



## Honoring Councilmember Susan Wengraf for 16 years of Service to the City of Berkeley

**WHEREAS,** Councilmember Susan Wengraf hails from New York City where she started as school teacher on the lower eastside of Manhattan, before gentrification, and obtained her Masters in Special Education, specializing in teaching deaf and hard of hearing children; and

**WHEREAS,** Susan Wengraf moved to Berkeley, CA in 1969 and met her husband Mark Berger during the time she directed and produced the award-winning documentary about Malvina Reynolds, “Love it Like a Fool”; and

**WHEREAS,** in 1991, after Susan, Mark and their two children moved to District 6, Betty Olds reached out to Susan, at the recommendation of Councilmember Dean, to run her campaign against an eight-year incumbent. After winning, Susan was asked to serve as a Legislative Aide in the District 6 office. During that time, Susan became the Berkeley Democratic Club President. Though she never intended to enter politics, she was immersed and when Betty decided to retire it was mutually decided that Susan would run; and

**WHEREAS,** Ms. Wengraf has made a tremendous contribution to making Berkeley safer from wildfire. She led the efforts of ensuring Measure FF’s place on the ballot for Berkeley voters, increasing Berkeley Fire Department’s capacity to proactively prevent and prepare for wildfire; and

**WHEREAS,** Susan’s leadership on Wildfire has been tremendous, not just for Berkeley, but for the region. Wildfire has been considered a “hills issue”, but through educating her colleagues over the years of the real threats to the entire city, the City Council unanimously adopted her resolution declaring wildfire prevention and safety a top priority in the City of Berkeley in 2019. Susan enlisted an advisory committee of stakeholder agencies – an unprecedented feat – and serves as the first chair of the East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWC); and

**WHEREAS** Ms. Wengraf initiated a county-wide collaborative in response to huge parties with bonfires and fireworks that evolved during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Grizzly Peak Boulevard, an area within so many jurisdictions that no City, County, or Agency would touch on their own; and

**WHEREAS,** Councilmember Susan Wengraf, forever an advocate for young people, instituted 15 mph speed limits within 500 feet of Berkeley schools and initiated the City/UC/Student Relations Committee, a council committee focused on providing Cal students and administrators an opportunity to discuss issues directly with their City representatives and work collaboratively on issues of mutual concern; and

**WHEREAS,** Councilmember Susan Wengraf is known for her service to constituents, initiating communication via her newsletters, the first newsletter of any Councilmember, responding to their calls and emails even on nights and weekends, some would say her cell phone was an appendage, and hosting community meetings on topics of concern, such as crime, wildfire, and canceled insurance policies; and

**WHEREAS,** Councilmember Wengraf values the spirit of partnership and collaboration. She succeeded in breaking ground on Undergrounding Utility District 48 by building a strong and trusted collaboration with a small group of PG&E and COB staff that met monthly for two years. After more than 30 years the project broke ground in July 2023 with completion projected for Spring 2027; and

**WHEREAS** Councilmember Susan Wengraf assumed leadership of Berkeley's annual Holocaust Remembrance Day Program in 2018, assuring the continuance of this important non-secular honoring of Holocaust Survivors and steering the commemoration successfully through the pandemic and into 2024; and

**WHEREAS,** Both of Councilmember Susan Wengraf's parents were educators who instilled in her the value of public service and Susan has taken seriously the ongoing process of finding her center in order to do what is right, even if not popular; and

**WHEREAS,** Councilmember Susan Wengraf is beloved by her constituents, colleagues, City of Berkeley leadership and staff.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Jesse Arreguin,** Mayor of the City of Berkeley, do hereby recognize, thank and honor Councilmember Susan Wengraf for her 16 years of service as a Councilmember, two of which as Vice Mayor, and her 32 years of service to the City of Berkeley in various capacities.

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED** that the City of Berkeley and your colleagues wish you the best in your retirement and hope that you will continue to be involved.



Jesse Arreguin  
Mayor



November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024