



2024 General Plan Annual Progress Report

City of Berkeley

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
2. Land Use Element	4
3. Transportation	8
4. Housing	11
5. Disaster Preparation and Safety	14
6. Open Space and Recreation	16
7. Environmental Management	18
8. Economic Development	29
9. Urban Design	32
10. Citizen Participation	34

INTRODUCTION

Government Code Section 65400(a)(2) requires planning agencies to provide an annual report to their legislative body, the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the status of their General Plan and progress in its implementation. The report must detail the progress in meeting the jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need and address efforts by the local agency towards removing governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing.

The purpose for the Annual Progress Report is to: 1) assess how the General Plan is being implemented in accordance with adopted goals, policies and implementation measures; 2) identify any necessary adjustments or modifications to the General Plan as a means to improve local implementation; 3) provide a clear correlation between land use decisions that have been made during the 12-month reporting period and the goals, policies, and implementation measures contained in the General Plan; and 4) provide information regarding local agency progress in meeting its share of the regional housing need.

The current City of Berkeley General Plan was originally adopted on **December 18, 2001 and April 23, 2002**. The General Plan contains the seven State-required elements which are Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety. The State allows the combining of elements or the addition of new elements as long as the required seven elements are present in some fashion. The Berkeley General Plan contains the following nine elements:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Disaster Preparedness & Safety
- Open Space & Recreation
- Environmental Management
- Economic Development & Employment
- Urban Design & Preservation
- Citizen Participation

Local governments are required to keep their General Plans current and internally consistent. The Berkeley Housing Element was last updated and adopted by the City Council on January 18, 2023 and certified by HCD on February 28, 2023 for the 2023-2031 planning period.

The City of Berkeley continues to actively implement the policies of the General Plan including the goals, policies and programs of the Housing Element. The following represents the progress the City has made towards implementing the General Plan and Housing Element during the **Calendar Year (CY) 2024** reporting period, which looks at the 2023-2031 6th Cycle Housing Element that was certified as that was the Housing Element in effect during the CY 2024.

The information to follow is organized to correspond with the elements of the Berkeley General Plan.

LAND USE ELEMENT

AMENDMENTS

State Law limits the number of times each mandatory element of the General Plan, such as the Land Use Element, can be amended to a maximum of four times per calendar year.

The Land Use Element of the Berkeley General Plan was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station Planning

Planning is underway to re-imagine the Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations as vibrant places that include housing, open space and community amenities. Both sites are owned by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART).

- **North Berkeley BART**

In February 2024, the Developer for the North Berkeley Station, North Berkeley Housing Partners submitted a housing project application for streamlined entitlements pursuant to AB 2011. On December 11, 2024, the City approved a land use application under AB 2011 for the North Berkeley BART site. The project includes 739 homes, 381 of which will be affordable to lower-income households, as well as public open space improvements.

- **Ashby BART**

In September 2024, City Council adopted a nonbinding Term Sheet for Ashby BART Transit Oriented Development (Resolution No. 71,514-N.S.). The Term Sheet was executed by the City and BART on September 21, 2024. On December 3, 2024, the City Council approved an ordinance (No. 7,939-N.S.) authorizing agreements with BART, aligning with the term sheet adopted in September 2024. That same day, the City and BART issued a joint

Request for Proposals and Notice of Funding Availability for developers of the Ashby BART West Lot. On December 6, 2024, the City published Preliminary Objective Design Standards for the Ashby BART West Lot, reflecting City and BART policies, state laws, and community input.

Density Bonus Projects

In CY 2024, 83% of projects greater than 5 units were approved using State Density Bonus provisions. The following Density Bonus projects were either approved, under construction, or completed this past year.

- 1598 University Ave
Demolish a non-residential structure and construct a 127,492 square-foot, eight-story (89 feet- 2 inches) mixed-use residential building containing 207 dwelling units (21 Very Low-Income) and 5,943 square foot commercial space, with 39 automobile parking spaces and 92 bicycle parking spaces, utilizing State Density Bonus.
- 1750 Sacramento St
AB 2011 Ministerial Application. The proposed project is a transit-oriented in-fill development of 13 mixed-use and multi-family residential buildings totaling approximately 769,300 SF and one wrap garage structure with approximately 296 parking spaces in parking lots surrounding the North Berkeley BART Station. Buildings range in height from 3 to 8 stories and consist of 739 units with over 50% of the homes at affordable rent levels. The project includes improvements to the Ohlone Greenway and over 6,000 SF of community-serving ground floor uses as well as street and public realm upgrades, and over 48,000 SF of publicly accessible open space.
- 1752 Shattuck Ave
Demolish an existing 2,998 square-foot, one story commercial building and construct a 47,137 square-foot, seven-story mixed-use building containing 74 dwelling units and 1,210 square feet of commercial floor area. Project utilizes State Density Bonus.
- 2000 University Ave
Phase 2 of construction of a new 8- story mixed use building with 81 dwelling units, Ground level lobby, Commercial space (Warm Shell), with state of California Density bonus. This phase consists of all building elements except foundation, 3-story concrete podium, and underground utilities.
- 2037 Durant Ave
Demolish 1-story 13,000 square foot commercial building, and construct an 8-story (90 feet), 76,373 square foot mixed-use building with 1,552 square feet of ground floor commercial space and 74 units of multi-family housing (including 4 VLI), utilizing State Density Bonus

- 2099 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
New Mixed-use Building: 72 units of market rate housing and ground floor retail/commercial space. 5 floors of Type III-A construction over 2 floors Type I construction. 12 parking spaces on the 1st floor, 72 units including 5 Very Low Income.
- 2115 Kittredge St
Construction of a 15-story, mixed-used building (155,741 sq. ft) with a live performance theater (19,108 sq. ft) on the ground and basement floors, and 214 dwelling units. Density Bonus Project includes 22 affordable units with amenity spaces on the 2nd, 14th, and 15th floors, which is included in the total amount of dwelling units.
- 2128 Oxford St
SB330 Application – Demolition of existing structure(s) (includes 16 rent-controlled units and construction of 26-Story, mixed use building with 485 dwelling units (includes 5 ELI and 42 VLI) and 13,500 SF of commercial space. Closed LUST Site (2148 Center). Eligible National Register Historic (2132 Center).
- 2136 San Pablo Ave
Demolition of the existing building and construction of a new 6 story mixed-use building with 126 dwelling units (of which 3 are live/work) and 10 are provided as low-income units.
- 2137 Dwight Way
Phase 2: Wood superstructure; Levels 2-6 of new (6) story building to include 58 residential units and ground floor amenity space
- 2300 Ellsworth St
Demolish two residential buildings with a total of 12 dwelling units and construct a 7-story residential apartment building (72,500 square feet) and 69 dwelling units (7 Very Low Income and 2 Low-Income units). The 6,500 square commercial building at 2300 Ellsworth will be retained.
- 2427 San Pablo Ave
Demolish two existing multifamily buildings and construct a 36,280 square foot, five-story (70 feet, 8 inches), residential building containing 8 replacement apartment units and a Residential Hotel (Group Living Accommodation) with 70 single-occupancy rooms (3 Extremely Low-Income, 2 Very Low-Income units, and 3 Low-Income) for a total of 78 units, utilizing State Density Bonus. Fifteen off-street automobile parking spaces would be provided.

- 2462 Bancroft Way
Demolish an existing non-residential structure and construct at 40,086 square foot, eight-story (88 feet 6 inches) mixed use residential building containing 66 dwelling units (3 Very Low-Income units Density Bonus qualifying units), 1,312 square feet of commercial space, and 28 bicycle parking spaces.
- 2527 San Pablo Ave
Demolish an existing vacant service station building and construct a 6-story, mixed use building with 63 dwelling units, including 12 below market rate units for qualified persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD); 3,179 square feet of combined ground floor commercial space for restaurant use including incidental service of beer and wine; and ground level parking for 49 vehicles.
- 2530 Bancroft Way
Removal of existing commercial structure. Construction of a new 12-story mixed use housing development over ground-level commercial and lobbies for a total of 110 dwelling units proposed.
- 2538 Durant Ave
A Density Bonus project that would demolish a four-story (52 feet), 14,780 square foot residential building that includes 12 dwelling units; five residential off-street parking spaces; and a surface parking lot with 30 vehicle parking spaces to construct an eight-story (88 feet and 8 inches), 80,829 -square-foot mixed-use building with 83 units (including six Very Low-Income units) and 1,460 square feet of ground floor commercial space.
- 2555 College Ave
Demolish two single-story (11 feet, 9 inches) commercial structures with a combined size of 834 square feet and construct a, four-story (47 feet, 3 inches), 10,024 square-foot multifamily residential building with 11 units (one Very-Low Income), utilizing State Density Bonus.
- 2587 Telegraph Ave
Construction of 8-story mixed-use development with 52 dwelling units and 2500 sf of ground-floor commercial space. This project includes residential amenities and usable open space
- 2701 Shattuck Ave
Construct a 5-story, 62'-tall, 27,980-square-foot, mixed-use building with 57 dwelling units (including 5 VLI units), a 600-square-foot ground-floor Food Service Establishment, 30 automobile parking spaces, and secure storage for 44 bicycles.

- 3030 Telegraph Ave
Demolish a one-story medical office building and two duplexes containing four units (2330 Webster Street and 2334-2336 Webster Street), and construct a five-story (63-foot) mixed-use building with 1,550 square feet of commercial area and 144 dwelling units, including eight Below Market Rate units (seven Very Low-Income units and one Low-Income unit), utilizing a State Density Bonus.
- 805 Jones St
Construct three, two-story duplexes for a total of six units (5,510 square feet) with a height of 26 feet and a 455 square foot second-story (22 feet) addition to the existing 1,750 square foot commercial building.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

During the CY 2024 reporting period, the City issued building permits for 102 ADUs and issued certificates of occupancy for 91 ADUs.

TRANSPORTATION

AMENDMENTS

The Transportation Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Citywide Demand-Responsive Parking Meter Pricing and SmartSpace Parking Program: By the end of 2023, all of the City's parking meters were transitioned to the goBerkeley program, which uses demand-responsive pricing and longer time limits to create more parking options and availability. In summer 2023, the City also made the SmartSpace pilot program permanent, which is a program to reduce excess greenhouse gas emissions from visitors frequently re-parking in residential permit areas to avoid posted two-hour time limits. The pilot includes new long-term paid parking for visitors in a residential permit area immediately south of UC Berkeley campus and parking permits for employees of local neighborhood businesses in the Elmwood neighborhood.

Addison Bike Boulevard: The City applied for and received funding from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant program Cycle 6 to complete the remaining segments of the Addison Street Bicycle Boulevard from Sacramento Street to Aquatic Park and from Milvia Street to the UC Berkeley Campus. When complete, this route will provide the only continuous east-west bikeway connecting the UC Berkeley Campus with Downtown Berkeley, West Berkeley, and the Bay Trail along the San Francisco Bay Shoreline. Public Works staff initiated preliminary work on this project at the San Pablo Avenue/Addison Street intersection in 2023 as part of the Alameda County Transportation Commission San Pablo Avenue Corridor projects, and initiated work on funding allocation for the next phase of project design to begin in 2025.

Telegraph Corridor Study: In 2021, the City acquired a grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission to conduct a study and perform preliminary engineering for major transit and bikeway improvements along Telegraph Avenue from Dwight Way to the Oakland border. Project components may include new bus-only lanes and a Class IV protected bikeway. The City kicked off the study process, collecting and analyzing existing conditions data and conducting the first phase of public engagement and concept design by the end of 2022. Project was on hold during 2023 but will be restarted in 2024 with the goal of completing conceptual design, public engagement, environmental clearance, and City Council approval by end of 2025.

Southside Complete Streets: This project will improve conditions for people walking, biking, riding transit, driving, and delivering goods and services in Berkeley's Southside neighborhood along Bancroft Way, Fulton Street, and Dana Street. In February of 2022 the Berkeley City Council approved conceptual designs for each of the four corridors. By the end of 2022 the City completed detailed engineering design and requested allocation of construction funds to be able to begin construction of transportation improvements in 2023. Construction funds were allocated, an open public bid process was conducted, a construction contract was executed, and construction was initiated in mid-December 2023. Construction is anticipated to be complete in spring 2025.

Adeline Complete Streets: This project will improve conditions for people walking, biking, riding transit, driving, and delivering goods and services along Berkeley's Adeline Street corridor from Ashby Avenue, alongside the Ashby BART station, and down to the Berkeley/Oakland border. In 2022 the City advertised for a consultant contract for the currently-funded conceptual design, public engagement, and environmental phase, interviewed consultants, and picked a consultant with whom to negotiate scope, schedule, and budget. The project was on hold in 2023 but was restarted in 2024 with City Council award of a consultant contract in the first half of 2024. Completion of conceptual design, public engagement, environmental clearance, and City Council approval is anticipated by end of 2026.

Ohlone Greenway Modernization Project: The goals of the Ohlone Greenway Safety Improvements Project are to upgrade a portion of the existing multi-use pathway, from Virginia Gardens to the south to Santa Fe Avenue to the north, to better accommodate the needs of all users and improve safety, especially at roadway intersections and during non-daylight hours. Upgrades will be focused on the following: Improving safety of pathway/roadway intersections, widening the pathway where feasible, improved connection at pathway gap on Peralta Avenue, enhanced pathway lighting to improve safety and security, and landscaping work to improve lighting and safety. The project completed conceptual design and public engagement in 2023 and will complete detailed engineering design in early 2025, with construction anticipated in late 2025.

Martin Luther King Jr Way Vision Zero Quick Build: This project implements elements of one of the high-priority pedestrian crossing safety corridors from the 2020 Berkeley Pedestrian Plan,

prioritized according to the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan. The project consists of the installation of median refuge islands, hardened centerlines, solar-powered Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), crosswalk lighting, roadway signage, detectable warning surfaces, roadway striping, pavement markings, red curb painting, pavement rehabilitation, and concrete curb ramp construction. The project completed detailed engineering design in late 2022, started construction in July 2023, and was completed in mid-2024.

Sacramento Street Pedestrian Safety Project: This project implements elements of one of the high-priority pedestrian crossing safety corridors from the 2020 Berkeley Pedestrian Plan, prioritized according to the 2020 Vision Zero Action Plan. The project consists of the installation of median refuge islands, hardened centerlines, solar-powered Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), crosswalk lighting, roadway signage, detectable warning surfaces, roadway striping, pavement markings, red curb painting, pavement rehabilitation, and concrete curb ramp construction. The project reached 95% completion of detailed engineering design in late 2023. Detailed engineering design was completed in 2024, with construction occurring beginning in Spring 2025.

Vision Zero Program: The Vision Zero program uses Engineering, Education, and Enforcement strategies to try to achieve the Berkeley City Council adopted goal of eliminating severe injury and fatal traffic crashes by 2028. During 2023 the program continued work on major grant-funded capital Vision Zero and Complete Streets projects listed above. Other Vision Zero program activities were largely on hold during 2023 and 2024, but anticipate being restarted in 2025, including the Vision Zero Coordinating Committee and continuing work on developing Rapid Response communications and Quick Build traffic safety implementation programs.

Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan: The City of Berkeley General Plan has a Transit-First Policy (Berkeley General Plan Policy T-4), which gives “priority to alternative transportation and transit over single occupant vehicles on transit routes identified on the [General Plan] Transit Network map.” The Berkeley Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan is intended to create a set of policies and design guidelines that provide procedures for the implementation of the Transit-First Policy and for future planning for the City’s existing transit primary routes. The Berkeley City Council approved the Berkeley Transit-First Policy Implementation Plan in March, 2023.

Washington Elementary and Berkeley High School Safe Routes to School Project: The City applied for and received funding from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant program Cycle 6 to implement recommendations for improving pedestrian safety at thirteen intersections in the Downtown area blocks around Washington Elementary School and Berkeley High School and at school frontages on Milvia Street and McKinley Avenue. Public Works staff initiated work on funding allocation for the next phase of project design to begin in 2025.

HOUSING

AMENDMENTS

The Berkeley Housing Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65400, the City Council is required to prepare an annual report on the status and progress in implementing the City’s Housing Element using forms and definitions adopted by HCD. The completed forms for CY 2024 are attached as **Exhibit A** to this report.

As shown in Table 1, the City of Berkeley’s RHNA for the applicable planning period is 8,934 residential units, broken down by income category. HCD regulations require that excess units in one income category cannot be used to reduce the unaccommodated need from the other categories.

Table 1: Regional Housing Needs Allocation 2023-2031

2023-2031	Income Category
2,446	Very Low Income
1,408	Low Income
1,416	Moderate Income
3,664	Above Moderate Income
8,934	Total

In 2024, the City issued building permits for 731 dwelling units, including 588 above moderate-income units, 30 moderate income units, 35 low-income units, and 78 very low-income units. Table 2 below shows the City’s progress in working towards the 6th Cycle RHNA allocation.

Table 2: Berkeley’s Progress in Meeting Regional Housing Needs ¹

Income Level	RHNA Allocation	Projection Period (June 30-2022-1/30/23) ²	2023 Permitted Units	2024 Permitted Units	Total Units to Date
Very Low	2,446	25	57	78	160
Low	1,408	25	32	35	67
Moderate	1,416	0	28	30	83
Above Moderate	3,664	442	314	588	1,344
Total	8,934	492	431	731	1,654

As required by state law, the City must zone land to accommodate the RHNA and develop programs and policies that promote an environment where housing construction is encouraged at all income levels.

Additionally, in 2024, the City completed the following notable objectives from the 6th Cycle Housing Element:

Program 2 – Housing Choice Vouchers

- In 2024, the Berkeley Housing Authority (BHA) issued 179 new vouchers to Housing Choice Voucher (VASH), Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) and Mainstream applicants on the waitlist. Of these vouchers, 112 have successfully leased up during the year and are now housed. Altogether, BHA housed an average of 1759 households in 2024 and is continuously issuing new vouchers to families on the waitlist. Additionally, BHA executed a Master Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract with Blake Apartments LP in March 2024 for 17 new project based units. These project-based units will provide housing for disabled and low income households.

Program 4 – Housing Trust Fund

- Three of the affordable housing development projects at the North Berkeley BART site received development funding reservations from the City in June 2024 (Resolution 71,428). RFPs for the Ashby BART sites (west and east lots) are planned for calendar year 2025.

¹ The RHNA progress data in Table 2 for the current reporting period (2024) and previous reporting period (2023) differ from Table B of the Housing Element APR (Exhibit A). The small inconsistency is due to a data discrepancy for 2023 in the electronic file that was prepopulated and provided by HCD, and cannot be altered by City staff. The unit counts in Table 2 rely on the Housing Element APR that the City submitted and HCD approved for the 2023 reporting period.

² Units permitted since the start of the 6th cycle RHNA projection period (June 30, 2022) is also displayed on Table B, and is auto-filled in the APR form by HCD.

Program 10 – Housing Preference Policies

- City Council unanimously adopted a citywide housing preference policy on July 11, 2023. The policy became effective on January 1, 2024. To date (as of 1/29/25), the preferences have been implemented on three new properties with affordable housing units. The City implements the policy on an ongoing basis, partnering on outreach, coordinating preferences with online housing portals for applications, and collecting data to assess impact.

Program 20 – Livable Neighborhoods

- Quick Build pedestrian improvements on Martin Luther King Jr Way (South) from Dwight to Adeline were completed in 2024 and Sacramento Street from Dwight to Southern City Limits will be completed in 2025.
- The community garden at Grove Park was completed in 2024.

Program 22 – Seismic Safety and Preparedness Programs

- In 2024, nearly \$3.5M of grant funding has been disbursed to Berkeley property owners and 107 buildings have been strengthened under the Retrofit Grants Program.

Program 23 – Berkeley Pilot Climate Equity Fund

- In 2024, an income qualified single-family home and two income-qualified multifamily buildings completed electrification upgrades. The upgraded multifamily buildings include a 22-unit limited-equity cooperative and a nonprofit student housing building, with 40 low-income, first generation UC Berkeley students. Upgrades included heat pump HVAC systems and heat pump water heaters. Implementation for an additional 8-unit low-income multifamily property is in progress with anticipated completion by early 2026.

Program 27 – Priority Development Areas (PDAs), Commercial and Transit Corridors

- In April 2023, MTC and ABAG awarded the consulting team a contract to assist the City of Berkeley with the development of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. In 2024, the consultant team and City staff have conducted various forms of community outreach including stakeholder interviews, small group meetings, multiple pop-up tabling events, intercept surveys and community workshops. Approximately 62 attendees participated in the community open house and approximately 31 attendees participated in the workshop. The workshop focused on specific plan topics related to transportation, housing, safety, commercial activity and land use policies.
- The City issued an RFP for the City of Berkeley’s Environmental Justice Element, Safety Element Update, and Equitable Climate and Resilience Metrics (Specification No. 24-11641-C). In accordance with the terms of the OPR APGP grant that is funding the work, Public Drafts of the General Plan Elements are anticipated to be completed by January 2026.
- In 2024, Land Use Planning began the initial stages of a preliminary study for the Corridors Upzoning project. This initiative seeks to expand housing capacity, tackle

development challenges, and promote equity while preserving each corridor’s unique character. Following a competitive bidding process, the City selected Raimi + Associates to lead the project in 2024. The planning process is expected to take about two years, with draft objective development standards anticipated by early 2026. Community engagement will run from winter 2025 through late 2026, featuring four key efforts: targeted stakeholder meetings, citywide community meetings, pop-up events, and surveys.

Program 29 – Middle Housing

- City Council stated, via a 2021 Resolution and a 2019 referral, its desire to review, research and consider rezoning of lower density residential districts to allow for more dense housing. This resolution and referral align with the proposed programs in the Housing Element and the Housing Element EIR assess 770 additional units distributed throughout the R-1 and R-1A districts. Staff have presented preliminary development standards to City Council, Planning Commission, and the Zoning Ordinance Revision Project (ZORP) subcommittees, and presented a draft ordinance for Middle Housing to the Planning Commission on November 1, 2023 and again on February 7, 2024. Upon receiving further direction and recommendation from the Planning Commission, staff presented to City Council on July 23, 2024, received additional direction on the project and plan to return to the Council with a final recommended zoning ordinance and zoning map changes in the spring of 2025.

Program 37 – Replacement Housing/Demolition Ordinance

- City council adopted revisions to its Demolition Ordinance in July 2024.

For a comprehensive list of Housing Element Implementation, please refer to Table D of the Housing Element APR, which was submitted separately to LCI (found in Exhibit A).

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & SAFETY

AMENDMENTS

The Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND SAFETY ELEMENT

Emergency Response Coordination

The City provided a coordinated response to multiple emergency situations in 2024, as described below.

Extreme Fire Weather

In October 2024, the National Weather Service forecasted weather that qualified for “Extreme Fire Weather” designation in Berkeley. The City issued alerts to hills communities recommending they leave the hills during the weather event, because a fire starting under

those conditions could quickly become catastrophic and the hills' roadway infrastructure will not support a quick evacuation. The City activated its Emergency Operations Center and upstaffed for extra fire readiness during this period. Luckily the weather was milder than forecast and a fire did not ignite.

Atmospheric River

City staff coordinated response to an atmospheric river in November 2024. Response efforts included management of downed trees and nuisance flooding, as well as community alerting for safety.

Tsunami Warning

On December 5, 2024, the National Tsunami Warning Center issued a Tsunami Warning including Berkeley. The City established an Emergency Operations Center, activated emergency alerting systems, and conducted evacuations of the waterfront and areas in west Berkeley. Approximately 1 hour after the tsunami warning was issued, it was canceled.

Berkeley Ready

Staff continued work on many community-facing efforts of the Berkeley Ready program. This included in-person Berkeley Ready programming in the community – at large in-person events such as Solano Stroll and the Harvest Festival, at smaller recreation events, in neighborhoods and at places of worship.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

In 2024, staff continued development of the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan addresses natural hazards in Berkeley and their potential impacts, as well as a strategic plan to mitigate those impacts.

Evacuation Time Study

Staff continued collaboration with a consulting firm on studies to comply with State evacuation planning requirements, including SB99, AB747, and AB1409. These require identification residential developments that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes, assessment of the safety, capacity, and viability of evacuation routes under a range of emergency scenarios, and identification of evacuation locations. In addition, staff began work with the consulting firm on the Evacuation Time Estimates, which will provide specific times to clear out areas of the City for various emergency scenarios. Study results will be presented in 2025.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

AMENDMENTS

Space Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

Funding

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) capital funding is made up of Recurring Capital from the Parks Tax, the General Fund, the Marina Fund, and the Camps Fund; and one-time funding sources like grants and insurance. Below are descriptions of some of these funding sources.

- Parks Tax/Measure Y: In 2024, Berkeley voters approved a 20% increase in the Parks Tax to fund a tree planting unit, Waterfront parks and landscaped areas, and an additional \$1.45M for capital projects. This increased the total Parks Tax annual funding for capital projects to approximately \$2.5M. In CY24, the Parks Tax contributed \$3.87M to projects like the MLK Youth Services Center and the Glendale La Loma Park 2-5 and 5-12 play structures and accessibility improvements. The Parks Tax also provides a yearly \$475,000 allocation for minor maintenance projects, which in CY24 included basketball and tennis court resurfacing in San Pablo Park and Grove Park, fence installation and replacement across several parks and gardens, and the repainting of both King and West Campus pools, among other improvements.
- Measure T1: In 2016 voters approved a \$100 million-dollar bond measure to repair and improve existing city facilities and infrastructure. The City completed \$41 million in Phase 1 projects in 2021, and is now implementing Phase 2 of the bond program in city wide improvements. Approximately half of this funding is going towards improvements in city parks, camps and waterfront. Phase 2 projects are largely focused in South and West Berkeley facility and restroom improvements and include parks projects such as the replacement of the Willard Clubhouse and the renovation of the Martin Luther King Youth Service Center.
- Grants: In 2024, PRW applied for 9 grants and was awarded 4 of those, totaling \$4.2 million. These included a \$385,000 State Coastal Conservancy grant for preliminary design, environmental and permitting for the Marina Blvd East Trail project; a \$76,000 California Division of Boating & Waterways grant for removal and disposal of abandoned vessels; and a \$100,000 California Department of Education grant for the City's Summer Lunch program.

Recently Completed Capital Improvements/Major Maintenance Park Projects (last 2 years)

2024

- Camps: Berkeley Tuolumne Camp Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (General Fund)
- Camps: Echo Lake ADA Improvements (General Fund & Camps Fund)
- Camps: Berkeley Tuolumne Camp Driveway Repairs (General Fund)
- Parks: Aquatic Park Tree Planting (200 trees) (Grant)
- Parks: Aquatic Park: East Streetscape and Landscape (Dev Agreement)
- Parks: Grove Park Playground Renovation (Parks Tax, T1, General Fund, Grants)
- Parks: Grove Park Field Renovation (Parks Tax, T1, General Fund, Grants)
- Parks: Solano-Peralta Bench and Irrigation (Donation)

2023

- Camps: Echo Lake Tree Removal (General Fund)
- Camps: Cazadero Riverbed Erosion – Phase 1 (Camps Fund)
- Parks: Ohlone 2-5, 5-12 Play Structures and Mural Garden (Parks Tax, T1)
- Parks: Solano-Peralta Play Structure – Phase 1 (Parks Tax)
- Parks: John Hinkel Park Hut- Design Only (Parks Tax)
- Parks: 63rd Mini- Park Community Garden (Parks Tax)
- Parks: James Kenney Skate Spot – Design Only (Parks Tax)
- Pools: King Pool Painting, Floors, Mechanical and Electrical Improvements (General Fund)
- Waterfront: Bike Park - Design only (Parks Tax)
- Waterfront: Misc. Piling Replacement (CIP, GF, Marina Fund, T1)
- Waterfront: Finger Dock Replacement Phases 3 and 4 (Marina Fund)

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Major Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

The PRW Department has over 50 projects on its CIP list. The following 8 projects represent some of the largest projects:

- Construction Projects
 - Willard Clubhouse and Restroom Replacement, Completion April 2025
 - Cesar Chavez Park Perimeter Pathway Renovation, Completion December 2025
 - Marina Main Channel Dredging, Completion December 2025
 - D and E Dock Replacement, Completion December 2025
 - Martin Luther King Jr, Youth Service Center Renovation, Completion May 2026
 - Tom Bates Sports Complex Restroom/Community Space, Completion December 2026
- Planning Projects
 - Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project - Design & Environmental Phase, February 2027
 - Waterfront Specific Plan, 2027

Berkeley Volunteer Programs

The City of Berkeley has a combination of year-round, monthly or even daily opportunities to volunteer within our department. Below is a brief description of a handful of different opportunities available to Berkeley residents.

- **Pollinator Gardens:** In 2024, Parks staff worked with volunteers to install pollinator gardens and planters at Grove Park and Remillard Park, as well as at the intersections of Alcatraz Ave and Adeline St and Monterey Ave and Posen Ave.
- **Shoreline Cleanup:** The City hosts individuals, families and groups on the third Saturday of each month for small cleanups that meet at the Shorebird Park Nature Center at the Berkeley Waterfront. These events feature a safety talk, a service-learning presentation on the impact of trash and plastics in our oceans and waterways, and how we can help. The City also organizes larger groups for the annual Coastal Cleanup Day.
- **Tree Planting:** The City hosted 6 major tree planting events in 2024. Tree planting sites in 2024 included Indian Rock Park, Aquatic Park, and the South Cove Area of the Berkeley Marina. Staff and volunteers planted over 1,000 trees.
- **Reseeding of Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Area:** Volunteers joined staff in reseeding the off-leash area of Cesar Chavez Park. The project involved seeding hillsides, roadsides, and pathways with native grass to outcompete invasive weed species.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

AMENDMENTS

The Environmental Management Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Environmental Management Programs

Regional Networks

The City participates, often in leadership roles, in local and regional environmental management groups including:

- Bay Area Air District (Air District) Indoor Appliance Implementation Working Group
- Bay Area Climate Adaptation Network (BayCAN)
- Bay Area Electric Vehicle Coordinating Council and Steering Committee
- Bay Area Regional Climate Action Planning Initiative (BARCAPI) Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)
- Berkeley Lab Community Advisory Group (CAG)
- California Building Decarbonization Coalition

- California Climate and Energy Collaborative (CCEC)
- Green Cities California (GCC)
- Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC)
- National Building Performance Standard Group
- Resilient Cities Network (R-Cities)
- Ride and Drive Clean
- StopWaste Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)
- U.S. Green Building Council California (USGBC-CA) California Building Performance Standard Group

Grants/In-Kind Services

- High Road Training Partnership (H RTP): The City of Berkeley is a partner in Rising Sun Center for Opportunities' Bay Area Residential Building Decarbonization High Road Training Partnership (H RTP). H RTP is working to create high-quality, clean energy jobs in the residential building decarbonization sector that are accessible to women, people of color and other underrepresented groups. The partnership is comprised of local governments, workforce and training nonprofits, labor unions, contractors and regional agencies from across the Bay Area. In 2024, H RTP developed labor standards and policy recommendations for public agencies that promote equity, job quality, and job access as well as published several papers and guides available on Rising Sun's website.
- Prepared, Safe and Healthy Berkeley Project: The City of Berkeley received \$497,042 in funding from the State of California's Adaptation Planning Grant Program to help update the General Plan Disaster Preparedness & Safety Element, create a new Environmental Justice Element, and develop community-driven climate and resilience metrics. The City's community partner, the Ecology Center, has been leading equity-driven engagement with a Community Advisory Committee comprised of organizations serving communities who have been marginalized and are impacted first and hardest by climate change. In 2024, the project team began hosting community events to gather input and ideas on how the City can create policies that better prepare Berkeley for natural disasters and climate change and reduce exposure to pollution. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2027.
- U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Zero Code Award: DOE awarded Berkeley and San Francisco a \$19.9 million grant — \$5.7 million of which will go to Berkeley — to develop Building Performance Standards as part of Berkeley's Building Emission Saving Ordinance (BESO) large building program. The grant will be used to develop requirements that lead to the emissions reductions in the cities' large buildings. The first stage of BPS development is slated to begin in 2025.

- Home Equity Electrification Project (HEEP): Berkeley participated in a two-year, \$1M grant award from ICLEI and Google.org, to advance electrification in income-qualified homes. The team was led by Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley and also included the cities of Fremont, Hayward and Oakland, as well as partners GRID Alternatives, Rebuilding Together East Bay Network, and Cal State East Bay. In 2024, the project team created tools to assist cities in scaling electrification for low-income residents, conducted contractor trainings, and installed direct improvements, including energy audits, solar + storage installation, electrical upgrades, and/or new electric appliances in three Berkeley income-qualified homes.

Climate Equity Fund Pilot Program

In 2021, Berkeley City Council established a Pilot Climate Equity Fund, with a budget of \$600,000, to promote building and transportation electrification for income-qualified residents. There are three Climate Equity Fund program areas, and all continued their implementation in 2024:

- Program Area 1: Resilient Home Retrofits (\$250,000) – In 2024, an income-qualified single-family home and two income-qualified multifamily buildings completed electrification upgrades with the help of the Climate Equity Fund. The Climate Equity Fund is working with an additional low-income multifamily property to implement electrification upgrades, with anticipated completion in 2026.
- Program Area 2: Berkeley Equity E-Bike Program (BEEP) (\$250,000) –With funding from the Climate Equity Fund, Waterside Workshops, with assistance from GRID Alternatives, implemented BEEP, an electric bike (e-bike) program for income-qualified Berkeley households, and an e-bike youth education and workforce training program to service e-bikes and provide job training opportunities. BEEP provided safety training and distributed, with additional support from the UC Berkeley’s Chancellor’s Grant, a total of 56 e-bikes to program recipients. BEEP also provided ongoing e-bike safety and maintenance service, community building activities, and additional support to participants for at least a year, until the program conclusion in September 2024. The BEEP Report (Feb 2025) details the program design, implementation, and participant experience including transportation mode shifts and decreased spending on transportation.
- Program Area 3: Climate Equity Collaborative (\$100,000) – The Climate Equity Fund provided funding to the Ecology Center, to develop and convene a Climate Equity Collaborative of about a dozen community organizations serving Berkeley communities who have been marginalized. Through the Climate Equity Collaborative, the Ecology Center provided climate change education at community events and distributed resilience measures such as Clipper cards, induction hobs and air filters to income-qualified residents. The Ecology Center also provided stipends to community

ambassadors representing communities who have been marginalized to support program implementation. Work will conclude in 2025.

- **Kala Artist-in-Residence:** The Planning Department participated in Kala Art Institute’s Print Public Municipal Artist-in-Residence Program, an arts-integrated approach to urban planning and community activation. The goal of the program was for artists to work with city departments as cultural strategists to help approach challenges in new ways, and lift up voices that are less often heard. In 2024, artist Cheryl Derricotte partnered on the Climate Equity Pilot and artist Marcel Pardo Ariza partnered on the San Pablo Area Plan. Their culminating art show, titled “Roadwork” was on display at Kala from October 24, 2024 – February 14, 2025.

Just Transition Pilot Program

To ensure that income qualified residents and construction workers benefit from the transition off fossil fuels, City Council approved a resolution to develop a Just Transition Pilot Program (2022) with a budget of \$1,500,000. This program aggregates electrification and resilience installations for low-to-moderate income households (at or below 120% of the Area Median Income) and requires that upgrades be completed by pre-qualified contractors who meet minimum labor standards, to ensure that residential electrification construction work also provides equitable benefits to workers. Through a competitive process the City selected Rebuilding Together East Bay Network as the program implementor. In 2024 the team worked to develop labor standards, building on the work of the HRTP, and started to develop a pipeline of income-qualified homes. This work will be finalized in 2025 along with providing support and training to contractors and releasing a request for proposals for contractors. The program is slated to complete implementation by the end of 2025.

Green Business Program

The City supports sustainable business practices and partners with the Alameda County Green Business Program to offer support to local businesses that want to improve their environmental practices. The program offers free assistance to businesses to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency, conserve water, and divert solid waste from the landfill.

Sustainability Outreach

- **Community Webinars:** The City collaborated with governmental and community organizations, and municipalities in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties to host or promote webinars on a variety of topics such as building electrification, induction cooking, climate justice, residential energy efficiency, electric cars and bikes, and solar and storage.
- **Resources & Incentives:** The City promoted various incentive programs for residents to access discounted solar and storage through the annual *Bay Area SunShares* program, and electric bike and vehicles through *Ride & Drive Clean* seasonal discount campaigns.

All of these programs provide time-limited group discounts, vetted providers, community workshops, and a streamlined process to remove barriers to solar and electric transportation adoption. The City also promoted programs and rebates to help homeowners and multifamily property owners access resources and incentives for energy and water saving upgrades to increase savings and resilience, improve indoor air quality and comfort, and decarbonize buildings.

- East Bay Green Home Tour: Since 2021, the City has hosted virtual *East Bay Green Home Tour* showcasing various efforts of local residents to save water and energy, increase resilience to drought and heat, electrify their appliances, and reduce the carbon footprint of their homes. In 2024, in addition to the virtual tour, the event added in-person tours at 13 homes. Hundreds of people attended the event, and online videos continue to receive thousands of views.
- Ride Electric: The City hosted its 7th *Annual Ride Electric* in conjunction with the City Harvest Festival on October 19, 2024. This event offers electric bike and scooter test rides through the City's shared electric mobility providers and local bicycle retailers, and a municipal fleet electric vehicle showcase. The City offered multiple resources to income-qualified residents to help electrify their ride as well as showcasing adaptive mobility options that accommodate all abilities.
- Conference/Workshop presentations: In addition to community-facing outreach, the staff from Berkeley's Office of Energy and Sustainable Development spoke at virtual and in-person conferences and workshops in 2024. These speaking engagements included the Annual Urban Sustainability Directors' Network (USDN) Conference, the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) and a Department of Energy (DOE) webinar, among others.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory

Community-wide GHG emissions in 2022 decreased 37% from the 2000 baseline, and decreased 7% from 2021.

Race to Zero

On May 11, 2021, Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution committing the City of Berkeley to the C40 Cities Race to Zero Campaign, and on November 30, 2021 established a 2030 emission reduction target that reflects Berkeley's fair share of the 50% global reduction in CO₂e by committing to reduce emissions 60.5% from 2018 levels by 2030.

Global Covenant of Mayors

The City of Berkeley maintained compliance in the Global Covenant of Mayors in 2024.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)

The LHMP is the main document that houses the City’s climate adaptation work. It was updated in 2023, approved by the California Office of Emergency Services and Federal Emergency Management Agency in 2024, and in 2023 was in the process of being updated. A public draft was released in May 2024, and the final plan is anticipated to adopted by Berkeley City Council in 2025.

Extreme Heat Planning

An extreme heat day is when temperatures reach the 98th percentile of historic maximum temperature. In Berkeley, an extreme heat day is a day above 88.3 degrees Fahrenheit. The City has developed extreme heat protocols for City operations. This work continues to evaluate city infrastructure and community needs, and is integrating best practices from other jurisdictions. The City is also participating in a regional group coordinated with UC Berkeley, the Berkeley Lab, and several Bay Area jurisdictions, to share and plan around extreme heat.

Solid and Hazardous Waste and Regulations

Landfill Solid Waste Emissions

Total community-wide landfill solid waste and overall emissions from the waste sector increased by 4% in 2022 compared to 2021, placing current waste sector emissions 47% below the 2000 baseline.

SB 1383 Organic Waste Composting

In 2016, California State Senate Bill 1383 was signed into law. This legislation is designed to reduce short-lived climate pollutants and requires 75% organic waste reduction by 2025 and a 20% increase in recovery of edible food that is currently disposed by 2025. Local jurisdictions have significant, new requirements to implement additional waste reduction programs and enhanced reporting and enforcement protocols to comply with the state legislation. The City began implementation of the requirements in 2022 and enforcement in 2024. The City has 153 Edible Food Generators that accept donated excess edible food and eight food recovery organizations. In 2023 (most recent available data), 425,286 pounds of edible food was recovered by food recovery organizations.

Single Use Disposable (SUDs) Ordinance Implementation

The City’s Single Use Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance requires businesses selling prepared food, for both on-site dining and take-out, to follow guidelines to reduce single-use foodware, including providing reusable foodware, color coded recycling and compost bins, and compostable take-out containers. In 2024, staff inspected 648 restaurants, and found that 175 or 27% were complying by providing reusables for on-site dining. Additionally in 2024, staff and California Climate Action Corp fellows conducted outreach to food-serving business, offering free technical assistance and up to \$300 to purchase reusable foodware containers or up to \$2,500 toward the rental or purchase of a dishwasher.

Construction and Demolition Debris Diversion

The City requires residential construction projects over a certain value and all nonresidential projects to recycle construction and demolition debris. Through increased collaboration between Zero Waste and Planning Department staff, Zero Waste staff now participate in the New Construction Plan Check process to help architects and contractors understand and comply with all City Zero Waste requirements before breaking ground on new developments or renovations.

Air Quality

Indoor Appliances Implementation Working Group for the Bay Area Air District

Berkeley participated in the Bay Area Air District Indoor Appliances Working Group (IWG). To improve indoor air quality, the Bay Area Air District adopted amendments to Rule 9-4 and Rule 9-6 in March 2023 which establish zero-nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions standards for gas furnaces and water heaters. These rules phase in requirements, beginning in 2027, that will ultimately only allow heat pumps (zero NOx appliances) to be sold and installed in the Bay Area for new water heaters and furnaces. The IWG is assisting the Bay Area Air District in identifying and addressing implementation issues including technical and workforce readiness of the market and equitable transition to compliant appliances, with a focus on residential water heaters in 2024.

Wildfire Smoke

To better address the threat of wildfire smoke, in 2019 the City of Berkeley participated in a grant led by Alameda County to create a communications protocol for responding to wildfire smoke and other air quality conditions. In addition, in 2023 the Office of Emergency Services secured 28 air cleaners for air filtration from a Bay Area Air District (Air District) grant. These air cleaners were distributed to public facing sites including libraries and community centers for use during poor air quality events. The City is also working to advance emergency and resilience planning for extreme heat and high air quality index (AQI) events, including coordination with cities around North America, and local collaboration outreach with community partners serving communities who have been marginalized.

Transportation Emissions

Total community-wide emissions from the transportation sector increased by 4% in 2022 compared to 2021, placing current transportation sector emissions 26% below the 2000 baseline.

Electric Mobility Roadmap

Implementation of Berkeley's Electric Mobility Roadmap, adopted in July 2020, continued in 2024, including bi-weekly meetings of the interdepartmental Electric Mobility Working Group. The Roadmap supports clean transportation, including walking, biking, public transportation, and a wide range of electric vehicles, with a focus on equitable and affordable access.

Electric Vehicles and Charging

The City continues to promote the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and facilitate the installation of EV charging stations by offering streamlined permitting, educating property owners about EV charging and grant opportunities, and providing EV charging on municipal property. In 2023, the EV adoption rate showed that 11% of the registered vehicles in Berkeley were zero emission (EVs and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles) or near-zero emission (plug-in hybrid electric vehicles) compared to 9% in 2022. Based on the most recent field verification, conducted in October 2023, there were currently 129 publicly available EV charging ports in Berkeley (Level 2 and Direct Current Fast Chargers, or DCFC) The City is partnering with Ava to develop future public DCFC Hubs at two locations in Berkeley. Local amendments to the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (effective January 2023) require levels of EV charging in new buildings in Berkeley which exceed state requirements.

Electrification of City Fleet Vehicles

Staff worked with Ava Community Energy to conduct a municipal fleet electrification assessment including a plan for EV deployment and associated charging infrastructure through 2030, presented to City Council in July 2020. The City is currently working to add EV charging for fleet vehicles at the Corporation Yard, and has continued to increase the number of EVs in the municipal fleet. There are 50 electric vehicles as part of the City's fleet, including 5 vehicles (4 F150 Lightning Pick-Up Trucks and 1 Polaris Ranger) that were delivered in 2024.

Shared Electric Micromobility- Electric Scooters and E-Bikes

In 2021, the City adopted a resolution to establish a shared electric micromobility program to provide Berkeley residents and visitors with electric scooters and e-bikes rentals. To ensure equitable access, at least 50% of the devices must be deployed in designated equity priority areas and operators are required to provide low-income programs and accessible devices, such as sit scooters. In 2024, a total of 241,508 trips, representing 210,265 total miles, were taken on these shared electric scooters and bikes. This represents an 8% increase in number of trips from 2023.

Water Quality and Creeks

Water Consumption

Water consumption in Berkeley decreased by 31% between 2000-2022, and by 1% between 2021-2022 as reported in 2024.

Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO)

The City of Berkeley continued to enforce the California Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO), regulating the water use of new (500 square feet or more) or rehabilitated (2,500 square ft or more) landscapes in projects applying for zoning or buildings permits. In 2024, 10 projects, with a total of 21,976 square feet of landscaping, were completed in Berkeley that were subject to WELO.

Sea Level Rise

In 2019, the City initiated the Waterfront Specific Plan project to develop a long-term vision for achieving a financially self-sustainable publicly-owned Waterfront. The team conducted an extensive community outreach process and a draft Sea Level Rise Study for the Berkeley Waterfront. Preliminary findings indicate that three locations at the Berkeley Waterfront may experience periodic flooding by 2050 during a 100-year storm and King tide.

Groundwater Rise

Shallow groundwater in coastal communities will rise as sea levels rise, increasing the risk of flooding communities from below. The City participated in a project funded through a 2020 – 2022 California Resilience Challenge grant, led by the San Francisco Estuary Institute Aquatic Science Center. The final report provides groundwater mapping for existing and future conditions, suggestions on how to use this dataset for planning purposes, recommendations for additional modeling and assessments, and potential next steps. The City built upon this work by evaluating the impact of shallow groundwater rise and sea level rise on toxic materials stored underground, through an analysis conducted as part of the Prepared, Safe & Healthy Berkeley Project, taking place from 2024-2026.

Habitat and the Urban Forest

Urban Forest Tree Planting Program – Tree Equity

The City of Berkeley has a vibrant urban forest made up of approximately 38,000 street, park and median trees, managed and maintained by the Urban Forestry Unit of the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department. Current tree inventories and canopy coverage data illustrate fewer trees are located in the West and South Berkeley, neighborhoods which also have higher populations of lower-income and historically marginalized communities. To address tree equity, over 1,000 trees were planted in Aquatic Park in 2024. In addition, the City plans to plant another 1,000 new trees in West and South Berkeley neighborhoods over the next year. Funds have been secured to cover most costs through an Urban Greening Grant of \$726,000 and an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Grant of \$576,000. Both grants are sponsored by the California Natural Resources Agency. In addition, the City was awarded a federal Urban and Community Forestry grant from the Inflation Reduction Act for \$1,000,000 to hire staff and continue tree planting work over the next three years. This project aims to eliminate the past barriers to growing new street trees by promoting tree planting opportunities, engaging with communities and gathering specific tree planting requests in areas with low tree counts, purchasing and planting drought tolerant trees and then providing the three years of watering investment to establish these trees. These new trees will help to provide shade, cooling, storm water benefits, and beautification in neighborhoods that have been historically underserved.

Pollinator Gardens

Pollinator gardens support bees and other insects that are responsible for the pollination of much of the world's crops and flowering plants and also provide access to natural spaces in

urban communities. Since 2020 several Berkeley Parks and medians have been renovated in collaboration with the community to create space for native pollinator gardens and corridors. In 2024, 3 gardens were constructed at the following locations:

- Grove Park Pollinator Garden
- Grove Park Collaborative Garden (Food, Faith, & Justice, McGee Baptist Church)
- Aquatic Park: 8,413 new native plants and grasses installed on Bolivar Dr. in between Addison and Bancroft

Local Food Systems

Farmer's Markets

The Ecology Center Farmers' Markets are open-air marketplaces where California farmers bring fresh, locally-grown produce and farm-processed foods to sell directly to consumers. As in past years, the Ecology Center supported three markets each week, year-round, in Berkeley in 2024. These markets are committed to supporting small-scale farmers who practice sustainable agriculture, and always accept WIC and EBT. To support customers with disabilities, the Ecology Center offers an *Accessibility Fast Pass* to skip the lines at the farmers' markets.

Energy and Lighting

Building Energy Emission Reductions

Berkeley's 2022 overall greenhouse gas emissions from the building sector were 47% below the 2000 baseline. Emissions from community-wide electricity decreased 50% between 2021 to 2022. Emissions from community-wide natural gas usage decreased by 6% from 2021 to 2022, and has decreased by 26% since 2000.

Berkeley Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy

The City in 2021 completed a comprehensive strategy on how to equitably electrify all its existing buildings as soon as possible. The report, involved a robust targeted community engagement process that focused on marginalized communities. The strategy includes short- and long-term strategies, a proposed timeline, and a set of "equity guardrails" which provide a minimum set of equity standards that must be met in order for any of the proposed policies to be advanced. The strategy was adopted by City Council on November 20, 2021, and implementation is ongoing.

Municipal Building Upgrades in 2024 included:

- **Building Lighting Upgrades to LED:** In 2024, lighting was upgraded at the administrative building at 1947 Center Street and at the Main Library (Phase 1).
- **Kitchen Electrification:** The South Berkeley Senior Centers received electric cooking equipment (stovetops and drywells) in 2023. In 2025, North Berkeley Senior Center's kitchen electrification and major wiring upgrades are anticipated to be completed.
- **Heat Pump Water Heaters:** High efficiency heat pumps were installed at the following sites in 2023: Main Library, South Branch Library, North Branch Library, Corporation

Yard Green Room, Corp Yard Ratcliff Building, Fire Station #3, Fire Station #6, Marina Restroom, Women’s Daytime Drop-In Center, and the Harrison House. No new heat pumps were installed in 2024.

Building Emissions Saving Ordinance

The City of Berkeley adopted the Building Emissions Saving Ordinance (BESO) in 2015 to accelerate energy and emissions savings in Berkeley’s existing buildings.

- **BESO Time of Sale Program**: The BESO Time of Sale Program (for buildings under 25,000 square feet) requires building owners to complete and publicly report comprehensive assessments of their building’s energy performance and opportunities for improvement prior to listing a building for sale. In 2024, 483 buildings completed a BESO assessment. In 2023, staff assembled a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of building decarbonization experts from local, state, and federal organizations, including PG&E, Ava, California Energy Commission, the Berkeley Lab, Building Decarbonization Coalition, contractors and architects, to advise on potential requirements at time of sale. Staff worked with the TAC, Bridge Association of Realtors, the Berkeley Rent Board, and the Environment and Climate Commission to further develop a policy proposal. In 2024, staff presented the proposal to City Council’s Land Use, Housing and Economic Development Policy Committee. The proposed BESO amendments to for energy and resilience upgrade requirements are scheduled to go to City Council in 2025.
- **BESO Large Building Program**: The BESO Large Building Program (buildings over 25,000 square feet) requires annual energy benchmarking reports and energy assessments on a five-year recurring cycle for large multifamily and commercial buildings. In 2024, a total of 342 energy benchmarks were submitted, achieving a 62.4% compliance rate. BESO staff also launched a benchmarking scorecard to help building owners understand their buildings’ energy performance, with 312 scorecards distributed. In addition, staff applied for and was awarded a US Department of Energy (DOE) Zero Code grant, in partnership with the City of San Francisco, to develop Building performance standards (BPS) to establish building-level requirements, such as minimum GHG emissions standards, by a specified date.

Ava Community Energy (Ava)

The City participates on the Joint Powers Agency Board of Directors for the community choice aggregation (CCA) program in Alameda County called Ava Community Energy (Ava). Authorized by California law in 2002, CCA enables cities and county governments to pool the electricity demand within their jurisdictions in order to procure or generate electrical power supplies on behalf of the residents and businesses in their communities. Ava began providing electrical account holders with electricity services beginning in 2018. In 2019, the City opted up its municipal accounts to receive 100% carbon-free electricity, reducing municipal greenhouse gas emissions by more than 50%. Starting in March 2021, the City’s electrical power for municipal buildings were generated from 100% renewable sources. On June 29, 2021, Berkeley City

Council adopted a resolution to upgrade all current and new Berkeley residential and commercial customer accounts to Renewable 100 (100% renewable energy from California solar and wind) for their default electricity service plan, excluding residential customers in low-income assistance programs. These changes became effective in March 2022 for residential customers and in October 2022 for commercial/industrial customers.

Solar + Storage at Critical Municipal Facilities

The City is working with Ava Community Energy on a procurement for resilient solar + storage systems at critical municipal facilities. This project will improve resilience by providing clean renewable back-up power for critical facilities when the grid is down and will reduce reliance on polluting diesel generators. Ava conducted a full technical analysis of locations and sizing potential for installing solar + storage at critical municipal facility sites. Ava will lead the procurement on behalf of six cities including Berkeley in order to reduce the cost and complexity of potential system deployment. City Council approved entering into a Power Purchase Agreement with Ava for the proposed sites for solar + storage installations in Berkeley are the Corp Yard and Live Oak Community Center in 2024. Construction is scheduled to start in 2025 and be completed by 2026.

Natural Gas Prohibition

In July 2019, the City Council adopted the first ordinance in the nation to prohibit the use of natural gas in newly constructed buildings. Berkeley's Natural Gas Prohibition, was implemented from January 2020 to January 2024. The ordinance was repealed in 2024 following a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that the ordinance was preempted by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

AMENDMENTS

The Economic Development and Employment Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT ELEMENT

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

In April 2024, the City of Berkeley's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) was defederalized from the funding granted by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1980. The RLF funds remained with the City and continue to provide access to capital for businesses that don't qualify for traditional commercial loans. All current RLF recipients (6 active loans) have resumed payments (a pause was offered during the pandemic) and after defederalization, the Loan Administration Board amended the RLF Administrative Plan to allow for a third-party administrator to service the RLF loans which will improve the experience for the existing and future Berkeley RLF borrowers.

COVID-19 Resiliency Loan Program (RLP)

In July of 2020, The City was awarded a \$814,000 federal CARES Act grant to provide additional funding to existing businesses. Using the grant, OED launched the COVID-19 Resiliency Loan Program (RLP) for Berkeley businesses that are at least two years old and have less than 50 employees. This program streamlines the approval of 0%-1% interest loans for businesses in need of working capital, to provide additional assistance and support for Berkeley's entrepreneurs. To date, the RLP portfolio has 18 loans with an outstanding principal of \$435,000 and the program is now serviced by Working Solutions, a certified Community Development Financial Institution.

Grants for artists and cultural practitioners

In 2024 the City of Berkeley Civic Arts program provided grants to support a vibrant arts ecosystem, strengthen diverse cultural expressions, and ensure equitable access to arts and culture throughout Berkeley. Civic Arts Grants Awarded in 2024 included: 11 individual arts project grants (\$44,000), 34 community festivals (\$199,680) and 55 arts organizations (\$444,799). The City also leveraged a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for the second year in a row to support a newer Civic Arts grant program with \$80,000 to distribute in grants (up to \$5,000 each) for: Berkeley nonprofit (not-art specific) organizations producing arts and cultural programming in partnership with an arts organization or teaching artist; or Greater Bay Area arts nonprofit organizations producing arts and cultural programming in Berkeley. A new program, the *Capital Projects Grants*, was funded with \$300,000 in December of 2023 and established to retain and sustain the vitality of Berkeley's arts sector through real estate and capital project support. In 2024 two grants of \$150,000 were awarded to Berkeley-based nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, this program will likely not run again in 2025 due to lack of funds.

Investment in Public Art

In 2024, the Civic Arts Program implemented a portfolio of public art projects in Berkeley valued at nearly \$700,000. Some of the projects included: the commission of a large bronze sculpture by Mildred Howard installed at Adeline and Alcatraz Avenues, and the restoration of a collaborative public art installation at the Berkeley transit node created by muralist John Wehrleand poet Betsy Davids, "MakRoote."

Business Outreach and Technical Assistance

In calendar year 2024, the Office of Economic Development (OED) conducted the following outreach and technical assistance activities:

- Fielded thousands of direct business inquiries by phone & email
- Issued [OED newsletters](#) with relevant information and opportunities for businesses
- Partnered with the Berkeley Chamber to organize Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) Forums for the business community at large to gain information, ask questions

and share resources related to ongoing commercial district management and special events.

- OED partnered with other staff sections to provide easy-to-digest information on how to engage with the city and work, invest, and grow a business in Berkeley. A new [Doing Business in Berkeley webpage](#), webinars, and downloadable materials from the City of Berkeley website were published now help local business leaders navigate government requirements for launching or expanding a business in Berkeley.

Equity-focused programming for the innovation sector

Berkeley Ventures, Berkeley Values was launched in 2019 to align the growth of Berkeley's innovation sector with the community values of diversity, equity and inclusion. Berkeley Ventures Berkeley Values programing includes activities that engage Berkeley startup founders, funders, and STEM industry professionals to build a local economy that benefits our entire community. Programs include: STEM CareerX Day tours for Berkeley High School students at local startups and innovation companies, developing a community of practice for Berkeley investors focused on implementing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) best practices. In 2024, dozens of Berkeley High School students saw how their science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills apply in Berkeley's workplaces during the 7 STEM CareerX Tours that took 125 Berkeley High School students to Berkeley companies in 2024.

Business succession planning for worker owned cooperatives

Beginning in 2018, OED partnered with Project Equity to meet the local demand for business succession planning; and provide technical assistance to Berkeley's businesses wishing to transition to employee ownership. Special funds (ARPA dollars) were leveraged to support a multi-year engagement with Project Equity. The funds enable Project Equity to stay as an on-call advisor to businesses in Berkeley that want to transition to worker ownership. Project Equity's work also implements strategies to measure business retention risk in Berkeley on an ongoing basis.

#BerkeleyHolidays Gift Fair, Berkeley Bucks Marketing Campaign – Local Shopping

A partnership between OED, the Berkeley Chamber, Visit Berkeley and business districts citywide, the #BerkeleyHolidays Gift Guide, local scrip Berkeley Bucks, and marketing campaign promoted local shopping during the holiday season and featured an in-person holiday fair in Downtown Berkeley in December of 2024.

Discovered in Berkeley – Local Business Marketing and advertising

The #DiscoveredinBerkeley business marketing campaign was launched in 2019 to, “inspire pride among Berkeley residents and business owners alike about the amazing commercial activity happening in the neighborhoods where they live and work, encourage local shopping, raise awareness of the business services offered by the City's Office of Economic Development and enhance Berkeley's reputation as a good place to do business.” In 2024, funding was allocated to Cityside, the publisher of the local independent online news publication,

Berkeley, to support the creation of sponsored stories, banner ads, and graphics for social media and the DiscoveredinBerkeley.com website highlighting exceptional businesses in Berkeley. Remaining funds were spent in 2024 on events, social media, and additional media channels that will increase local businesses' sales, visibility in the region, reputation, and community pride. In 2024, the City continued its marketing initiatives to highlight businesses in several districts, around a number of relevant and seasonal themes. The 'Discovered in Berkeley' local marketing campaign featured a thoughtful roster of unique local-serving storefront businesses and the business districts in which they reside, by highlighting Berkeley businesses that fall into the categories of "Food Forward," "The Upcycle," "Dare to Share", and "Local Love." By year end, the campaign had made approximately 4.4M impressions and generated nearly 179,000 concrete engagements online.

Business Improvement Districts

The City facilitates five business improvement districts (BIDs) in the Downtown, Telegraph, Elmwood, North Shattuck, and Solano commercial districts that generate funds through a self-assessment to help promote and maintain their districts. There is also a city-wide Tourism BID which is funded by the self-assessment of Berkeley's hotels and motels and directly supports Visit Berkeley, the City's Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Over the past year, the City has continued to provide technical assistance to each of the BIDs, with particular focus on bolstering the wider Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN) (an organization which all commercial districts participate in), increasing the frequency of meetings to allow for improved communication and sharing across district networks.

URBAN DESIGN AND PRESERVATION

AMENDMENTS

The Urban Design and Preservation Element was not amended during CY 2022.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE URBAN DESIGN & PRESERVATION ELEMENT

The City continues to review projects on a case-by-case basis for conformance with the principles, policies and implementation measures of the Urban Design and Preservation Element to ensure that they are designed to enhance the livability of Berkeley and encourage a high level of quality design while encouraging well designed sustainability measures.

Preservation

- In CY 2024, three properties were designated as City Landmarks or Structures of Merit and added to the local register: 2442 Haste Street, 2227 Parker Street and 2500-2512/1094-1098 Dwight Way.

- The Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) was maintained in 2024 with no changes, revisions or updates.
- The established process for identifying and designating historically or culturally important buildings, sites, and areas is open to all and remains so. All of the recently designed properties were the result of either a public petition or the initiation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.
- The existing referral process prior to demolition continues with 7 referrals in 2024; no ordinance changes occurred in 2024.
- The City of Berkeley continues to serve as a Certified Local Government (CLG); no CLG grant applications were submitted in 2024. The City continues to maintain a formal partnership with SHPO. Other organizations, such as BAHA, communicated regularly with the City in 2024 through correspondence and presentations to LPC.
- An outstanding Notice of Violation for un-permitted exterior alterations and signage installation remained under review in 2024.
- In 2024, the City’s GIS mapping system includes the inventory of City Landmark and Structures of Merit sites.
- In 2024, the City possessed generalized information about sites that are known to contain sub-surface cultural resources and those that may possibly contain these resources.
- In 2024, a seismic retrofit program continued to provide incentives for the owners of “soft-story” properties, including several historically significant properties, to complete seismic upgrades.
- Design Review Staff has been assisting with this effort to review projects for FEMA funds and encourages preservation-sensitive measures.
- The City Manager maintains cooperative relations with UC Berkeley leadership and confer regularly on the implementation of the Long-Range Development Plan where specific activities relate to the preservation and treatment of historical resources.
- The City maintains a relationship with the school district on matters of cultural resource management. In 2024, consultants for the district provided an advisory presentation to the Landmarks Preservation Commission describing a planned improvements project for a district-owned City Landmark site.

- In 2024, City staff continued to encourage project proponents to make use of the State Historical Building Code; most often this occurs during building permit application review.
- The City received and granted three requests for a Mills Act contract in 2024.
- New development is encouraged throughout the City where infill proves viable. These areas may contain historic resources, and the City’s ongoing practice encourages retention of resources and treatments consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.
- The City continued its work on the Civic Center Vision Plan (adopted 2020) and completed Phase 2, which involved development and refinement of a design concept. In 2024, the Office of Economic Development began to plan for and roll out Phase 3 of the project.

Urban Design

- There were no new ordinance changes for design review in 2024. Both Staff and the Design Review Committee (DRC) continued the General Plan Policies already set in place.
- The DRC was able to forward a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) on eight (8) residential projects in 2024. Please see the list of project addresses below:
 1. 2530 Bancroft Way
 2. 2462 Bancroft Way
 3. 2037 Durant Avenue
 4. 2128 Oxford Street
 5. 2136 San Pablo Avenue
 6. 2820 San Pablo Avenue
 7. 2274 Shattuck Avenue
 8. 2550 Shattuck Avenue

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

AMENDMENTS

The Citizen Participation Element was not amended during CY 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

New Environmental Justice Element

In 2024, significant progress was made towards the creation of a new Environmental Justice Element. The new Environmental Justice element will include new programs and policies that aim to add to and improve upon existing policies relating to civic engagement. The civic

engagement topics in the new Environmental Justice Element will replace the Citizen Participation Element, which has not been updated since 2002.

Land Use Planning Commissions and Bodies

Citizen participation takes place in the arena of policy-making and advisory citizen bodies, such as the Berkeley City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Adjustments Board. The following commissions held over 100 public meetings where projects and land use policies were discussed:

- Zoning Adjustments Board
- Planning Commission
- Landmarks Preservation Commission
- Design Review Committee