovation to build community power, convene coalitions and connect resources to support community-led policy development
- *The public* can ensure equitable changes are a priority by staying curious and getting informed about community issues and experiences, being persistent amplifiers of community-led solutions, and voting for inclusive leaders.



Equity 4 Black Berkeley Campaign Participants

Entity	Description	Role in Campaign
Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)	A national engine for health equity thought leadership	Supported capacity building of Black community members
Berkeley Black Community	Current and former residents of South Berkeley belonging to the Black Community	Provided qualitative information about lived experience in South Berkeley, community needs and priorities for policy change
City of Berkeley Health, Housing and Community Services Department	A public agency responsible for addressing public health prevention and emergencies as well as the physical health, mental health, and basic needs of those most vulnerable in Berkeley	Collaborated with Berkeley residents and leaders on the development and advancement of the Affordable Housing Preference Policy (AHPP)
City of Berkeley Elected Officials	The Mayor and City Council of Berkeley are responsible for leading local government	Led the review, approval and direction of local government efforts to address public priorities
East Bay Community Law Center	A regional legal organization providing legal and social services for communities of color	Supported capacity building of Black community members
Ecology Center	A Berkeley community organization focused on improving the health and environmental impacts of Berkeley residents	Supported capacity building of Black community members
Friends of Adeline	A neighborhood organization in South Berkeley	Served as an ally and advocate for the Berkeley Black community
Healthy Black Families, Inc.	A community organization providing people with knowledge, skills and strategies to make social systems and policies more equitable for Black people and communities.	Working under the guidance of local residents, facilitated the coordination and organization of the Berkeley Black community with allies, funders, and local leaders on the Equity 4 Black Berkeley campaign
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	A national civil rights and social group	Supported outreach to Black community members, served as a collaborator on advocacy
Partnership for the Bay's Future	A fund pooling private and philanthropic contributions to produce, preserve and protect affordable housing in the Bay Area	Provided financial resources to support the Equity 4 Black Berkeley campaign through two grants (the Challenge Grant and the Breakthrough Grant)

Figure 1. Key Collaborators involved on the Equity 4 Black Berkeley Campaign for the Affordable Housing Preference Policy

02 Development, Displacement and the Black Community in Berkeley

A Brief History of the Housing Landscape

The roots of the Black community in Berkeley, California run deep

Black Americans have called South Berkeley home for over a century

Black people first came to Berkeley in significant numbers beginning in the 1910s, with the Great Migration.¹ At that time, Berkeley was an up-and-coming city boasting some of the nation's newest intellectual, spiritual and cultural attractions. It started growing in earnest after the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, when many people fled to the East Bay. Previously, the area had been rural farmland since European settlers seized the territory from the Ohlone centuries before.

Even after the college and town were established in the 1860s-1870s, most residential development in the region took place in neighboring San Francisco and Oakland. To accommodate and capitalize on a growing population, developers in Berkeley worked to turn large tracts of land into high-end 'private residence parks,' which would prioritize design that harmonized with the environment's natural beauty. By 1910, Berkeley was the fifth largest city in California, known for its natural beauty, the university, and a growing number of industries.²



Mansion built in 1910 in Berkeley's Elmwood neighborhood, which was originally designed exclusively for white people

The first Black Americans arriving to Berkeley found limited choices for where to live³

The 'fitting and beautiful homes' Berkeley promised newcomers were not available to all.⁴ Many of the properties had deeds with restrictive covenants – clauses prohibiting their sale or lease to 'undesirable' occupants, which the developers considered to be "people of African, Mongolian or Asiatic descent."⁵ Although racialized zoning was prohibited early on, discriminatory attitudes and practices in private sales would remain unregulated for decades.⁶ Developers commonly relied on exclusionary practices to control neighborhood composition in an effort to "protect" their financial investments. Under pressure from developers, Berkeley policymakers passed single-family zoning in 1916. Single-family zoning



Martin family on Juneteenth in California, 1920s

helped to implicitly codify and expedite racial segregation by preventing new housing development in neighborhoods where restrictive covenants were common.⁷⁸ Since neighborhoods excluding Black people and other people of color were predominantly located in North Berkeley and the hills of East Berkeley, Black people and other people of color often had no choice but to take up residence in the flatlands neighborhoods of South and Southwest Berkeley.

The Berkeley Black community grew larger, more dense, and more robust

South Berkeley grew quickly between 1940 and 1970. For a variety of reasons, the neighborhoods also became more densely populated by Black people during this time. A second wave of Black migrants moved to the area for jobs during WWII. After the war, many white people moved out of more urban areas to the suburbs, where they could purchase American “dream homes” with federal home loans.^{9, 10} However, these loans were not as accessible to communities of color in the South Berkeley neighborhoods, given redlining practices in the home mortgage industry (see Figure 2, redlining map).

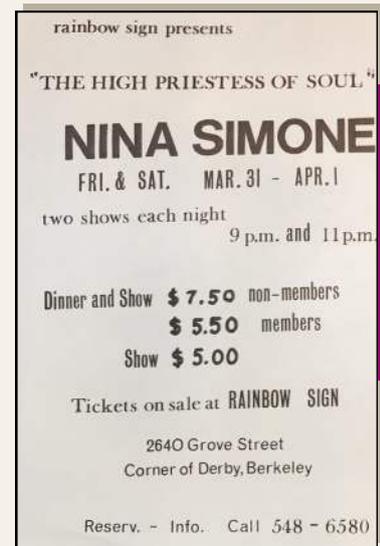
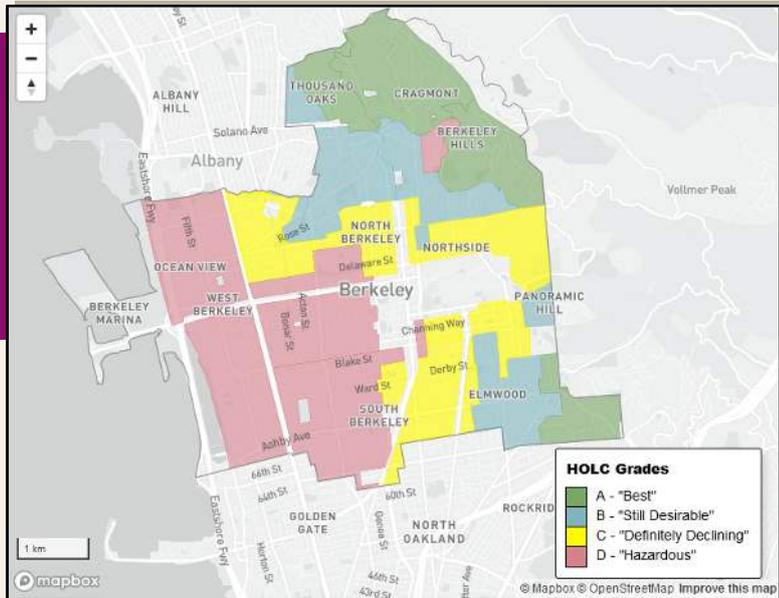


Figure 2. Map of the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) designations of risk for mortgages in Berkeley in the 1930s-1960s -- South Berkeley is deemed “hazardous” due to “Predominance of Negroes and Orientals. Also mixed classes of wage earners and colored professional people.”

Flyer for a 1972 event at the Rainbow Sign featuring renowned singer Nina Simone,

Although Black people in Berkeley were effectively segregated to South Berkeley, they used their circumstances to their favor and worked to build supportive neighborhoods. South Berkeley became a thriving Black enclave, rich with Black-owned businesses and cultural institutions.^{11, 12} Black doctors and dentists ran local clinics that understood and served the needs of their diverse Black patients.¹³ Social hubs like the Rainbow Sign and the Black House attracted influential thinkers and activists, including James Baldwin and Huey Newton, and served as a cultural meeting spot for community members, like the family of future Vice President Kamala Harris.¹⁴ For a brief time, the neighborhood was even home to a school specifically focused on teaching local teens about the Black experience.^{15, 16} Generations of families would congregate at churches established at that time. From commerce to entertainment, worship and education, South Berkeley became a welcoming, safe home to the Black community.



“I moved to South Berkeley in 1955, when I was 1 year old. I was lucky to inherit my home here. Generational wealth is hard to come by. Back then, Martin Luther King, Jr. Way was the race cutoff line. Today, it feels like we still live in these relationships, with neighborhood lines.”

– South Berkeley resident



Family life, 1960s



Displacement presented an existential threat to the Berkeley Black community

Development decisions stymied South Berkeley's growth

The 1950s-1960s saw the rapid development of multi-unit buildings aiming to capitalize on a growing demand for housing in the "flatlands" area of Berkeley -- predominantly South Berkeley -- which were not zoned for single-family housing. These poorly constructed buildings were nicknamed "ticky-tackies," and considered an eyesore by many Berkeley residents. In response to concerns about the blight and tenant exploitation brought by the landlords of ticky-tackies, local policymakers passed a ban on the development of new multifamily housing in most residential areas.¹⁷



A 1960s-era "ticky tacky" in Berkeley

Together with the existing segregation perpetuated by mortgage redlining practices common during the 1930s-1960s, the new multifamily housing ban significantly limited the growth of the Berkeley housing supply.^{18 19} Home sale and rental prices climbed, forcing many low- and middle-income residents to relocate to make ends meet. Black households were particularly vulnerable to such shifts, given the widespread discrimination they already experienced in jobs, education, and many other areas of everyday life.²⁰



Around this time, in the 1960s, BART started the construction of the region's new transit system. Development of the Ashby BART station required taking property from numerous Black households in South Berkeley by means of eminent domain. This exacerbated the housing shortage and disproportionately impacted the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, who were predominantly members of the Black Berkeley community. For the first time in Berkeley's history, the size of its Black population dropped, interrupting the growth and vibrancy of the community. ²¹



"Jumbo" tunnel digger for construction of Berkeley BART line

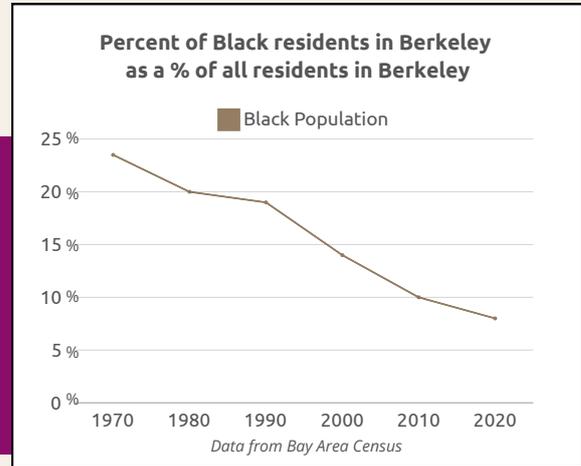


Figure 3. Percent of Black Residents in Berkeley 1970-2020

Displacement led to a precipitous decline in Berkeley's Black population

Development decisions in the decades to follow continued to disproportionately impact Black Berkeleyans. In the 1970s, anti-growth sentiments led to decisions to prioritize neighborhood preservation and cap property taxes. Although displacement affected both Black and white population groups at this time, "the white homeowner population increased throughout several Black neighborhoods." ²² In the 1980s, the Black population continued to drop as homelessness and gentrification grew amid a shortage of affordable housing, deindustrialization, and the elimination of federal welfare programs. ^{23 24 25} Displacement continued in the 1990s but accelerated with subprime lending in 2007-2010, disproportionately affecting low-income communities of color. ²⁶ The rapid growth of the tech sector fueled a widening income gap which helped to drive up housing costs. By the early 2020s, the total Black population in Berkeley was estimated at under 10% of Berkeley's overall population, representing over a 50% drop since 1970 (see Figure 3). ²⁷ Some analyses show that on some historically Black blocks in the neighborhood, the Black household count dropped by four times between 1970 and 2020. ²⁸

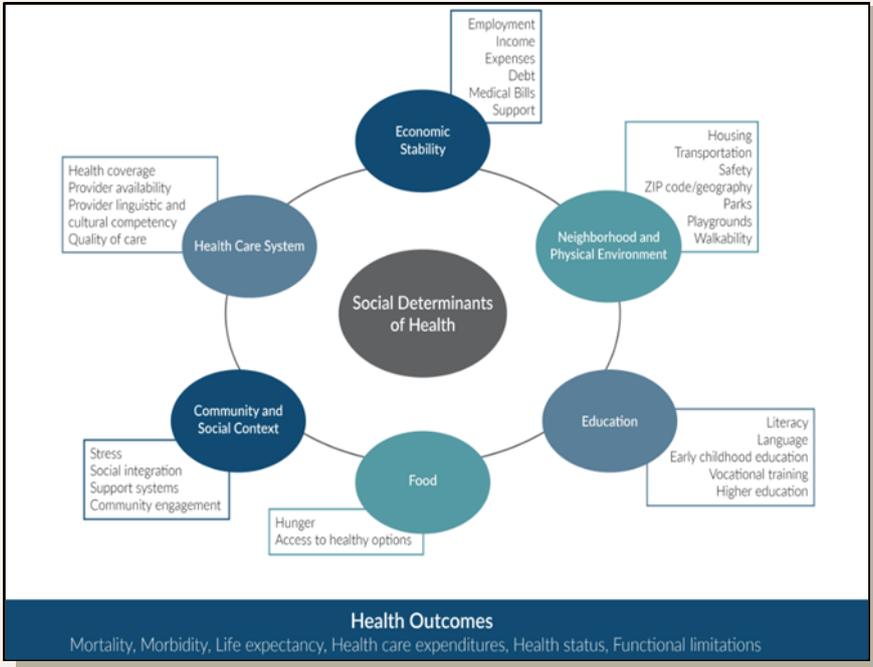


"When BART and the forces of change and displacement came to town, they tore a hole in the heart of South Berkeley... But that act is what started everything in South Berkeley. That's what launched an entire generation of activists."

– Berkeley Council Member

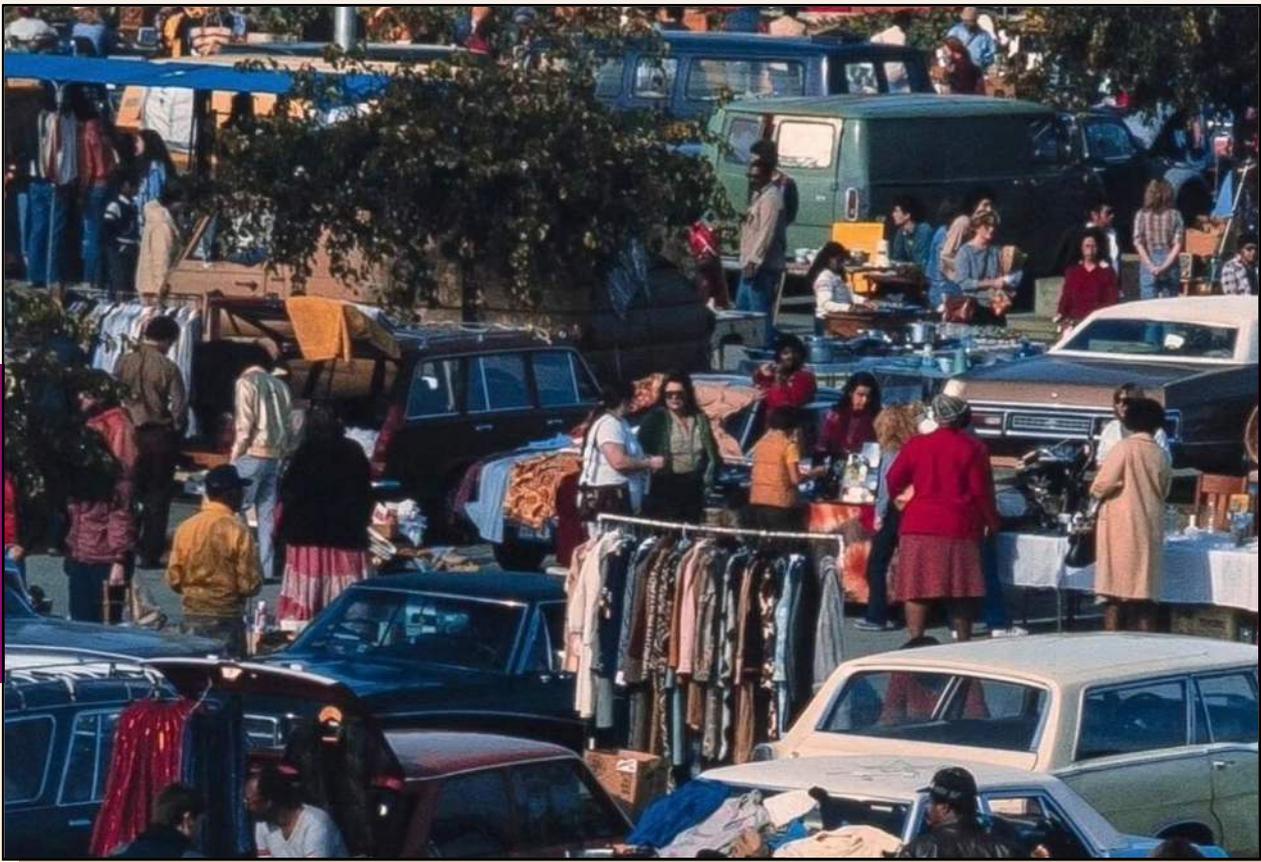
The harmful impacts of displacement on the Black community are difficult to quantify

Displacement disrupted the lives and wellbeing of Black individuals, families, and communities in Berkeley. The full extent of the impacts can be difficult to quantify. However, the relationship between displacement and racial disparities is documented across a host of health outcomes, including chronic health diseases, preterm birth rates, and mortality (see Figure 4).^{29 30 31}



Displacement sows isolation across family networks and social supports, and negatively influences economic mobility, mental health, and voting agency.³² Research shows that Black communities in California experiencing displacement also have limited political representation, which in turn, perpetuates systemic issues working against the community's interests.³³

Figure 4. The Social Determinants of Health



Ashby Flea Market, 1970s

Recent changes promise to turn the tide on displacement in Berkeley

A growing national housing crisis spurred public pressure for change

By the middle of the 2010s, the housing crisis reached fever pitch in Berkeley and other large cities across the state following the growth of the tech sector and an economic crash fueled by predatory lending. In California, people at multiple income levels were experiencing the strain of rising rents and housing costs. At this time, a growing body of research on housing patterns had begun to catch up to the experiences of low-income people and communities of color, demonstrating patterns of displacement and gentrification and validating the experiences of limited housing affordability and availability nationwide. With the Black Lives Matter movement bringing greater awareness of racial inequities to the broader public, public pressure for leaders to increase affordable housing became calls to stop the disparate impacts of displacement during the COVID pandemic.



Homeless encampment in South Berkeley in 2017

Berkeley leaders began to address the history of displacement

Hearing the calls for change, in 2016, the Berkeley City Council pledged support to explore anti-displacement policies in local development plans.³⁴ In the years to follow, the City would explore and adopt a range of new policies to address the housing crisis and stem displacement. In 2018, Berkeley voters passed Measure O, a \$135M bond to fund housing for low-, very low-, below-median-, and middle-income individuals and working families over 36 years.³⁵ That same year, the City identified strategic long-term goals to create more affordable housing, more support services for vulnerable populations, and champion social and racial equity. Work plans prioritized increasing affordable housing citywide as well as addressing



Figure 5. Map of Adeline Corridor
Housing and displacement were issues the City of Berkeley addressed in the Specific Plan for the Adeline Corridor in South Berkeley

“

“Black Berkeley was once a solid community. At one point, we were at least 48,000 people in the flatlands. Our numbers now might be 8,000, if that. People have known each other all their lives, we have been raised together. We got to know each other. Even though we are spread apart now, Black Berkeley still functions like a small town.”

-- South Berkeley Resident

displacement and economic development in South Berkeley.³⁶

With significant input and leadership from the Black community, the City adopted targeted measures addressing displacement in the South Berkeley neighborhood in the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan in 2020 (Figure 5).^{37 38}

In 2023, the Berkeley City Council unanimously passed the Affordable Housing Preference Policy, Berkeley’s first policy directly addressing its history of displacement and a huge victory for Black Berkeley.

New Berkeley policies offer displaced community members an opportunity to return

The 2023 Affordable Housing Preference Policy (AHPP) recognizes that those who have been unfairly pushed out of Berkeley for a variety of reasons, have a right to return to their home community.³⁹ Similar to policies in New York, San Francisco, Seattle and Portland, Oregon, the Berkeley AHPP targets households that lost property due to eminent domain during the period of urban renewal or discriminatory home loan decisions. The policy outlines priorities, processes and timelines for identifying new tenants in various types of housing developments.

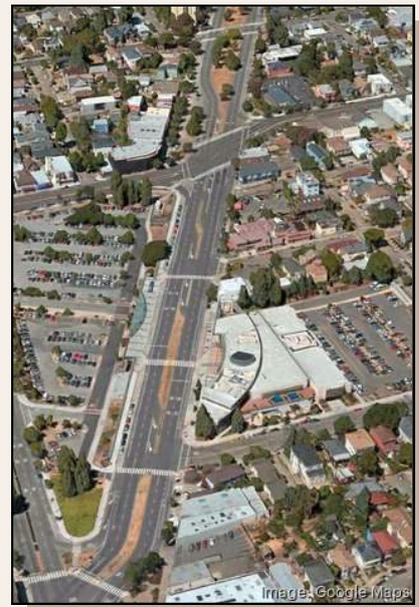
Preference	Details
Displacement due to eminent domain for BART construction	Descendant of someone whose home was taken via eminent domain to develop Ashby or North Berkeley BART station
Displaced by foreclosure	1 point: Applicants displaced due to foreclosure in Berkeley since 2005.
Families with children	1 point: household with at least one child aged 18 or under
Homeless/At Risk of Homelessness	1 point: At Imminent Risk of Homelessness in Berkeley/ with former address in Berkeley OR 1 point: Literally Homeless in North Alameda County
Ties to redlined areas	1 point: Applicant has current/former address in Berkeley’s redlined areas <u>AND/OR</u> 1 point: Applicant’s parent/ grandparent has current/former address in redlined areas.

Figure 6. Affordable Housing Preference Policy preference summary, 2022

The AHPP will provide opportunity for people who were; pushed out of the city due to the development of the Ashby BART station in the 1960s and 1970s, those affected by the foreclosure crisis of 2007-2010 or eviction in recent years, as well as those who suffered from redlining decisions, to have the chance to return to their Berkeley community. This opportunity extends to include the descendants of Black families who were affected by these historic actions. Though many changes are needed to fully counter patterns of exclusion that have persisted in Berkeley for over a century, recent changes open the opportunity for the city to repair harms to Black community members.



Ashby BART Station entrance from South Berkeley parking lot



Aerial view of the Ashby BART Station

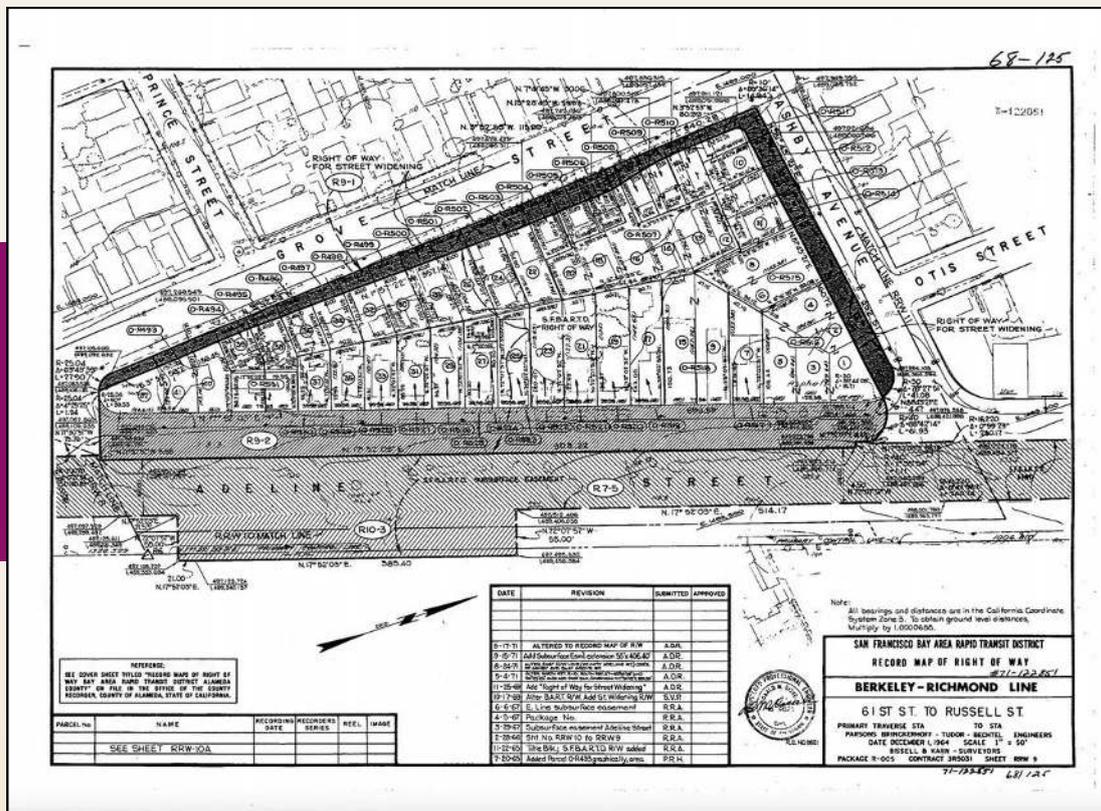
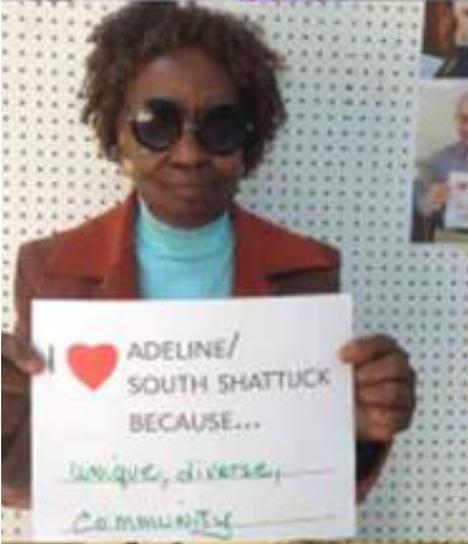
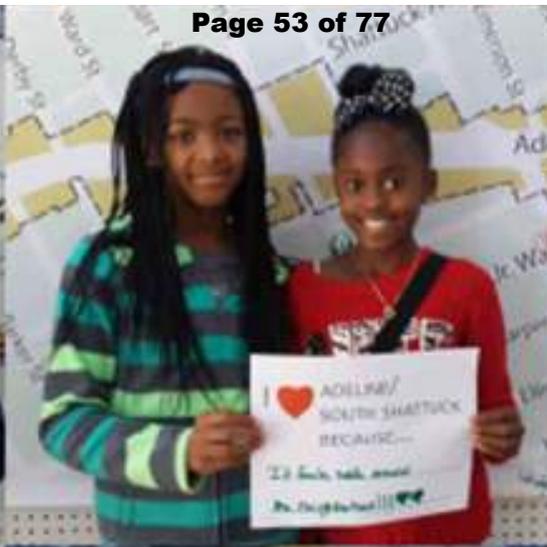


Figure 7. Parcel map of the Ashby BART station area prior to development of the transit station



03 The Fight for Equity for Black Berkeley

An Overview of the Campaign for Equitable Change



The community meets at a People's Assembly hosted by Healthy Black Families, Inc. to discuss affordable housing priorities

Community advocacy was essential for making new policies equitable

Community expertise helped to shape the Affordable Housing Preference Policy

Among the range of policies to reverse displacement trends in Berkeley, the Affordable Housing Preference Policy (AHPP) stands out for addressing the specific priorities and needs of communities that have been and are actively being displaced from Berkeley. Like other anti-displacement policies, the AHPP was made possible through the collaboration of a wide range of partners, including lawmakers, city workers, legal aid organizations and advocacy groups (see Figure 1, page 6 for further details).⁴⁰ But unlike other policymaking processes, the development of the AHPP involved the direct participation and input of Berkeley's Black community early and often in the policymaking process. Through this direct collaboration between the City and the community, the voices of this shrinking population could be heard along with other voices in Berkeley, instead of being drowned out by them.

The Berkeley Black community's identity and cohesion transcended geographic boundaries

For the Berkeley Black community to meaningfully engage in local advocacy on housing policy, the community had to overcome hardships caused in part by decades of displacement. This started with staying connected; community members made the effort to sustain the community fabric in the face of its existential threats. As displacement was happening, community members, many of whom have known each other for generations, kept in touch across city limits. Some who moved to other places came back regularly to Berkeley to visit family, shop, socialize, and go to church. Some remaining in the community continued to reach out and stay active with their far-flung connections. For both the people continuing to reside in South Berkeley as well as legacy families that were pushed out, South Berkeley was home. This broad community umbrella also included a transitional population of Black students at the university who found a home “for radicalism and movement thinking and organizing” in the neighborhood.⁴¹ Together, these dispersed and diverse community could speak with a common and collective voice.



Mildred Howard with her mother Mable Howard in Berkeley in 1985



Mildred Howard in a 2017 interview explaining how rising rent prices pushed her out of Berkeley



Artist Mildred Howard's sculpture "Delivered, Mabel's Promissory Note" after its installation in South Berkeley

The Berkeley Black community steadily beat the drum on its priorities

Despite the challenges that came with being dispersed across geographies, working across generational divides, facing multiple social and economic inequities, and at times even being divided about the pathway to resolution, the Berkeley Black community continually engaged in local politics.⁴² Many community members attribute their persistence to the community culture of activism linked with the Black Panther Party, the Republic of New Afrika Independence Movement, and the Free Speech Movement in the 1960s.⁴³ Their priority issues have historically included disparities in access to healthy environments, the wealth gap, food access, education, housing affordability in Berkeley, and the social determinants of health -- the systemic and environmental factors that influence access to healthful opportunities, resources and choices.⁴⁴



“Where you live determines what you eat, how you travel, the quality of air, the economics in the area, the schools, health care, food security, and even physical security. So when you can’t afford your housing, you experience multiple impacts – not being able to eat, afford bills, pay registration, buy clothing. The list goes on and on when the rents are too high.”

– Berkeley Council Member

When the conditions were right to create change, the community was ready

Ongoing advocacy from the community, a growing movement for racial equity, and increased availability of data validating stories about the displacement happening to Black residents in South Berkeley helped bring awareness to City leaders to the disparate impacts of the crisis on the Black population in Berkeley. In the mid 2010s, City leaders mobilized to address a growing housing crisis, and began to focus more diligently on housing policy. Housing was a key focus in their efforts to update plans for the Adeline Corridor, one of the main streets in South Berkeley, and a historic cultural area for the Berkeley Black community. Through their participation in public planning related to the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, the Black community made the case for establishing preferences for new affordable housing units to help curb displacement. A few years later, the City explored the possibility of creating a new Affordable Housing Preference Policy. When they performed

public outreach to gather input on the process, the Black community in Berkeley insisted that the City work directly and intentionally to understand the impact on the community and lift up the community’s perspective. When the City reached out to the community in response, the community pushed forward leaders at Healthy Black Families, Inc. as their representatives.



Berkeley council members outside of 1910 Elmwood mansion, remembering racially-exclusive housing policies that shaped Berkeley’s landscape



Photo by Brooke Anderson | @movementphotographer

Healthy Black Families staff members at a community event

Healthy Black Families, Inc. led the campaign for equity in Black Berkeley

Healthy Black Families, Inc. (HBF) is a grassroots community leader

Healthy Black Families, Inc. (HBF) is a community-based public health organization focused on improving conditions for the Black community in Berkeley. HBF's vision is to organize individuals, families and the organizations that serve them, into communities empowered with skills to advance social equity and justice, with a focus on Black individuals and families.

HBF was founded in 2013 by local public health leader Dr. Vicki Alexander to organize and address local health disparities, successfully reducing local Black infant mortality inequities by half. Building on this legacy, HBF has worked for over a decade to champion health equity through programming to; connect and empower Black parents, build skills and kindergarten-readiness for Black children, educate about and improve physical activity and food environments and choices for Black families, promote health and wellness and physical activity, and amplify the voices of the Black community through storytelling, education, advocacy and policy development.

HBF provides people with knowledge, skills and strategies to make social systems and policies more equitable for Black people and communities.

“

“We value working with our allies, but the work with allies has done nothing to stop the inequities, mortality and displacement affecting the Black community. HBF staff is directly from the Berkeley Black community and all have experienced what inequity means in our lives and are dedicated to not just interrupting but stopping the harm on every level possible.”

– HBF Representative



HBF encouraged meaningful shifts to the City's policy development process

When HBF began its work with the City on the Affordable Housing Preference Policy, the City shared its plans to gather input from all Berkeley residents to inform priorities for the policy. HBF was familiar with the City's public input process; HBF had participated in public meetings for the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan and had also provided input to the City and its partners on research related to tenant rights. Recognizing the unique needs and challenges of the Berkeley Black community, HBF made the case to shift away from the general city-wide survey process, which would feel more transactional than meaningful to the community, and also leave many of the community's disconnected members out.

The City agreed with HBF's recommendation to continue with the citywide survey but add on a more targeted and customized process for the community's participation. Soon, new outreach plans were underway in the South Berkeley neighborhood. To support the work, the City of Berkeley and several nonprofit partners updated a grant for staff capacity from the San Francisco Foundation's Partnership for the Bay's Future to include HBF's work. The philanthropic support for "Equity 4 Black Berkeley" helped to support a campaign for equity that would lead to greater community participation in the policymaking process and ultimately, the adoption of an Affordable Housing Preference Policy prioritizing the community's concerns.



"Healthy Black Families provides a kind of space where people feel like they do belong. They're one of the few organizations – if not the only organization – that can do that. Although we are a small community, we are fragmented – people have different ways of seeing things, different interests, different ways of aligning. Political forces can leverage these differences to divide and conquer. To create change, we have to get out of our comfort bubbles and create new relationships to one another, and Healthy Black Families, Inc. makes that change possible."

– Community Member

The heart and soul of the campaign required building a strong community base

HBF prioritized inclusive and representative community participation

HBF worked quickly to outreach to the community about the opportunity for change. The staff's deep and longstanding relationships in Berkeley provided a strong foundation for outreach to more senior members of the community as well as those who were displaced long ago. The organization's work with families and young women through their work on the STEP program, Kindergarten Readiness Program, and Thirsty for Change Campaign had broadened their network over the years, and provided a strong foundation to identify and outreach to young leaders. The organization's leaders brought their experience in community organizing and social change efforts to the work, informing strategy and tactics for the campaign. Through this knowledge, and a strong baseline understanding of the community's assets, strengths, challenges and opportunities for change, under the leadership of Executive Director Wilhelmenia Wilson and Deputy Executive Director Ayanna Davis, HBF brought together a community leaders group to address and explore how best to approach the opportunity at hand.



Little Bobby Hutton and the 10th point from the Black Panthers' Ten Point Program, as part of a 2012 Oakland Museum of California art installation in collaboration with Life is Living / Reflections of Healing

HBF provided supports to build community unity, power and capacity

To build community awareness and participation, HBF hosted various events which served to unite a broad range of community members. Included in these events were the Community Leaders Groups, a podcast led by HBF (“The Housing Chronicles”) and most notably, the “Equity 4 Black Berkeley” People’s Assemblies. Complementary to their gatherings, they also provided trainings on Policy Advocacy and Organizing, and an HBF fellowship to build the confidence, knowledge, capacity, and strength of community members to engage in important discussions about housing, displacement and community conditions. Understanding the need for unity and wide-reaching engagement, HBF’s strategy included inviting elders, developers and policymakers to speak at assemblies and motivating local youth to lead in online communication and outreach strategies. When disagreements would arise, HBF facilitated across the community’s differences through discussions, forums, and education. Over time, the participatory, human-centered work of this group would extend into the community and grow the size and power of the community coalition.

“

“Education is key to movement building. If you’re going to capture the hearts and minds of people, small group engagement is one of the best ways to do it.”

- HBF representative



Campaign leaders invested time and care for the community to generate solutions

HBF led the community through participatory research strategies

Community-led, community-based research helped to provide detailed and accurate information about conditions in South Berkeley and the priorities of the community. HBF's surveys captured extensive qualitative information from the community about their experiences with displacement and feelings about returning. Healthy Black Families, Inc. employed multiple strategies to ensure the data they gathered truly reflected the needs and priorities of the community, including: reaching out to both community members living in Berkeley and those who were displaced, gathering information broadly using surveys, training community members to engage in outreach and survey administration, and discussing and collaboratively interpreting findings at public assemblies. To support engagement, HBF held meetings in places familiar and easily accessible to the community, providing food, childcare and safe practices (e.g., COVID safety) to attend to support participant needs.

HBF facilitated the community's process to develop evidence-based recommendations

HBF's survey findings provided a strong basis for the community to reflect upon and understand conditions in Berkeley as identified by members of the Black community, and to discuss and vet ideas for solutions. The community welcomed this contrast to other public processes, which often asked for resident priorities without the opportunity for collective community self-reflection and discussion. Being in a university town, the community was also accustomed to and tired of extractive processes in which researchers would gather information from the community to draw conclusions and make recommendations without their participation, approval, or sometimes even their awareness. In this process, community members reviewed data collected across community to arrive at conclusions. Throughout this process, HBF encouraged them to focus on "strategic unity," and finding the things they could all agree on in order to strengthen the power of their recommendations.



Healthy Black Families hosts a People's Assembly to discuss community priorities

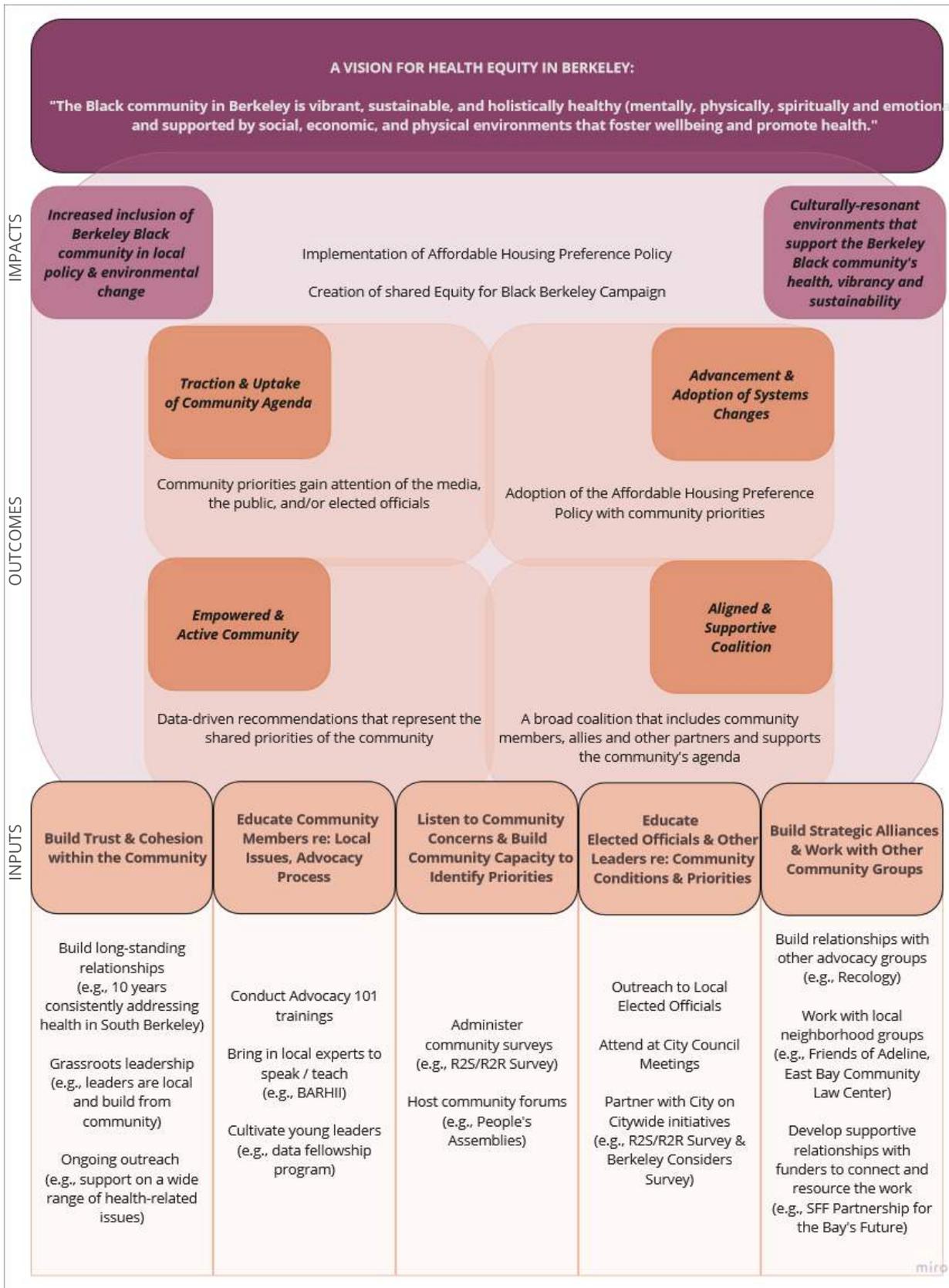


Figure 8. A schematic summarizing Healthy Black Families' efforts to advance a campaign to address the displacement of the Black community from the South Berkeley neighborhood, including the efforts they input, the outcomes of those efforts, and the longer-term impacts towards the vision of Equity 4 Black Berkeley.

HBF applied clear messaging around the community’s shared priorities

With input from the community on the central question of “What do we need to create a thriving Black Berkeley?”, HBF coalesced the recommendations together with research findings to deliver clear messages to local elected officials, city representatives, and funders about the community’s priorities for change.⁴⁵ HBF worked with the City to generate presentations, flyers and other materials to educate others.

The community’s priorities of housing, health, community and finance centered on a widely discussed point in their meetings, one that drew from the wisdom of the Black communities they were connected to across the country and also international liberatory movements such as the Right to Stay Movement that started in Palestine in 1948: that affordable housing was not an effective response to an apartheid state, as affordable housing rested upon an assumption of “the ability of the people to afford.” From here, the language of the campaign shifted to invoke the more inspiring and inclusive vision of “a thriving Black Berkeley” and “equity for Black Berkeley,” from prior language that focused more narrowly on achieving an “equitable Black Berkeley.”



“HBF’s sharing of the Black experience with Berkeley elected created really powerful presentations which had elements of communication and narrative change, especially combined with the really clear frameworks that they put out around “right to stay, right to return, right to own” shows that narrative change that can happen from naming and clarity.”

– Community Partner



City of Berkeley public meeting



Berkeley Black community discusses affordable housing priorities

Equitable processes were integral to Equity 4 Black Berkeley campaign success

HBF worked strategically to build and engage allies along the way

With limited capacity and resources to organize the community and advance change, HBF welcomed strategic partnerships to support the community and advance their priorities. To support community capacity building, HBF leveraged relationships with other nonprofits and advocacy groups, such as the Ecology Center and the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII). HBF also collaborated with a former councilmember who led resident Equity Summits, established community groups like Friends of Adeline, and Black-led organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) - Berkeley chapter and the Berkeley African American Holistic Resource Center to ensure broad outreach on their community survey and to get messages out. To expand its reach while also building stronger community leadership, HBF also developed the HBF Fellows Program and collaborated with Dr. Derethia Duval, a Black professor specializing in qualitative research on participatory research strategies. HBF also welcomed the collaboration of a fellow from the Partnership for the Bay's Future, staff at the City, and allies at the East Bay Community Law Center to interpret community recommendations along with results from a citywide public survey administered by the City, along with other public data.



HBF influenced decision-makers with well-backed recommendations and broad support

The community recommendations were a critical component for developing policy. HBF worked with staff at the City of Berkeley and other community leaders to review these recommendations along with, citywide survey results, public demographic and housing data, and examples and models of preference policies in other places to develop meaningful, solutions-oriented recommendations. The Black community in Berkeley could get behind this work when they saw their input reflected in the draft policies. With a broad coalition of support and a strong basis of research supporting their work, HBF ultimately co-presented clear recommendations to leaders in Berkeley.⁴⁶

“

We couldn't have done this without HBF. They immediately came up with the logo and putting out info to the Black community. They had a QR code that people would use to download questions. They created a whole communication list. That was initial. Then they did [People's Assemblies], they'd discuss topics every month. That's where some of the priorities came from...The question was not just health but what would it take to create a thriving Black Berkeley? They were able to glean and put data points together and come up with a great report to inform where the money will go over time.”

– Community Partner



Berkeley City Council discussion



04 Toward the Vision of a Thriving Black Berkeley

A Summary of Lessons Learned

Achieving the vision for a thriving Black Berkeley requires everyone

The AHPP is a key early step in the overall journey

The Affordable Housing Preference Policy represents an important start to addressing institutional racism and the systematic displacement of Berkeley community members, but more work is needed to achieve a sustainable, thriving community. Patterns of displacement have been the result of multiple decisions at different junctures over decades; creating new patterns of inclusion will require everyone's readiness and willingness to design, seize and implement other opportunities for change in the future. That readiness will hinge upon: (1) the community's continued organizing to monitor and enforce the implementation of AHPP and other policies, (2) the City's continued work to effectively and meaningfully partner with the community in future public processes, and (3) the continued support of funders and allies to attend to the priorities of the Black people in Berkeley and to stop the systemic harm and economic extraction of resources from their community.

Collaboration on a common vision of a thriving Black Berkeley

Achieving a thriving Black community in Berkeley requires continued collaboration among diverse stakeholders around a common vision. Favorable conditions to create and adopt the AHPP were born from the alignment of Berkeley residents around goals to curb displacement and address institutionalized racism in local exclusionary housing policies. Strengthening the alignment around the community's vision for a sustainable, thriving Black community in Berkeley will help to generate greater momentum to meaningfully address a long history of exclusion. This vision extends beyond the AHPP's promise to help legacy families return to their Berkeley roots. It calls for greater opportunities for Black families to build generational wealth, stronger investments in community culture, and better supports for youth and workforce development.

Future opportunities for change

This vision can be made possible through policies and programs that support greater homeownership among Black families, the revitalization of historic cultural gathering places like the Ashby Flea Market, and the development of new ones like the African American Holistic Resource Center. It includes efforts to build alliances and coalitions in support of their vision, outreach to investors to infuse sizable resources into equity for Black Berkeley, and research on opportunities for policy development or change.



City of Berkeley planning workshop



A South Berkeley community resident, community organizer and leader at Healthy Black Families, Inc. listens to the words of another member of the community

As Healthy Black Families, Inc. moves forward in its work with the City of Berkeley and other partners to build momentum toward a shared vision, it is important to look back at the lessons from the campaign to date. Communities, allies and funders involved so far have shared multiple lessons for others engaging in similar work, listed below.

Lessons for communities

Healthy Black Families' efforts around housing advocacy in Berkeley have demonstrated that it is important for communities facing challenges to:

- *Create power in numbers* – To seize opportunities for change when they arise, communities benefit from building a strong base. Staying connected across geographies and generations is especially important in times of adversity, like when facing displacement.
- *Build power through learning* – Knowledge is power. Communities can build power through both simple and organized acts of learning, including: ensuring the transmission of information across generations, leveraging the knowledge of different generations, engaging in community data gathering efforts, and co-creating data-informed recommendations.
- *Strengthen and unify the community through community connectors and caretakers* – Communities are not monolithic, and conflict among diverse community members is often inevitable. To overcome these natural patterns, communities must find and value the people in the community who demonstrate the greatest care and compassion to help facilitate across disagreement, build trust, and strengthen community cohesion.



- *Adopt a stance of readiness* – A strong community base is ready to speak up and speak out, ready to identify solutions, and ready to ask questions and challenge norms both when the time is right and when it is inconvenient. Communities can prepare by staying politically engaged, monitoring social and political shifts, and staying on the lookout for opportunities to advocate for change.



Healthy Black Families is a community-based and community-led organization located in South Berkeley

- *Work in solidarity* – Creating alliances with other leaders and groups is essential for advancing shared liberation. Healthy Black Families has operated under ideologies that understand that while policies and issues will shift, fundamental root causes and values will remain the same. Engaging a wide range of partners helps to build flexibility, muscle and endurance for long-term change processes.

Lessons for allies

Allies in public agencies and community organizations played an important role in the housing policy efforts to advance equity for Black Berkeley. Allies pursuing other, similar efforts should note that:

- *Work to earn trust* – Collaboration “moves at the speed of trust,” particularly when working with communities that have chronically faced systems or leaders that do not trust or prioritize their input. Allies can build trust by proving themselves trustworthy; listening to understand the community’s perspective, leading with community priorities, offering supports, and following through on promises.

- *Offer resource-intensive support to support the community's leadership* – Support and build upon the community's expertise and leadership by providing research, planning, strategy, and technical supports that will help to validate their priorities and expedite their solutions. In the work on the AHPP, the City of Berkeley brought technical research skills to expand knowledge of policy models supporting community priorities, and the Partnership for the Bay's Future brought resources to support analysis and communication activities under the community's leadership.
- *Find creative ways to formalize community-driven change* – Leadership involves forging new paths, and leadership can happen from any seat. Every actor in a change process, working with shared values toward a common vision, has the power to identify barriers and opportunities for change. In the fight for equity for Black Berkeley, leaders in varying seats of local government worked with and found different ways to advance change in favor of the AHPP.
- *Promote the community's stories* – By sharing the stories of the community's obstacles, challenges and wins, allies can leverage their existing networks and reach to help broaden understanding of the community's conditions, priorities, and solutions. In today's digital landscape, allies can look to and promote the podcasts, blogs, and social media posts of their community partners.

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“This is a story that needs to be told. It needs to not just be in front of people who care about social justice, but also people who are agnostic, who don't understand the privilege that we have had by being white and not discriminated against. In a progressive community like Berkeley, we might be able to find new funding for big efforts like this. There are all sorts of opportunities that could happen if the greater world were to understand the true impact of discrimination.”

– Community Partner



Lessons for funders

Funders were essential for ensuring that Healthy Black Families, the City of Berkeley, the community and allies could complete their work in a timely and effective way. Funders aiming to create change in this and other communities can build on this work and:

- *Lift up trusted community leaders* – Community leaders are not always those who step forward first or are recognized by groups in power. Trusted community leaders are those who are pushed forward by the community members themselves. They create space for dialogue within broad, diverse communities. Funders seeking to support sustainable community-centered change would benefit from ensuring sufficient time to listen to and understand the specific needs of the community and to identify the community's natural trusted leaders.
- *Provide core support to build community power* – Communities know that while issues and politics will change, the fundamental root causes and issues remain the same. Communities need support for long-term, sustained organizing to remain connected, unified and ready. The experience and efforts of the Black Berkeley community demonstrate that hardships like displacement severely impact community coherence and voting power. Even without an agenda or specific policy intervention in sight, community connection and base building matters.



Proposed new development in South Berkeley will include affordable housing and storefronts

- *Convene coalitions* – Community groups and local government actors rarely have the space or resources to discuss needs or best practices together. Providing the financial, staffing, and physical resources to support dialogue, coalition building and collaboration will expedite the identification of effective solutions. Funder grants and informational resources made it possible for the City and community to research and create effective community-centered solutions.
- *Connect efforts to formalize community-centered policy development in local government* – Funders can support continued partnerships, strategy development, research and technical assistance to spur innovation. Despite growing awareness and efforts to improve public participation processes for greater inclusion, there is still a long way to go for policymaking to regularly and effectively integrate community priorities. The equity campaign applied here provides a model for lifting up a small but mighty perspective that would have been diminished due to the large plurality of stakeholders in the community.



Lessons for the public

The public at large played an important role in the creation of an Affordable Housing Preference Policy responsive to the needs of the Black community in Berkeley.

- *Stay informed and curious* – Public understanding of the issues affecting the residents of South Berkeley deepened over time and helped to create a more inclusive agenda for change. The public can arrive at inclusive solutions to complex community issues by staying curious and learning how experiences might differ within a community. In Berkeley, members of the public involved in Friends of Adeline worked directly with HBF and the community to understand and help advocate for community priorities.
- *Be a persistent amplifier* – Continued pressure from the public helped grow support for improved housing access and affordability, and ensured that the issue remain a priority for local Berkeley leadership to address. Members of the public can support equitable change by amplifying the needs, priorities and solutions of communities of color.
- *Vote for inclusive, values-aligned leaders* – By participating in the democratic process, the broader public elected leaders who were willing to listen to and address not just the priorities of the broader populace, but also the needs of its most vulnerable groups.



05 Afterword

This Case Story

This case story was commissioned by Healthy Black Families, Inc. with funding from the Coro Foundation and developed by Mesu Strategies, LLC. The purpose of this case story is to document the story and lessons learned from the Affordable Housing Preference Policy success to advance equity for Black Berkeley. The aim is to share details on their approach to help inform and guide others who share their vision to achieve equitable community transformation. This case story is not a systematic evaluation of the campaign or its actors.

Approach

To inform the development of the case story, Mesu Strategies performed a literature review, and media scan, conducted confidential interviews with stakeholders, applied the PolicyLink Getting Equity Advocacy Results (GEAR) framework and benchmarks of success, and synthesized key learnings.

The literature review looked at peer-reviewed publications, grey literature, and materials provided by HBF and peer-reviewed publications, including:

- Educational materials developed for and presented to policymakers regarding possible policy solutions for local community needs (e.g., presentations to Berkeley City Council re Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act and Affordable Housing Preference Policy, 2021-2022)
- Educational materials developed for and presented to communities regarding policy opportunities and needs for input (e.g., presentations, question guides, talking points for members of the West and South Berkeley neighborhoods in community meetings and People's Assemblies, 2021-2022)
- Databases of information provided by community members about community priorities (2023)
- Policy documents (e.g., Adeline Corridor Specific Plan 2020, Affordable Housing Preference Policy 2023)
- Podcast links discussing and describing the context and journey for its advocacy (2023-2024)
- Invitation materials planning for future campaign meetings with BART, SFF, and City of Berkeley (2024)

Mesu Strategies conducted confidential interviews with community members and allies involved with the AHPP. All interviewees invited to participate successfully completed an interview. Interviewees received a common set of questions related to their role in AHPP advocacy and perceptions of context, success and challenges. Interviewees included:

- **Anna Cash**, City of Berkeley Housing and Human Services, formerly Partnership for the Bay's Future
- **Ayanna Davis**, Healthy Black Families, Inc. and community member
- **Jacqueline McCormick**, City of Berkeley Mayor's Office
- **Willie Phillips**, community member
- **Wilhelmenia Wilson**, Healthy Black Families, Inc. and community member

06 References

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