



Igor Tregub  
Councilmember, District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR  
JUNE 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Igor Tregub (Author) and Cecilia Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Resolution Opposing the Removal of USPS Mailboxes at the Berkeley Main Post Office

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a Resolution opposing the removal of public mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office on Allston Way and urging immediate engagement with United States Postal Service (USPS) leadership to restore these essential public services and send the Resolution to the attention of US Congresswoman Lateefah Simon and US Postmaster.

### **CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS**

The USPS has recently removed public mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office, located on Allston Way, a landmark civic institution that serves thousands of residents, small businesses, and community organizations.

Several District 4 constituents have reached out to District 4 office with concerns over the sudden and unexplained removal of mailboxes from in front of Berkeley's Main Post Office. Residents who have long relied on these services for their daily needs have expressed not only confusion and frustration, but also a growing sense of alarm, as no public notice or explanation was provided. One constituent described the unsettling experience of arriving to mail letters, only to find the familiar exterior boxes gone with a postal worker confirming the change. Across these messages, a consistent and troubling theme has emerged: a deep sense of dismay, a loss of trust, and a call for greater transparency and accountability in decisions that directly impact the community's everyday access to essential public infrastructure.

Public mailboxes are vital to the timely exchange of bills, legal documents, small business shipments, and critical correspondence. Their removal forces residents to travel farther, endure longer waits at remaining facilities, and face delays in deliveries, an unacceptable burden in a city where mail is a lifeline for medication, newspapers, and government communications.

The mailboxes at the Berkeley Main Post Office served as a key hub in a vibrant, high-traffic commercial corridor, where visitors often combined postal errands with trips to nearby shops, restaurants, and civic spaces. The removal risks disrupting this ecosystem, reducing downtown foot traffic, and weakening the local economy.

Moreover, this action threatens to widen existing inequities, disproportionately affecting lower-income residents, seniors, and individuals without reliable internet access, all of whom rely on traditional mail for essential services. According to a 2021 Pew Research Center survey, approximately 27% of seniors aged 65 and older do not use the internet, relying heavily on USPS for managing finances, receiving Social Security notices, and other essential communications<sup>1</sup>.

## **BACKGROUND**

Berkeley has long spoken up against USPS closing places and cutting back services, since it makes mail slower and hurts our neighborhoods. Now, removing these mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office is another concern. This latest removal from the Berkeley Main Post Office is equally troubling, as USPS has provided no transparent data showing that this mailbox was underused or cost inefficient.

The removal of these mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office is not an isolated action, it represents a continued erosion of public infrastructure that Berkeley residents have long fought to protect. The Main Post Office itself, located in a historic landmark building, in 2013, Berkeley residents, labor unions, and civic leaders successfully organized to block the sale of the building to private developers, affirming that the USPS is not only a service but a vital part of the city's public commons<sup>2</sup>. In 2013 Berkeley City Council passed a resolution opposing the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office<sup>3</sup>.

Berkeley has repeatedly demonstrated that its community values accessible, public-serving infrastructure and has stood at the forefront of protecting the USPS from privatization and cutbacks. This resolution continues that legacy, reinforcing the city's commitment to equitable access, economic vitality, and public stewardship.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/04/02/7-of-americans-dont-use-the-internet-who-are-they/>

<sup>2</sup> Berkeleyside. *Locals, city fight on to prevent sale of Berkeley Post Office*, July 19, 2013. <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2013/07/19/locals-city-fight-on-to-prevent-sale-of-berkeley-post-office>

<sup>3</sup> City of Berkeley. *Resolution Opposing the Sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office*, March 5, 2013. <https://newspack-berkeleyside-cityside.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2013-03-05-Item-15-Opposing-the-Sale.pdf>

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Limited staff time is required to communicate the City's position to State representatives. No direct impact on the General Fund. However, reduced access to postal services risks indirect economic harm to Berkeley residents and small businesses by disrupting essential operations and reducing downtown foot traffic.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS**

The removal of these mailboxes will likely force more residents to drive farther for postal services, increasing vehicle trips, greenhouse gas emissions, and downtown congestion. Retaining convenient, walkable mail infrastructure in the heart of the city directly supports Berkeley's climate and sustainability goals by reducing car dependency and supporting transit-oriented neighborhoods.

## **CONTACT PERSON**

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## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Resolution

**RESOLUTION NO. XX,XXXN.S.**

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE REMOVAL OF USPS MAILBOXES FROM THE  
BERKELEY MAIN POST OFFICE ON ALLSTON WAY**

**WHEREAS**, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has removed public mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office on Allston Way, a vital civic institution serving Downtown Berkeley residents, businesses, and organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, such removal imposes undue burdens on seniors, persons with disabilities, small businesses, newspapers, and community groups who rely on efficient, accessible local mail services; and

**WHEREAS**, USPS has provided no clear public rationale for removal, claiming only that the removed mailboxes were underutilized or unprofitable; and

**WHEREAS**, these mailboxes contributed to the vitality of Berkeley's downtown economy by supporting foot traffic to nearby shops, restaurants, and services; and

**WHEREAS**, their removal has a potential to increase vehicle trips, lengthen lines at remaining facilities, and impose financial and logistical hardships on employees, residents, and small businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, timely, accessible mail service is essential for equitable access to healthcare, legal services, government programs, and small business operations, especially for vulnerable populations; and

**WHEREAS**, this action aligns with a troubling national pattern of USPS disinvestment and infrastructure removal that threatens public access to essential services.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City formally opposes the removal of USPS mailboxes from the Berkeley Main Post Office on Allston Way; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Berkeley transmit this resolution to Congresswoman Lateefah Simon (CD-12), the Postmaster representing the City of Berkeley, and the Postmaster General.