



Civic Arts Commission Meeting
Wednesday, July 23, 2025
6:00 PM

Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703

Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

- Jonathan Bachrach, District 1
- Dana Blecher (Vice Chair), District 6
- Lisa Bullwinkel, District 4
- Peter Montgomery, District 8
- Eduardo Pineda, District 5
- Sean Vaughn Scott, District 3
- Cameron Woo (Chair), District 2
- Vacancy, District 7
- Vacancy, Mayor

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of Huchiun (*Hooch-yoon*), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (*Cho-chen-yo*) speaking Ohlone (*Oh-low-nee*) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona (*Vuh-roh-nuh*) Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan (*Lih-Shawn*) Tribe and create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this Land Acknowledgement

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (for items not on the agenda)

5. **COMMUNICATION** (received from the public for items not on the agenda)
None

6. **CHAIR'S REPORT**
 - a) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission ending and final report

7. **PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS** (All items for presentation, discussion and possible action)
 - a) **Information Report:** Turtle Island Monument Project Contract Negotiations Impasse (30 minutes)
Information Report by Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer/Commission Secretary (Attachment 1)
Public Comment

 - b) **Action Item:** Final Report with Recommendations to Council on Affordable Housing for Artists from the Joint Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission (15 minutes)
Presented by Cameron Woo, Chair (Attachment 2)
Recommendation: Approval of Final Report with Recommendations to Council on Affordable Housing for Artists from the Joint Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission.
Public Comment

 - c) **Action Item:** Willard Clubhouse: Construction Document Phase of public art project by Julie Chang (15 minutes)
Introduced by Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead. Presented by Chandra Cerrito, Willard Clubhouse Public Art Project Manager (Attachment 3)
Recommendation: Approval of Construction Document Phase Deliverables for public art project by Julie Chang for Willard Clubhouse
Public Comment

 - d) **Information Report:** Quarterly Grant-Funded Festivals Report
Presented by Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead (Attachment 4)
Public Comment

8. **STAFF REPORT**
 - a) Civic Arts Program Updates, Jen Lovvorn (5 minutes)

 - b) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah (5 minutes)

- c) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas (5 minutes)

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Grants

- Dana Blecher, Chair
- Lisa Bullwinkel
- Cameron Woo

b) Public Art

- Jonathan Bachrach
- Eduardo Pineda

c) Policy Subcommittee

- Lisa Bullwinkel, Chair
- Dana Blecher
- Cameron Woo

d) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission

- Cameron Woo, Chair
- Sean Vaughn Scott

e) Representative on Design Review Committee

- Cameron Woo

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Draft Minutes of June 25, 2025 Meeting (Attachment 5)

From: Commission Secretary

Recommendation: Approval of June 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

11. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT

Attachments:

1. Information Report: Turtle Island Monument Project Contract Negotiations Impasse
2. Final Report with Recommendations on Affordable Housing for Artists from the Joint Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission
3. Willard Clubhouse: Construction Document Phase of public art project by Julie Chang

4. Quarterly Grant-Funded Festivals Report
5. Draft June 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Staff Contact:

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ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION:

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the ADA Program Coordinator by phone (510) 981-6418 or by TTY/TDD (510) 981-6347 at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.



INFORMATION REPORT TO CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION

Meeting Date: July 23, 2025, 6pm

Subject: Turtle Island Monument Project – Contract Negotiation Impasse

Prepared by: Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer

SUMMARY

Following extensive and years-long discussions with Indigenous artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson regarding the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project, negotiations have reached an impasse. Regrettably, the gap between artists' demands and reasonable municipal contract terms cannot be bridged and therefore, the City has concluded that the Turtle Island Monument project cannot proceed with these artists due to the negotiation impasse under current circumstances. Despite multiple proposal iterations and significant accommodation efforts, the gap between the artists' stated requirements and municipal contracting capabilities has proven insurmountable. This report documents the most recent negotiation process, proposals offered, and factors leading to this decision.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Historical Context

In the 1990s, the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project was first proposed to the City by Lee Sprague as artist and Marlene Watson as project designer. Both Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson worked with the City of Berkeley and Indigenous communities internationally to develop the monument's design – merging an Indigenous ethic and aesthetic with the requirements provided by the City and its Commissions.

On July 7, 1992, Berkeley City Council approved the recommendation from the Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission for "the creation of the Turtle Island Project, as the native Nation's monument within the Peace Wall circle at Martin Luther King Civic Center Park, as adopted by the Berkeley City Council in the Resistance 500 Task Force Proposal and with the support of the Landmarks Preservation and the Civic Arts Commissions." Also in 1992, the City of Berkeley became the first city in the U.S. to declare and institute Indigenous Peoples Day, to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus in the Americas on October 12, 1492.

The original proposal for the Turtle Island Monument project dated 1992 included "a round base of granite with entry from the East. In the center of the circle will be a bronze turtle ... Around Turtle Island will be a circle of water... round tiles with the names of Indigenous nations and people engraved on them. Many of the tiles will be blank, to represent the people who are no longer with us, languages that are not heard anymore, and nations that have ceased to exist since 1492."

In 1997, the City of Berkeley Landmark Preservation Commission initiated a Landmark Application of Civic Center Park¹, and the general concept of the Turtle Island fountain/monument was further described in it as such: "In recent years, the "Turtle Island" fountain design has been revised to incorporate some of the concentric ring arrangement of the current fountain, and reduce the size of the composition to the center of the terrace rather than the entire terrace space. Water would flow outwards and pathways would lead inward, representing the migration of peoples to the Americas across the surrounding oceans." In the Landmark Application, this concept is attributed to Lee Sprague, Potawatomie from Michigan, of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, as the original Turtle Island Monument artist.

As stated in the Landmark Application of Civic Center Park, the park has been the site of numerous cultural and civic events of importance to Berkeley's history. Civic Center Park was renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park in 1983, and the park is listed on the National Register under this name.²

Previous Challenges

The project faced significant delays and complications over the past three decades, including:

Late 1990s-Early 2000s:

- Following initial approvals, there was a long delay in advancing the project, during this time Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson left the Bay Area to pursue work elsewhere, while the fountain constructed in 1942 remained inoperable.
- There were numerous project approvals related to the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) in the 1990s and then an appeal of the proposed project was filed as part of EIR process on March 22, 2002). City Council dismissed the appeal on July 9, 2002, after which the project left the domain of public documents.

¹ Landmarks Preservation Commission, Notice of Decision for Meeting on November 3, 1997. Landmark Application for "Civic Center Park, Civic Center Plaza, Provo Park" dated August 27, 1997. Records available for viewing by request to the Planning Department.

²Access the National Register listing of Berkeley's *Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park* online: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/123858157>, National Archive Identification District Number (NAID): 123858157.

2003-2006:

- 2004: The City of Berkeley approved a master plan for a renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park with construction of TIM to start in the park.
- Instead of notifying the original TIM artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, the City sought new artists and architects to work on a revised redesign for the Turtle Island Monument at the park's existing (inoperable) fountain.
- 2005: The City underwent a public procurement process to commission artist Scott Parsons to create four bronze oceanic turtle sculptures and facilitate the creation of eight stone art medallions by North, Central and South American Indigenous artists and international tribal representatives.
- 2006: Artist Scott Parsons created and delivered four bronze turtles and eight stone medallions, but they were never installed at the TIM site because the project was paused due to funding shortages.
- Since delivery, in 2006 the eight stone medallions (art pieces) have been in storage at City facilities (Corp Yard and currently 2180 Milvia storage) and the four bronze turtles have been on display at 2180 Milvia Street (Lobby and 5th Floor) waiting to be installed as part of the Turtle Island Monument at Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park.

2017-2021 Turtle Island Garden Efforts:

- 2017-2018: Three Berkeley community members conducted advocacy (which consisted largely of visiting many City of Berkeley Commissions and Councilmembers) to convert the inoperable 1942 fountain into "Turtle Island Garden," a new design that did include the four turtles and eight stone medallions delivered by artist Scott Parsons, but did not include water.
- At the time, City staff were not aware of the prior 1990s "Turtle Island Monument" design by artists Sprague and Watson.
- On December 4, 2018, the Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution directing the City Manager to develop a plan for the "Turtle Island Garden" located in the same place as the Turtle Island Monument (the inoperable fountain in Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park).
- On March 21, 2022, the City received a \$591,666 *Clean California Local* grant from CalTrans for the "Turtle Island Garden" and upper civic center plaza improvements.³ The funding for the grant included a date of June 30, 2024, by which the project was originally to be completed.

³ CalTrans, Clean California Local Grant Projects, District 4, Online: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-4/d4-popular-links/d4-clean-california/d4-local-grants>

- When the City held an initial "Indigenous stakeholder meeting" for the garden project, a fundamental problem emerged: the project was built on an Indigenous concept but was proposed by non-Indigenous people.
- After realizing the problem through the course of the stakeholder meetings, City staff re-engaged artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson for a listening session, after which Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson agreed to participate in a design charrette for the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project.

2022-2023: TIM Design Development and Emerging Conflict:

- August 18 & 19, 2022: Design charrette held for development of TIM design which PGA Design was engaged to draw Lee and Marlene's vision into design documents that could be reviewed by the City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission, and other departments (including the Parks Recreation and Waterfront department) ultimately for permitting and construction.
- It was established that Turtle Island Monument was Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's intellectual artistic property, as reported to Civic Arts Commission on December 7, 2022.⁴
- March 30, 2023: The City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) grants approval of Turtle Island Monument design developed through the Design Charrette that included input from Lee Sprague, Marlene Watson, Scott Parsons, PGA Design, and others.⁵
- June 2023: Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson requested additional design changes to the LPC approved plan, for TIM which included adding another boulder for the "Turtle Island creation story".
- August 25, 2023, the design team consisting of Parks Recreation and Waterfront Capital Project staff, Civic Arts staff, Scott Parsons, and City's contracted landscape architect for the Civic Center Upper Plaza Improvement Project, met with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson to attempt to reconcile the proposed design changes, with the approved design and the project schedule. However, the scope of possible changes was limited due to the funding deadline imposed by the Cal Trans Grant. The meeting ended without agreement on feasible design changes.

⁴ City of Berkeley, Civic Arts Commission, Staff Report to Civic Arts Commission, December 7, 2022, Item 5 a. Online: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-attachments/Civic%20Arts%20Commission%20Meeting%20Late%20Attachments%2012-7-22.pdf>

⁵ City of Berkeley, Landmarks Preservation Commission, Meeting Minutes, March 30, 2023, Item 7. Online: https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/2023-03-30_LPC_Action%20Minutes_FINAL.pdf

2023-2025: Project Crisis Attempted Resolution and Continued Challenges:

- September 2023: Lee Sprague disavowed the design he and Marlene Watson had helped create and accused the City of violating the Indian Arts and Crafts Act by falsely representing Scott Parsons' artwork under his name.

(November 2023-December 2024):

- November 2023: Outside consultants (Kristen Bennett and Jackie De La Cruz) were brought in to work with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson to resolve issues so that contracts could be agreed to.
- Late 2023 – early 2024: The Upper Civic Center Park improvements are separated from the TIM project to ensure that the CalTrans grant funding was not lost.
- Late 2023 – early 2024: CalTrans grants an extension to June 30, 2025, for project completion. The park improvements include bringing stubbed utilities to the fountain site in preparation for when a contract with the TIM artists (Sprague and Watson) could be executed.
- October 2024: Construction contract for Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park - Upper Plaza Improvements Project is authorized by City Council.⁶
- While the consultants and artists reviewed many proposed contracts over these years, no contract agreements with the TIM artists were reached during this time. By December 2024, the project entered "hibernation" status with no resolution.

RECENT NEGOTIATION TIMELINE

Recent Reengagement (April-May 2025)

In April 2025, the City made renewed efforts to reengage with the TIM artists to identify a viable path forward for project completion. Following email negotiations between Jennifer Lovvorn and the TIM artists, staff presented and emailed new "path forward" proposal iterations to the artists (Sprague and Watson) and met twice on Zoom (May 2 and May 9, 2025).

As negotiations progressed, a significant TIM gap emerged between the artists' demands and what the City could reasonably accommodate. The meetings became increasingly contentious and uncomfortable, with the artists issuing a public press release (May 12, 2025 – Attachment 1) alleging violations of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and presenting additional conditions for creating the TIM artwork that substantially exceed the City's capacity to fulfill.

Additional Requirements demanded by the artists Included:

⁶ Berkeley City Council, [Item 12](#), October 29, 2024.

- Establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (communicated verbally May 9, 2025)
- Formal apology from the City (communicated by email May 8, 2025, and verbally May 9, 2025)

In late May 2025, staff discussed with City leadership options for resolution, including discussion of a “path forward plan” dated May 21, 2025 (Attachment 2) that addressed many of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s concerns and represented a viable path for project completion.

Key points of “Path Forward Plan” Proposals Offered by the City (dates October 2024 – May 2025)

Comprehensive Project Implementation Plan

- Resolution Correction: Formal rescission of incorrect historical attributions
- Project Control: Artists' primary role in design development with City providing implementation support
- Procurement for landscape architect for Turtle Island Monument design documents with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities
- The exclusion of Scott Parson’s artwork elements (four bronze turtles, eight mosaics) from Turtle Island Monument, as they were not part of the original Turtle Island Monument concept created by Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson in the 1990s.

Multiple Plan Iterations were developed with the Initial plan development starting October 2024 and continuing with multiple revisions through May 2025 addressing artist feedback. The “path forward plan” and the preceding multiple plan iterations always put forth a comprehensive approach centering addressing artistic vision and compensating the artists fairly while maintaining City requirements.

The final path forward plan shared with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson on June 27, 2025 included a generous fee at a fixed amount to mitigate the risk of not reaching an agreed upon fee with the artists should the amount be determined at a later point in the project:

- Artist Compensation: Fixed \$100,000 per artist for consultation during development of Turtle Island Monument. This amount is inclusive of fee and travel.

Some of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson listed concerns and demands were not included in the “path forward plan” because they were outside the purview of a public art contract negotiation. City leadership determined that the artists' expanded requirements could not be accommodated within standard municipal contracting procedures and despite good faith efforts on behalf of the City, the negotiations had reached an impasse with no realistic path to working successfully with these artists on this project.

DECISION FACTORS

Demands Outside Contract Scope

The artists' expanded requirements included elements beyond the scope of municipal contract negotiations:

- Indian Arts and Crafts Act Certification Policy: Request for City to establish certification policy relative to IACA compliance – A new certification policy would require broader municipal policy modifications rather than project-specific contract terms
- Formal City Apology: Request for official municipal apology for past handling of the project. This would be a decision that is beyond the scope of contract negotiations.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Project Status

The Turtle Island Monument project is formally concluded due to a negotiation impasse - the inability to reach mutually acceptable contract terms between the artists and the City despite extensive good faith negotiations. The City sent notification to the artists regarding the project conclusion on June 27, 2025 (Attachment 3).

City's Position

- The City respects the artistic vision and contributions of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson
- Multiple reasonable proposals were developed and offered through extensive iterations from October 2024 through May 2025, in addition to efforts undertaken in the years prior (2022-2024)
- Certain artist demands fell outside the scope of contract negotiations and required broader policy changes beyond project parameters
- The decision reflects procedural limitations rather than lack of commitment to the vision of these artists for a Turtle Island Monument in Berkeley

Public Process

This Information Report provides public transparency about the negotiation process and decision factors. The artists have been invited to participate in public comment during this meeting should they wish to provide their perspective.

No Commission action is required, as this is provided for informational and transparency purposes.

Meeting Information: July 23, 2025, 6pm – Agenda posted July 16, 2025

Public Comment is available for input on this matter in writing ahead of the meeting or at the meeting

Attachments:

1. Turtle Island Monument Press Release issued by John Curl (May 12, 2025)
2. Turtle Island Monument “Path Forward” Project Plan (May 21, 2025)
3. Correspondence with artists (June 27, 2025)



TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT COMMITTEE

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

From: **Turtle Island Monument Committee**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 12, 2025

Contact: John Curl, press liaison, (510) 847-3431

The artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson are available for interviews.

Berkeley's Turtle Island Monument Fountain, dedicated to Native America 33 years ago, will finally replace the broken Civic Center Fountain, but Council must remove the last obstacles by acknowledging and correcting the City's past violation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.

As public art, the Turtle Island Monument is the artistic and intellectual property of Indigenous artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, protected under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (IACA) of 1990, and cannot be credited to another artist. Yet that is exactly what the City flagrantly tried to do in 2005. Today we are still undoing the damage and misconceptions caused by the misappropriation of Sprague and Watson's original design.

History and Future of Berkeley's Turtle Island Monument Fountain (TIM)

1992: Mayor Hancock dedicated the Turtle Island Monument, honoring Native America and representing the highest values of the people of Berkeley, at the first Indigenous Peoples Day celebration, which touched off the movement that has since spread around the country and the world. The old fountain had not been in operation for over a decade, and was viewed by all as an eyesore. The artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, both Native people, presented the preliminary architectural drawings with a central turtle presenting the vision, bearing the American continents on its back. The project was enthusiastically approved by the necessary commissions and unanimously by City Council.

1996-1997: Voters approved a \$49 million bond measure which included funds for TIM. But the project was undercut when the entire historic Civic Center was landmarked to prevent unwanted development. During the long delay, Lee and Marlene both eventually left the Bay Area to pursue work elsewhere, while the old fountain remained dysfunctional.

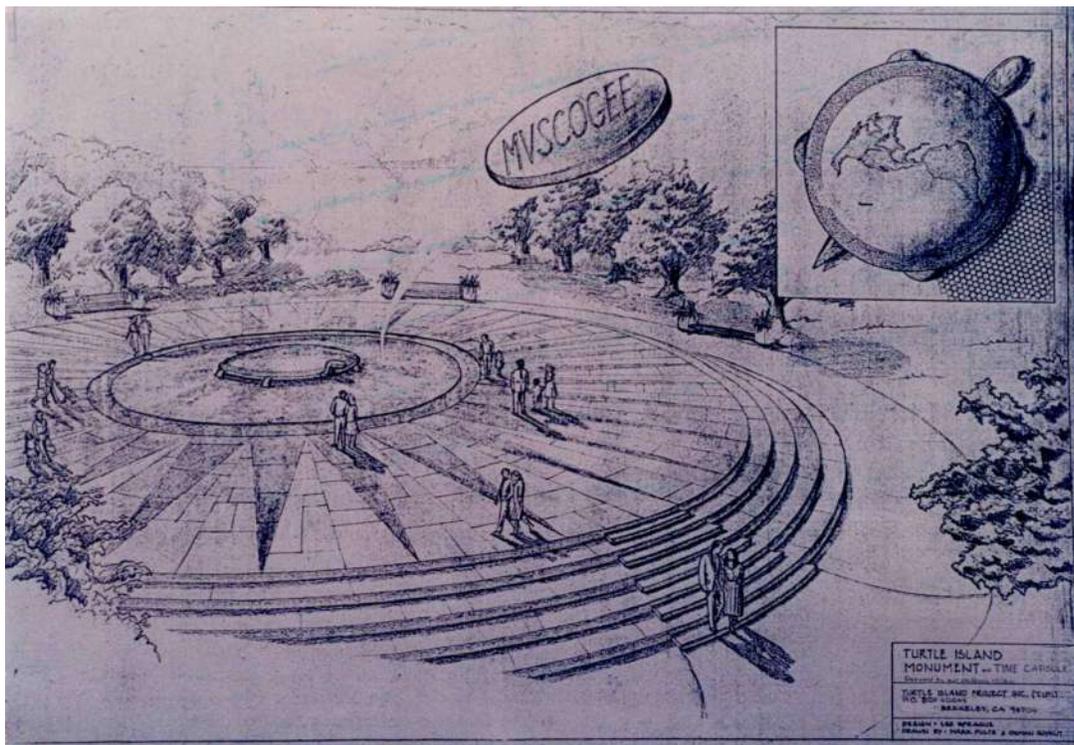
2003-2006: The City approved a master plan for park renovation with construction of TIM to start in 2004. But, instead of making any attempt to notify the artists Sprague and Watson, the

City sought new non-Native artists and architects to work on a revised redesign, in violation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which protects the rights of Indigenous artists. TIM had been a 100% Indigenous concept and design, but the City in 2005 awarded a commission for four bronze turtles, which were not part of the original design, to a non-Native artist. Native people were now entirely excluded from the project, but it was then paused again due to funding.

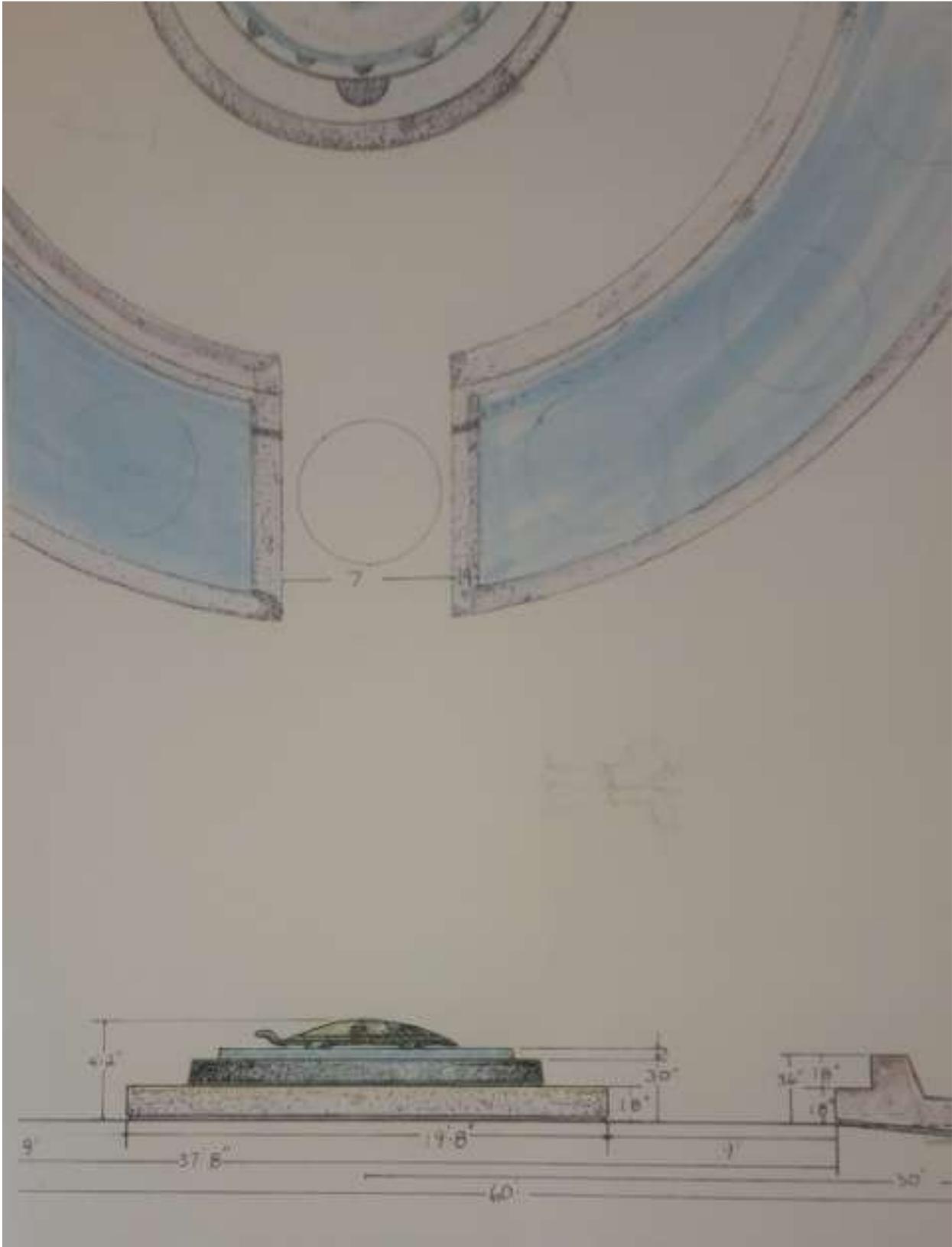
2017-2018: Council directed the City Manager to develop a plan, staff began to re-engage, and a group of non-Native people presented a new idea involving plants and gardens, but the City still made no attempt to contact the artists Sprague and Watson.

2021-2023: City of Berkeley and a non-Native landscape architectural firm began devising another TIM project design when the City finally reached out to contact Sprague and Watson. Lee and Marlene did not give consent to the latest design by the City, but shared their original concept and meaning of the central turtle design of the TIM project. The City passed another misdirected resolution naming the same non-Native artist from 2005 as primary artist for the TIM project to purchase granite stone for the center water fountain. The City needs to acknowledge and remove the four bronze sea turtles already built from any association to the TIM project and MLK Civic Center Park

2024-2025: But the project remains stalled. All past City Resolutions misappropriating TIM to this same non-Native artist need to be rescinded by Council before the TIM project can move forward again. This will open the way after over three decades to finally complete the Turtle Island Monument Fountain project with its original concept and artists, destined to become the beautiful, powerful and profound center of our city.



TIM Concept 1992



TIM Concept 2023



DEDICATING THE SITE FOR THE TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT

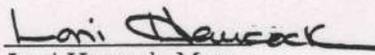
WHEREAS, the Berkeley Resistance 500 Task Force, a broad-based community group, brought the proposal for Indigenous Peoples Day and related activities and programs to the Commission on Peace and Justice, which recommended adoption of the proposal to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley City Council, on 22 October 1991, approved the recommendation for Indigenous Peoples Day and the designation of 1992 as the Year of Indigenous People, including educational events throughout the year and commemorative events on the weekend of 10-12 October; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force proposal also included a monument, now known as the Turtle Island Monument, and the concept for this monument and time capsule are being developed and circulated for review and approval through all necessary City boards and commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Turtle Island Monument is dedicated to all indigenous people of this hemisphere, whose societies flourished centuries before Columbus arrived and which continue on this day, which is seen as the end of 500 years of resistance and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Loni Hancock, Mayor of the City of Berkeley, do hereby dedicate this site for the Turtle Island Monument to the Native People of this hemisphere on behalf of the non-native people of Berkeley, in recognition of your care for this land long "before Columbus was discovered on our shores" and in honor of your culture and philosophy, which are needed now more than ever if the planet is to survive.


Loni Hancock, Mayor

2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, California 94704 • Telephone (415) 644-6484
TDD (415) 644-6915

Turtle Island Monument artists Marlene Watson & Lee Sprague.



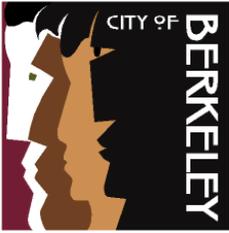
(Photo: Marc Kolsters, Digital Media Services)

"Our original designs connect the indigenous peoples from Turtle Island to the moment when Berkeley recognized indigenous Peoples Day, the first city in the world to do so. Marlene and I worked with Berkeley residents beginning 33 years ago. We are looking forward to seeing water flowing at the fountain at Civic Center, which has faced 50+years of administrative delays. Water is Life. Through our art, the unseen powers, the great mysteries, guide our footsteps and recognize Berkeley's creation of the first Indigenous Peoples Day as a shared dream for generations to come."

Lee Sprague

Mr. Sprague and Ms. Watson are available for interviews.

John Curl, press liaison, (510) 847-3431



TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT (TIM) PROJECT PLAN

May 21, 2025

Transition of Authority:

- The Civic Arts Program has authority over the project with Artwork Design Approval by the Civic Arts Commission (per Municipal Code 6.14.050) and approval of any alterations to the Fountain by Landmarks Preservation Commission (per Municipal Code 23.402.050).
- Jennifer Lovvorn will serve as project manager.
- These changes support a commitment to honor Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's original artistic vision.

Plan to Address the Resolution Issue:

- Prioritize the research on rescinding the resolutions that incorrectly named Scott Parsons as the Turtle Island Monument artist
- Jennifer Lovvorn to prepare a draft resolution for Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's review that:
 - Explicitly acknowledges Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the original and current artists of Turtle Island Monument or TIM.
 - Corrects the historical record regarding the artistic vision rooted in the Historic Landmark Designation.
 - Outlines the commitment to implement the artists' (Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson)vision going forward.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to share the timeline for bringing this to the Civic Arts Commission and then to Council.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to utilize already gathered archive of historical documents pertaining to Turtle Island Monument dating back to the 1990s.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to remove the four sea turtles created by Scott Parsons from the Civic Center building located at 2180 Milvia Street.
- Once Resolution is approved, Jennifer Lovvorn to establish a Turtle Island Monument project webpage with regular updates that credit Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the original and current artists of TIM.

Project Approach:

This project plan, now framed clearly under Civic Arts management, includes the following elements to directly address Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's concerns:

- New landscape architect with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities.

- Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s primary role in design development.
- The exclusion of Scott Parson’s artwork elements from Turtle Island Monument.
- The use of dedicated Civic Arts funds that don’t have spending deadlines to allow the project the time it needs to move forward.

Turtle Island Monument Scope of Project

1. Working with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the artists and with a Landscape Architect (TBD):
 - Complete design of Turtle Island Monument
 - Design approvals and permits as needed
 - Construction Document Package for Bidding
 - Conduct Construction and Specialty Artwork Fabrication Bidding
2. Adding Construction Contractor and Specialty Artwork Fabricator to the team to complete the project with consultation from Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson and Landscape Architect:
 - Construction of Turtle Island Monument
 - Fabrication and Installation of Specialty Artwork Elements

Project Implementation.

1. City to establish Budgets and Council authorization for contracting and Landscape Architect RFP.
2. Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson to be placed under Sole Source Artist Contracts for \$100,000 each covering all project related expenses including travel to consult and guide the development of the Turtle Island Monument, and consultation during construction and fabrication of the Turtle Island Monument. Their scopes of work would be consulting and the artist contracts would not hold any subcontracts. The contract would include the narrative description of Turtle Island Monument from the 1997 Landmark Application language as the basis for the design work.
3. Artwork Foundry to be placed under Sole Source Contract (for Design Phase only) with the City so that their model maker can work with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson during the design phase to create a model of the central turtle and its relationship to the fountain under Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s creative guidance.
4. City to go out to bid for a Landscape Architect with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities. The Landscape Architect’s scope of work would be: Working with Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson as advisors throughout entire scope from approvals, through development of Construction Bid Documents and review during construction.
5. Approvals:
 - a. All phases of Artwork Design must be approved by Civic Arts Commission.
 - b. Any structural alterations to the historic fountain must be approved by Landmarks Preservation Commission.
 - c. All contracts over \$50,000 must be authorized by City Council.
6. Bid Documents: Once all approvals are obtained, development of Construction Bid Documents used to bid for the construction of Turtle Island Monument and separate Specialty Artwork Element Construction Documents to bid the fabrication of any specialty artistic elements such as the central bronze turtle and any pavers.
7. Construction Bidding

8. Artwork Fabrication Bidding
9. Council authorization of contracts
10. Award Construction Contract
11. Award Artwork Fabrication Contract
12. Construction of Turtle Island Monument
13. Fabrication and Installation of Specialty Artwork Elements
14. Dedication Ceremony

Civic Center Site – Current Conditions:

The Upper Plaza Improvement Project is currently moving forward as a capital project managed by the Parks Recreation and Waterfront Department with an anticipated completion date of June 2025. The footprint of the fountain has been excluded from the Upper Plaza Improvement Project and reserved for the future Turtle Island Monument to be implemented according to an agreed upon Turtle Island Monument Project Plan. As part of the scope of work of the Upper Plaza Improvement Project, utilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of the Turtle Island Monument are being provided: capped irrigation line for any future plantings, empty electrical conduit for future electrical needs, empty conduit sleeves under the pavers leading to fountain edge for any other needed utilities at the fountain, and the tunnel under the fountain can be utilized for any other needed utilities for the Turtle Island Monument.

Lovvorn, Jennifer

From: Lovvorn, Jennifer
Sent: Friday, June 27, 2025 5:49 PM
To: Lee Sprague; Marlene Watson
Cc: John Curl
Subject: Turtle Island Monument Project - Conclusion of Contract Negotiations
Attachments: Turtle Island Monument Path Forward Plan 5-21-25.pdf

Dear Lee and Marlene,

Over the past couple months, I have been excited to reengage with you both to explore how we might move the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) forward after more than three decades. As you know, the City has made substantial efforts to address your concerns and develop a viable path for project completion.

I was hopeful that the proposed "path forward plan" shared with you starting in October 2024 and developed through many iterations until May 2025 had sufficiently addressed your concerns. There were, however, certain additional concerns and demands, such as the establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and a formal apology from that City that you made verbally (May 9, 2025) and by email (May 8, 2025), which are not in the purview of a contract negotiation. Because these concerns and demands are not in the purview of a contract negotiation, I cannot feasibly address them. Correspondingly, your concerns and demands asking for the establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and a formal apology from that City, cannot be included in the plan. What is included in "path forward plan" (attached) is a feasible approach to move the project forward. It aligns with the spirit of the project as described in the press release that John Curl distributed on May 12, 2025.

Please note that the attached plan is substantially the same as the version that was shared with you on May 6, 2025 with the exception of the artist fee determination, which changed from "a yet to be determined" amount to a fixed amount, the text changes are indicated in underline below: *Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson to be placed under Sole Source Artist Contracts for \$100,000 each covering all project related expenses including travel to consult and guide the development of the Turtle Island Monument.*

After extensive discussion and careful consideration of your position and additional requirements relative to what the City can reasonably accommodate through our standard municipal contracting processes, there remains too significant a gap between your demands and what the City can realistically provide.

While I had hoped we could reach an agreement that would allow this important project to move forward in alignment with what the City can responsibly deliver, I must unfortunately inform you that we will not be able to proceed with the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) public art project at this time.

As part of our commitment to transparency and public process, I will be presenting an Information Report about the conclusion of these negotiations to the Civic Arts Commission at their meeting on **July 23, 2025, at 6pm**. This meeting is open to the public and includes an opportunity for public comment. Should you wish to participate in public comment, either remotely via Zoom or in person, please let me know and I will arrange the appropriate connection details. The agenda will be posted on the [Civic Arts Commission Agenda webpage](#) by July 16, 2025.

I want to acknowledge the significance of this project and your long-standing commitment to it. The City's decision reflects the practical realities of municipal contracting requirements and our responsibility to follow established procedures for public projects, rather than any lack of respect for your artistic vision or contributions.

I am attaching the most recent project implementation plan that was under discussion for your reference.

If you have any questions about the Civic Arts Commission meeting or the public comment process, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Lovvorn

Chief Cultural Affairs Officer

City of Berkeley

Attachment: Turtle Island Monument Project Plan (May 21, 2025)

To: Housing Advisory Commission/Civic Arts Commission
From: Joint Subcommittee on Affordable Housing for Artists
Subject: Approve the Report “Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists” and Recommend Transmittal to the City Council for its Review and Approval

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) and the Civic Arts Commission approve the report “Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists” and recommend transmittal to the City Council for its review and approval.

The report is included as Attachment 1.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The report makes seven recommendations for increasing funding, construction, and access to affordable housing for low-income artists and creative workers. Some of these recommendations have no fiscal impact, such as those dealing with zoning policies, and others, such as placing an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot, have a positive fiscal impact. For every one dollar of local funds raised through a bond measure, five to seven dollars can be generated from other sources to preserve existing, and build new, affordable housing.

One recommendation, to consider including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project, requires the City Council to retain the previously budgeted funds (\$50,000), when it re-considers the item in fall, 2025.

Several strategies require an allocation of staff time to implement AB 812, which allows a set-aside of below-market-rate (BMR) units, develop a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and applying for State cultural district designation (which in turn could open grant funding opportunities, etc.), and to work with arts organizations to provide technical assistance.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Artistic professions are highly valued but poorly compensated. Artists represent a significant yet vulnerable segment of our workforce. As a labor sector, artists are among the lowest-income workers, placing them within already marginalized communities that struggle with housing affordability.

Berkeley's artistic and cultural richness is actively promoted as an attraction to renters and homebuyers, yet the very artists who create this cultural value face displacement due to high housing costs. Without accessible housing and workspace options, Berkeley

risks losing the complete arts sector that defines much of the city's local economy, character, and appeal.

In July 2023, members of the Civic Arts Commission made a presentation to the HAC regarding its desire to work with HAC on recommendations to the City Council to increase access to affordable housing for lower-income artists. HAC and the Civic Arts Commission formed a joint subcommittee to explore affordable housing strategies and policy initiatives to retain and grow the artist community. The joint subcommittee met regularly over the past two years to prepare the attached report to address the critical need for affordable housing for artists and cultural workers in Berkeley.

The report has seven recommendations which support the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector by expanding affordable housing opportunities for low-income artists:

1. Adopt an ordinance implementing AB 812, which allows up to 10% of Below Market Rate (BRM) units within cultural arts districts to be set aside for low-income artists.
2. Integrate policies to incentivize affordable housing and affordable commercial space for artists and arts organizations in study areas already identified in the City's Housing Element, specifically the *San Pablo Specific Plan* and the *Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.*
3. Place an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot.
4. Partner with regional arts and affordable housing organizations to identify a large site, or multiple small sites, for an affordable housing project (new-build or existing properties) for low-income artists, provide technical assistance, pre-development funding and/or other resources as necessary to kick-start such a project.
5. Implement the short- and medium-term strategies recommended in the *Berkeley Social Housing Study - Draft - May 2025.*
6. Adopt a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and applying for State cultural district designation.
7. Preserve the funding for a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project and explore the feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in the pilot project.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the City Council adopted the City of Berkeley [2017-2018 Arts and Culture Plan Update \(Update\)](#). The Update developed and recommended citywide goals, policy improvements, and actions to support and further develop local arts, culture, and entertainment. The Update contains five strategic goals. Goal #1 is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces for artists and arts organizations.

In 2021, the Civic Arts Commission commissioned a [survey on affordable housing for artists in Berkeley](#) by Creative Equity Research Partners. Of the 88% respondents who had Bachelor's degrees, 60% reported an annual household income of \$69,000 or below, which qualified as low-income in Alameda County. Forty-five percent (45%) were rent-burdened. This disparity also intersects with the racial wealth gap: among respondents who identified as non-White, 72% reported low household incomes, compared to 55% among those who identified as White or Caucasian. The survey report concluded that without strategies and policies to work affirmatively to keep artists and cultural workers in the city, artists will continue to be priced out of the housing market.

The [City's Housing Element](#) also recognizes the need for affordable housing for artists. Policy H-8 calls for developing workforce housing for low- and moderate-income households, including teachers, *artists*, and other residents who work in the city of Berkeley, underpinning the idea that artists, who are often teachers as well, contribute to the economy and vibrancy of the community and that high housing costs are placing the community's thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement.

Taken together, these reports and the lived experiences of Civic Arts Commissioners and their colleagues and fellow working artists, spurred the Civic Arts Commission to reach out to HAC with a proposal to work together, via a joint subcommittee, on a series of recommendations to create more affordable housing for artists for City Council consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Adopting the recommendations contained in the report will have positive sustainability and climate impacts. The zoning policy recommendations will promote mixed-use development close to transit and bike routes, will open development opportunities in less densely developed areas of the city, and will set-aside some BMR units for low-income artists. Increased revenue for the Housing Trust Fund will ensure the city can continue to work towards its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals. Providing housing for all income groups and economic sectors promotes a sustainable Berkeley.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The affordable housing crisis, in Berkeley, throughout the Bay Area, and increasingly, throughout the nation, is a well-studied and well-documented reality. The repercussions

for local communities are widespread and deep, from pricing young people and seniors out of the area, displacing long-time residents and increasing homelessness to creating super-commuters who spend more than three hours a day in their cars because they cannot afford to live where they work, and negatively impacting the diversity and creativity of communities. Affordable housing development is necessary to mitigate the impacts of the ongoing affordable housing crisis. It serves as essential infrastructure for low- and moderate-income individuals and families, including the artists and cultural workers who contribute significantly to Berkeley's identity and economy.

Funding for affordable housing comes from various sources, including government programs, private investors, and local initiatives. All three sources for funding such projects are severely distressed for the foreseeable future—government funding is increasingly scarce as government cuts in spending gain momentum. Meanwhile, private sector funding is tentative at best given the uncertain economic atmosphere. In short, funding nationally and locally (both municipal and private sectors) is scarce.

Still, there are actions to be taken to put necessary zoning into place, provide capacity building, and position the city with critical local matching funds, as well as building alliances and dreaming on a large scale, so that when the economic outlook improves and funding once again becomes available—the city of Berkeley will be ready to act. The need for affordable housing will not subside—and neither should our commitment to addressing it.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative actions were considered.

Attachment:

1. “Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists”

Draft

Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists

**A Report by the Housing Advisory Commission
and the Civic Arts Commission, July 2025**

In 2018, the City Council adopted the City of Berkeley 2017-2018 Arts and Culture Plan Update (Update). The Update is a framework for supporting the arts. A key Update recommendation is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces for artists and arts organizations. In 2021, the Civic Arts Commission commissioned a survey on affordable housing for artists in Berkeley by Creative Equity Research Partners. The survey report concluded that without strategies and policies to work affirmatively to keep artists and cultural workers in the city, artists will continue to be priced out of the housing market.

The 2022 survey on affordable housing for artists concluded that without affirmative strategies and policies, artists will continue to be priced out of Berkeley.

Acting on the survey report's findings, in July 2023, members of the Civic Arts Commission made a presentation to the Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) regarding its desire to work with HAC on recommendations to the City Council to increase access to affordable housing for lower-income artists. HAC and the Civic Arts Commission formed a joint subcommittee to explore affordable housing strategies and policy initiatives to retain and grow the artist community.

The joint subcommittee met regularly over the past two years to prepare the following goals and recommendations to address the critical need for affordable housing for artists and cultural workers in Berkeley. This report was presented to the HAC and Civic Arts Commission at their respective July 2025 meetings with a recommendation that the report be forwarded to the Berkeley City Council for its consideration and approval.

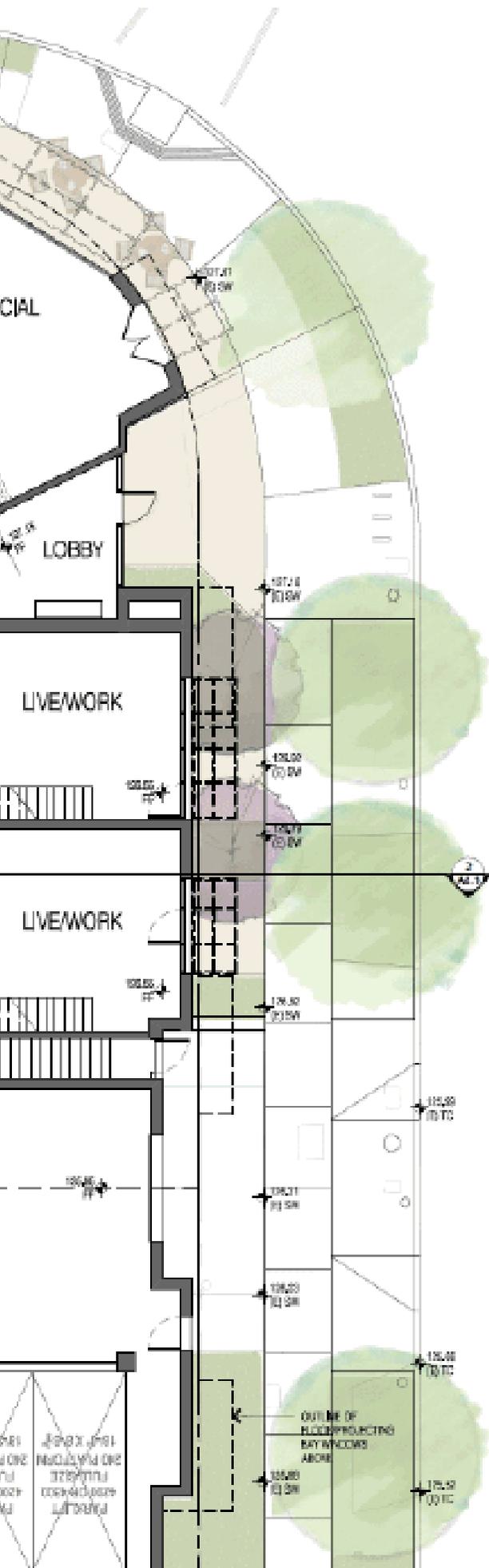
Overview of Policy Recommendations

- 1 Adopt an ordinance implementing AB 812, which allows up to 10% of Below Market Rate (BRM) units within cultural arts districts to be set aside for low-income artists.
- 2 Integrate policies to incentivize affordable housing and affordable commercial space for artists and arts organizations in study areas already identified in the City's Housing Element, specifically the San Pablo Specific Plan and the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.
- 3 Place an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot.
- 4 Partner with regional arts and affordable housing organizations to identify a large site, or multiple small sites, for an affordable housing project (new-build or existing properties) for low-income artists, provide technical assistance, pre-development funding and/or other resources as necessary to kick-start such a project.
- 5 Implement the short- and medium-term strategies recommended in the Berkeley Social Housing Study – Draft – May 2025.
- 6 Adopt a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and applying for State cultural district designation.
- 7 Preserve the funding for a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project and explore the feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in the pilot project.

Making the Case for Artist Housing in Berkeley

In 2018, the City Council adopted the City of Berkeley 2017-2018 Arts and Culture Plan Update. The Update is a framework for supporting the arts. It developed and recommended citywide goals, policy improvements, and

A proposed development on San Pablo Ave. (left) suggests live/work spaces on the first floor in place of traditional retail space.



actions to support and further develop local arts, culture, and entertainment. The Update contains five strategic goals. Goal #1 is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces for artists and arts organizations. Several of the policy recommendations are updated and included in this report.

In 2021, the Civic Arts Commission commissioned a survey on affordable housing for artists in Berkeley by Creative Equity Research Partners. One hundred and sixty-three (163) local artists were surveyed and represented a cross-section of Berkeley’s most vulnerable populations. The survey found that high housing costs were placing the community’s thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. The survey report concluded that without strategies and policies to work affirmatively to keep artists and cultural workers in the city, artists will continue to be priced out of the housing market.

Acting on the report’s findings, in July 2023, members of the Civic Arts Commission made a presentation HAC regarding its desire to work with HAC on recommendations to the City Council to increase access to affordable housing for lower-income artists. The Civic Arts Commission’s key concern was that the affordable housing crisis was adversely impacting the artist community in Berkeley by pricing practicing artists out of the city, negatively impacting the local economy, and community vibrancy and creativity. Given the unique role that artists play in a community’s character and prosperity, HAC and the Civic Arts Commission formed a joint subcommittee to explore affordable housing strategies and policy initiatives to retain and grow Berkeley’s artist community.

“The need for affordable housing will not subside—and neither should our commitment to addressing it.”

Current Housing Funding Landscape

This report comes at a unique and challenging moment when traditional funding sources for affordable housing face unprecedented constraints. Affordable housing developments serve as essential infrastructure for low- and moderate-income individuals and families, including the artists and cultural workers who contribute significantly to Berkeley’s identity and economy. Funding for affordable housing comes from various sources, including government programs, private investors, and local initiatives. All three sources for funding affordable housing projects are severely distressed for the foreseeable future—government funding is increasingly scarce as government cuts in spending gain momentum. Meanwhile, private sector funding is tentative at best given the uncertain economic atmosphere. In short, funding nationally and locally (both municipal and private sectors) is scarce.

Still, there are several actions to be taken to put necessary zoning into place, provide capacity building, and position the city with critical local matching funds, as well as building alliances and dreaming on a large scale, so that when the economic outlook improves and funding once again becomes available—the city of Berkeley will be ready to act. The need for affordable housing will not subside—and neither should our commitment to addressing it.

Artists as Economic Contributors and Vulnerable Workers

Artistic professions are highly valued but poorly compensated. Artists represent a significant yet vulnerable segment of our workforce. As a labor sector, artists are among the lowest-income workers, placing them within already marginalized communities that struggle with housing affordability. Despite this economic vulnerability, artists drive substantial economic activity, representing 7% of California’s economy—or 15% when including television and film industries. This economic contribution makes artists vital to the prosperity of California and the city of Berkeley.

According to the 2022 Creative Equity Research Partners survey, of the 88% respondents who had Bachelor’s degrees, 60% reported an annual household income of \$69,000 or below, which qualified as low-income in Alameda County. Forty-five percent (45%) were rent-burdened. This disparity also intersects with the racial wealth gap: among respondents who identified as non-White, 72% reported low household incomes, compared to 55% among those who identified as White or Caucasian.

Berkeley’s artistic and cultural richness is actively promoted as an attraction to renters and homebuyers, yet the very artists who create this cultural value face displacement due to housing costs. Without accessible housing and workspace options, Berkeley risks losing the complete arts sector that defines much of the city’s local economy, character and appeal.

The definition of “artist” for the context of this report, approved by the Civic Arts Commission, May 25, 2022, is as follows:

An individual (or team member of an arts group) who is regularly engaged in the arts on a professional basis. These include but are not limited to those who practice:

Fine Arts such as painting, sculpture, mixed media works, photography, papermaking, printmaking, filmmaking or videography, or interdisciplinary art practice.

Performing Arts such as dance, dance theatre, acting, directing, set design, or members of theatre troupes.

Musical Arts such as musicians, composers, singers, choir members, band members, or ensemble members.

Literary Arts such as writers of prose, poetry, or plays.

Social Practice Arts including interdisciplinary

modes of creative production with methods of public engagement.

Craft Artisans who create such as fine wood-working, ceramics, glass blowing, stained glass, textiles, jewelry, metal works, fashion, blacksmithing, basketry, etc.

Artists who have culturally specific creative practices (folk arts, traditional arts, tradition bearers)

Self-taught and “outsider” artists

The terms “artist”, “cultural worker”, and “creative workforce” are used interchangeably throughout this report.



A Two-Pronged Challenge

Current efforts by organizations like Vital Arts, which is conducting a regional artist census and providing emergency displacement prevention grants, and Artist Space Trust, which provides low-income housing for artists and trains artists to access existing affordable housing, highlight the two-pronged nature of this crisis.

The City's Housing Element recognizes this need. Policy H-8 calls for developing workforce housing for low- and moderate-income households, including teachers, *artists*, and other residents who work in the city of Berkeley. This policy underpins the idea that artists, who are often teachers as well, contribute to the economy and vibrancy of the community and that high housing costs are placing the community's thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. Further, the Housing Element includes programs like Program 27, focused on Priority Development Areas (PDAs), including the San Pablo Specific Plan, and other initiatives that call for rezoning to enable higher-density housing, especially near transit and services.

The Corridors Zoning Update is one of the primary tools to carry out the Housing Element's vision. It will focus specifically on North Shattuck, College Avenue, and Solano Avenue—commercial corridors with potential for added housing. The goal is to update zoning codes to allow more housing (including affordable units), promote mixed-use development, and ensure compliance with state laws on housing capacity.

Both planning efforts emphasize equity and access. Berkeley has long valued its creative spirit. Now is the time to protect it. The dual imperative is clear: create more affordable housing and ensure artists can remain in their communities.

Embracing Berkeley's Commitment to Arts and our Artistic Heritage: Laying the Groundwork for Artists Housing in Berkeley

The goal: To support the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector by expanding access to affordable housing and workspaces for artists and arts organizations—through targeted policies, funding mechanisms, and land use strategies.

HAC and the Civic Arts Commission share the following recommendations:

1 Adopt an ordinance implementing AB 812, which allows up to 10% of Below Market Rate (BRM) units within cultural arts districts to be set aside for low-income artists.

In 2023, the State Legislature adopted AB 812 (Chapter 747). The bill provides that cities with inclusionary zoning programs can set aside up to 10% of Below Market Rate (BMR) units for lower-income artists. The units reserved must be located within, or within one-half mile, of a State-designated, or wholly within a locally designated, cultural district. The city has two locally designated cultural arts districts: The Black Arts and Culture District and the Arts District Overlay in downtown Berkeley. Community members and stakeholders are exploring a possible third local arts district in West-South Berkeley.

To provide a BMR unit set-aside for artists within local cultural districts, the city must adopt an ordinance implementing the state law. A draft ordinance has been prepared for Planning Commission and City Council consideration and is attached as Appendix A. [The Civic Arts Commission and HAC previously approved a recommendation referring the draft ordinance implementing AB 812 to the Planning Commission.]

Adopting an ordinance implementing AB 812 is an immediate action that can lead a concerted effort to retain the city’s creative workers, especially low-income artists and artists of color.

2 Integrate policies to incentivize affordable housing and affordable commercial space for artists and arts organizations in areas already identified in the City’s Housing Element, specifically the San Pablo Specific Plan and the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.

Planning staff are currently working with the community on the San Pablo Specific Plan and have recently initiated the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave. Both planning initiatives focus on key commercial corridors with the goal of developing land use and economic revitalization initiatives that will encourage and support diverse housing, commercial activities, and public amenities. The Plans also provide critical opportunities for developing land use standards and policies that encourage and incentivize live-work spaces for artists, spaces for non-profit arts organizations, and affordable housing for low-income cultural workers. In addition, flexible outdoor and indoor spaces for exhibitions and performances should be encouraged along these commercial corridors. The exhibition and performance spaces should be accessible and affordable to ensure their usability by artists.

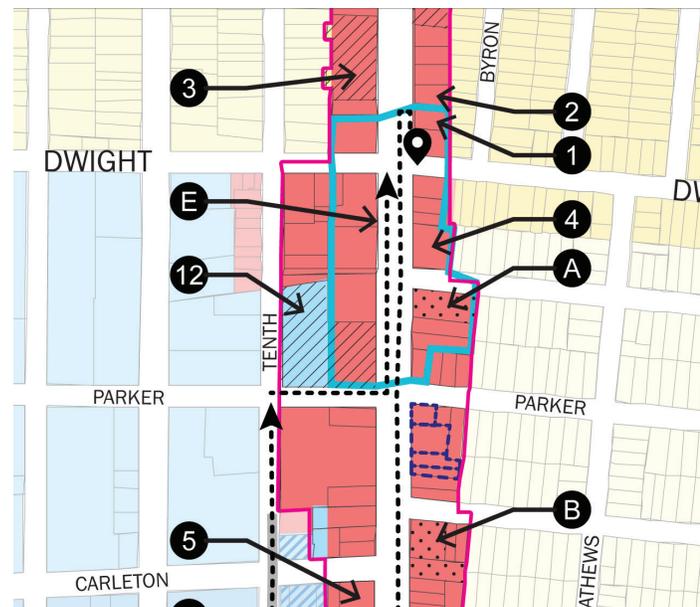
a. San Pablo Specific Plan

The San Pablo Specific Plan is investigating land use and zoning standards that promote access to housing, equity, safer streets, sustainability, and an economically vibrant commercial corridor.

The December 4, 2024, presentation to the Planning Commission provides an outline of the major goals derived from the community assessment. The identified goals, if translated into land use standards and policies, will go a long way to promoting affordable and diverse housing and encourage flexible spaces for arts and culture organizations and activities. The expansion of allowable ground floor uses to permit residential, with an emphasis on live-work spaces, is critical to animating the corridor and promoting economic vibrancy. Allowing pop-up uses by right and sponsoring public-private events are key avenues for supporting the arts and local artists. All of these strategies should be adopted in the final Plan.

The city of Berkeley has initiated studies of several key neighborhood corridors, earmarked for improvements.

San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Walking Tour



Specific recommendations include:

- In exchange for increased density, require provision of ground floor, below-market-rate office or exhibition space for non-profit arts organizations or provision of ground floor affordable artist live-work space.
- All live-work projects should have a set-aside for below-market units specifically for artists.
- If corridor improvements are permitted in exchange for increased density, they should include outdoor areas suitable for exhibitions and performances. It is essential that “corridor improvements” include hard and soft funding as “hard” spaces are only as good as the programming that happens within them. Funds for ongoing activities, landscaping, amenities, etc. must be provided.
- Permitted ground floor uses must be expanded to have an economically vibrant and successful San Pablo Avenue. Residential uses must be allowed, with a focus on live-work housing. Offices should also be permitted with a focus on arts and cultural (and other) non-profit spaces. Day care facilities are critical to economic development and should be a permitted ground floor use.

b. Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.

The Corridors Zoning Update is a city of Berkeley initiative focused on revising zoning regulations along three key commercial corridors: North Shattuck Avenue, College Avenue, and Solano Avenue. These areas have been designated as priority commercial and transit corridors in the city’s 2023–2031 Housing Element, aiming to increase housing capacity and promote equitable development.

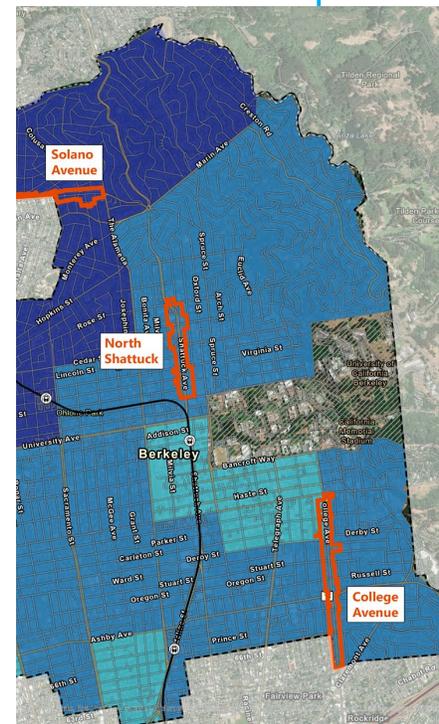
The Corridors Zoning Update is focused on land use and zoning standards that enhance housing capacity and address development barriers to advance fair housing and augment housing capacity, with a focus on equity and inclusion. The re-zoning effort launched earlier this year, and it is estimated to be completed at the end of 2026. The initial community meeting was held on May 1, 2025. The PowerPoint presentation from the meeting can be found here.

This initiative, which is just beginning, is an opportunity for affordable housing and arts organizations and advocates to be engaged to:

- Ensure that live-work spaces are permitted as part of the re-zoning; and
- Permit ground floor spaces in new residential developments, both market rate and affordable, to be used, by right, as flexible spaces that can accommodate offices and performance, exhibition and classroom facilities.

Affordable housing should be prioritized and incentivized:

- City-owned properties within the three corridors should be studied for feasibility for conversion into affordable housing sites; and
- A set-aside of affordable units for low-income artists should be included (see report recommendation #1 regarding adopting an ordinance implementing AB 812.)



The city of Berkeley has identified sites for housing opportunities.



3 Place an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot.

In 2018, the voters approved Measure O, with 77.5% of voters voting yes. Measure O provides \$135 million of funding from bond revenue to pay for affordable housing projects. Since approval of Measure O, over 750 units of affordable housing have been built or are under

construction and hundreds of units have been approved for funding and are in the development pipeline. The city completed two of the planned four issuances of the Measure O bond, with the third issuance anticipated in 2025.

The City does not have an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process to allocate Measure O funds, but instead issues NOFAs when sufficient funding is available to support one or more projects. There are no immediate plans for a NOFA for the estimated \$1.8M in remaining Measure O funds. Staff anticipates that remaining Measure O funds could be used to support pipeline projects that need additional subsidy, or may be used to support a new project, in conjunction with other local housing funds.

While there are major affordable housing projects in the development pipeline, including the North Berkeley and Ashby BART stations, Measure O funds have been expended, encumbered, or reserved for identified projects. Therefore, there are no significant local funds that can be used for new affordable housing projects. Local funding is a critical component of affordable housing development as \$1 of local funding can leverage up to \$5-\$7 of additional funding.

Local matching funds make projects more competitive when applying for state and federal funding, and are essential for securing Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding, a key affordable housing mechanism. Without a new local source of affordable housing funding, the forward progress in addressing the city’s affordable housing crisis will be stalled and the gains in reducing the number of unhoused people and providing stable housing for low-income families and individuals will be reversed. Therefore, it is imperative that the city begin the process of placing a new affordable housing bond measure on the November 2028 ballot.



A 2028 bond measure can ensure funding for:

- Workforce housing, including housing for artists;
- Redeveloping the West Berkeley Senior Center site on 6th Street;
- A Social Housing pilot project(s); and
- Initiatives identified in the San Pablo Specific Plan and Corridors Zoning Update.

Several housing developments exist which aim at housing artists—from a proposed project on Market Street in San Francisco, CA (upper left) to the majestic Warren Building / the Artspace Uptown Artist Lofts (left) in Michigan City, IN and Westbeth Artists Housing in New York City, NY (lower left).

4 Partner with regional arts and affordable housing organizations to identify a large site, or multiple small sites, for an affordable housing project (new- build or existing properties) for low-income artists, provide technical assistance, pre-development funding or other resources as necessary to kick-start such a project.

The city is fortunate to be part of a vibrant affordable housing and arts ecosystem. While the development of housing projects can take years, in the short term, it is also important for the city to work to support and retain its diverse workforce and residents.

City Housing and Economic Development staff could seek to work in close partnership with arts organizations, including Artist Space Trust who is already providing technical assistance programming to educate their members and the larger arts community on accessing existing affordable housing, navigating the Section 8 wait list, monitoring various housing advocacy and provider websites, learning about community land trust housing, and more.

Longer-term, and working in partnership, these same arts organizations are a vital asset to the city in the development of an artist-centered affordable housing project. The project would incorporate best practices gathered from across the sector to create affordable housing for low-income arts workers. It could include live-work units and studio spaces, define finance and ownership structures, and importantly, continue to deliver vital technical assistance programs, aimed at informing and engaging the most vulnerable within our arts community. All the lessons learned, and expertise gained, could then inform other artist-centered housing projects and zoning programs and policies, with the goal of preserving and growing the arts as an impactful economic sector and retaining and expanding the artist community in Berkeley.

Specific activities might include:

- Explore the feasibility of a NOFA for an artist-specific affordable housing project to be funded in part with Housing Trust Fund monies.
- If sufficient funds are not available for a NOFA, develop a pilot project to provide technical assistance and pre-development funding to support an affordable housing project for artists to be awarded through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.
- Hold a workshop for arts organizations about how to access affordable housing with information about Section 8, the Inclusionary Housing program, the Housing Preference Policy, non-profit housing development organizations, and housing advocacy groups like East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO). The workshop could also include information about Fair Housing and the Rent Stabilization Program.

5 Implement the short- and medium-term strategies recommended in the Berkeley Social Housing Study - Draft - May 2025.

The Draft Berkeley Social Housing Study advances a vision of housing as a universal right and outlines how Berkeley can integrate social housing principles into local policy. It highlights the city's acute housing challenges – widespread rent burdens, homelessness, displacement of residents, and a persistent shortfall in affordable housing – indicating that current efforts are falling short of the need.

Drawing on international models (like Vienna and Denmark) and a U.S. example (Montgomery County, MD), the study finds that social housing can be effectively delivered by public and/or nonprofit entities if backed by sustained funding, and that when such housing constitutes a large share of the total stock, it dramatically improves overall affordability. Key findings emphasize the need for: 1) long-term public investment, 2) strict cost controls to keep development costs down, and 3) strong tenant participation in housing management to ensure success.

The study's financial analysis (comparing a mixed-income, cross-subsidy approach to a deeply affordable model) found that acquiring and rehabilitating existing buildings is more cost-effective per unit than new construction and can create affordable homeownership opportunities; however, delivering new social housing at scale will require either including some market-rate units to cross-subsidize lower rents or securing much larger public subsidies – in all cases, substantial outside funding is needed to reach the lowest-income households.

In the near term (1–3 years), the study recommends launching pilot projects to demonstrate social housing principles – for example, a mixed-income development and an acquisition-rehab project converting rentals to affordable homes. It also suggests bolstering existing programs by: 1) expanding the Small Sites Program (with sustainable funding) to preserve at-risk buildings, 2) encouraging cost-saving construction methods (like modular design), and 3) leveraging public land for affordable housing developments.

Over the medium term (4–10 years), the study calls for a 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategic Plan to set clear social housing goals (including targets for income mix and what proportion of Berkeley's housing stock should be social) and to clarify the City's future role in housing (whether to remain a funder or become a direct housing provider). The plan would also identify sites for future projects, institute formal cost controls on development (such as limits on unit size, per-unit cost, and developer fees), and explore new public financing tools like infrastructure financing districts to support social housing. Finally, the study urges efforts to “decommodify” housing by preserving affordable units long-term and establishing robust tenant governance structures (such as participatory budgeting and rent transparency) to ensure housing is treated as a public good.

“... the study urges efforts to “decommodify” housing by preserving affordable units long-term and establishing robust tenant governance structures ... to ensure housing is treated as a public good.”

6 Adopt a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and applying for State cultural district designation

The City of Berkeley currently has two locally designated cultural districts. However, they are implemented differently:

1. The Arts District Overlay was established in Berkeley Municipal Code 23.204.130.D in 2012, as part of the Downtown Area Plan, and has specific boundaries outlined in the Downtown Mixed-Use District.

2. The Black Arts & Culture District was designated by the City Council on February 13, 2024, by Resolution No. 71,212–N.S. The Black Arts & Cultural District is not designated with its own unique boundaries, but rather by reference to the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, which allows and “strongly encourage[s]” arts and entertainment uses in ground floor spaces.

In December 2024, the City Council referred to the City Manager and Civic Arts Commission the task of establishing common standards for locally designated cultural districts, with the recommendation that the city should consider a standard process for cultural district designation such that the above and future designations can qualify under AB 812 as a “similar locally designated cultural district.”

The referral also directs city staff to consider seeking state-level cultural district designation once local standards are in place. With the adoption of AB 189 (2015), the state of California launched the California Cultural District program as a pilot in 2017, with 14 state-designated cultural districts certified by the California Arts Council. In June 2025, the Council launched a second round of the California Cultural Districts program to select another 10 state-designated cultural districts.

Adopting common standards for locally designated cultural district will leverage the power of the AB 812 implementing ordinance by expanding the universe of available BMR set-aside units for lower-income artists, as these set-aside units can be located with 1/2 mile of a state-designated cultural district.

7 Preserve the funding or a guaranteed basic income (GBI) pilot project and explore the feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in the pilot project.

The feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as eligible participants in a Guaranteed Basic Income pilot project should be explored in recognition of their economic vulnerability and contribution to Berkeley’s cultural and economic vitality.

As part of its Reimagining Public Safety initiative, the City Council budgeted \$50,000 to hire a consultant to develop a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project. According to staff, this project has not moved forward and the designated funding will be examined among competing priorities for the city budget in the fall. When the GBI pilot project is re-evaluated in the fall, HAC and the Civic Arts Commission recommend that the funding be retained for this initiative.

Artists share the same challenges as other economically precarious workers with irregular incomes. Participation in a GBI program could help stabilize housing and access to work spaces, thereby retaining an important sector of the local economy. A study of Oakland’s recently concluded GBI pilot program showed that the GBI pilot program resulted in more modest employment and modest improvements in



“Berkeley has a long history of supporting the arts and artists with specific policies and requirements to ensure its standing as a vibrant and forward-looking community.”

housing outcomes, including less likelihood of becoming homeless, compared to the control group.

Moving forward with a GBI pilot project is essential given all the on-going and anticipated cuts to federal and state social safety net programs and services. Strategies to meet the needs of lower income workers must be explored and implemented as resources shrink and the need grows. Developing and refining best practices is an important part of this effort if we are to support and sustain the arts and the working artists who make up the arts workforce.

Wrap-Up

Berkeley has a long history of supporting the arts and artists with specific policies and requirements to ensure its standing as a vibrant and forward-looking community. Its original Arts and Culture Plan was approved over 20 years ago. During this time, the city has weathered the Great Recession of 2008; multiple housing cycles and downturns resulting, at various times, in increases in its unhoused residents; a growing affordable housing crisis; a pandemic; and most recently, an unprecedented attack on the social safety net and funding for the arts and humanities by the federal government.

At the same time, the city has worked hard to address these challenges, with citizens voting for several measures to fund programs to reduce homelessness and build affordable housing. During the pandemic, the city provided emergency funding to non-profit arts organizations and tenants to prevent displacement. The city has undertaken several planning initiatives to incentivize more equitable development and pave the way for more affordable housing opportunities. These efforts must be built upon to realize the goal of supporting the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector. Adopting this report's recommendations will go a long way to achieving that effort.

APPENDIX A

ORDINANCE NO. _____

Implementation of AB 812 (Chapter 747) Authorizing a Certain Percentage of Affordable Units be Reserved for Artists up to 10% of those Required Affordable Housing Units Consistent with the City of Berkeley's Affordable Housing Preference Policy

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23.328 is amended to read as follows:

Section 23.328.010

Findings and Purpose.

Section 23.328.010 is amended to add the following:

H. AB 812 (Chapter 747) authorizes a city or county that requires, as a condition of approval, that a certain percentage of units of a residential development be affordable housing, as specified, to reserve for artists up to 10% of those required affordable housing units, if certain conditions are met, including that the units reserved are located within or within one-half mile from a state-designated cultural district or within a locally designated cultural district, as specified.

I. The City of Berkeley has two locally designated cultural districts. The Black Arts and Culture District was designated by the City Council on February 13, 2024 by Resolution No. 71,212–N.S. 2. The Arts District Overlay was established in Berkeley Municipal Code 23.204.130.D in 2012 as part of the Downtown Area Plan.

J. According to a 2022 survey produced for Berkeley's Civic Arts Commission by Creative Equity Research Partners, the 163 local artists surveyed represent a cross-section of Berkeley's most vulnerable populations, and high housing costs are placing the community's thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. Artistic professions are highly valued but poorly compensated. Of the 88% respondents who had Bachelor's degrees, 60% reported an annual

household income of \$69,000 or below, which qualified as Low Income in Alameda County. 45% were rent-burdened. This disparity also intersects with the racial wealth gap: among respondents who identified as non-White, 72%, reported low household incomes, compared to 55% among those who identified as White or Caucasian.

K. In 2023, the City Council approved the City of Berkeley's 2023-2031 Housing Element Update, which included several programs to produce and preserve affordable housing for a broad population including Policy H- 8 (Workforce Housing): Develop Workforce Housing for low- and moderate-income households, including teachers, artists, and other residents who work in the City of Berkeley.

L. In 2023, the City Council approved an Affordable Housing Preference Policy for individuals who have previously been displaced from Berkeley and desire to return. Implementation of the AB 812 affordable housing set-aside for low-income artists shall be consistent with the Affordable Housing Preference Policy as it may be amended from time to time.

Section 23.328.020

Definitions

Section 23.328.020 is amended to add the following:

"Affordable housing" for the purposes of implementing AB 812 (Chapter 747) means units dedicated to moderate-income, lower income, very low income, or extremely low income households, as defined in Sections 50079.5, 50093, 50105, and 50106 of the Health and Safety Code, at an affordable housing cost, as defined by Section 50052.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

"Artist" for the purposes of this Chapter means the creator of any work of visual, graphic, or performing art of any media, including, but not limited to, a painting, print, drawing, sculpture, craft, photograph, film, or performance.

APPENDIX A ... continued

Section 23.328.030 Affordable Housing Regulations

Section 23.328.030 Affordable Housing Regulations is amended to add the following:

A. Requirement to Construct Affordable Units.

A. 10. Pursuant to AB 812 (Chapter 747), up to 10% of the required Affordable Units shall be reserved for Artists, if certain conditions are met, including that the units reserved are located within or within one-half mile from a state-designated cultural district or within a locally designated cultural district. The percentage of Affordable Units set aside for Artists and consistency with the City’s Affordable Housing Preference Policy shall be determined by the City Manager or their designee who may promulgate additional rules and regulations consistent with the requirements of AB 812 (Chapter 747).

Section 2. The City Council intends that this Ordinance be construed as an amendment to the City’s existing affordability requirements, and that the repeal and re-enactment of any requirement shall not be construed to relieve a party of any outstanding obligation to comply with the requirements applicable to any previously approved Housing Development Project.

Section 3. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within 15 days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

At a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Berkeley held on _____, 20_____, this Ordinance was passed to print and ordered published by posting by the following vote:

Ayes: _____ Nos: _____

Absent: _____

Credits/ Art and Photographs

Cover: Maudelle Miller Shirek Community (housing development) image provided by MWA Architects

Page 2: 2902 Adeline Street Site Plan (detail) by Trachtenberg Architects

Page 5: Photograph by Pexels/Cottonbro

Page 7: The City of Berkeley/San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan “Walking Tour” Guide

Page 8: The City of Berkeley/North Shattuck, College, Solano Corridors Plan

Page 9: Photograph by Pexels/Sora Shimazaki (top); 1687 Market Street, rendering by Mark Cavagnero Associates (bottom inset), Warren Building image provided by Artspace, Westbeth Artists Housing photograph by Graham Dickie/*The New York Times* (bottom inset).

Page 12: Photograph by Pexels/Pixabay



Enchanted Forest - Willard Clubhouse Public Art Final Design



Willard Clubhouse Public Art Final Design Detail

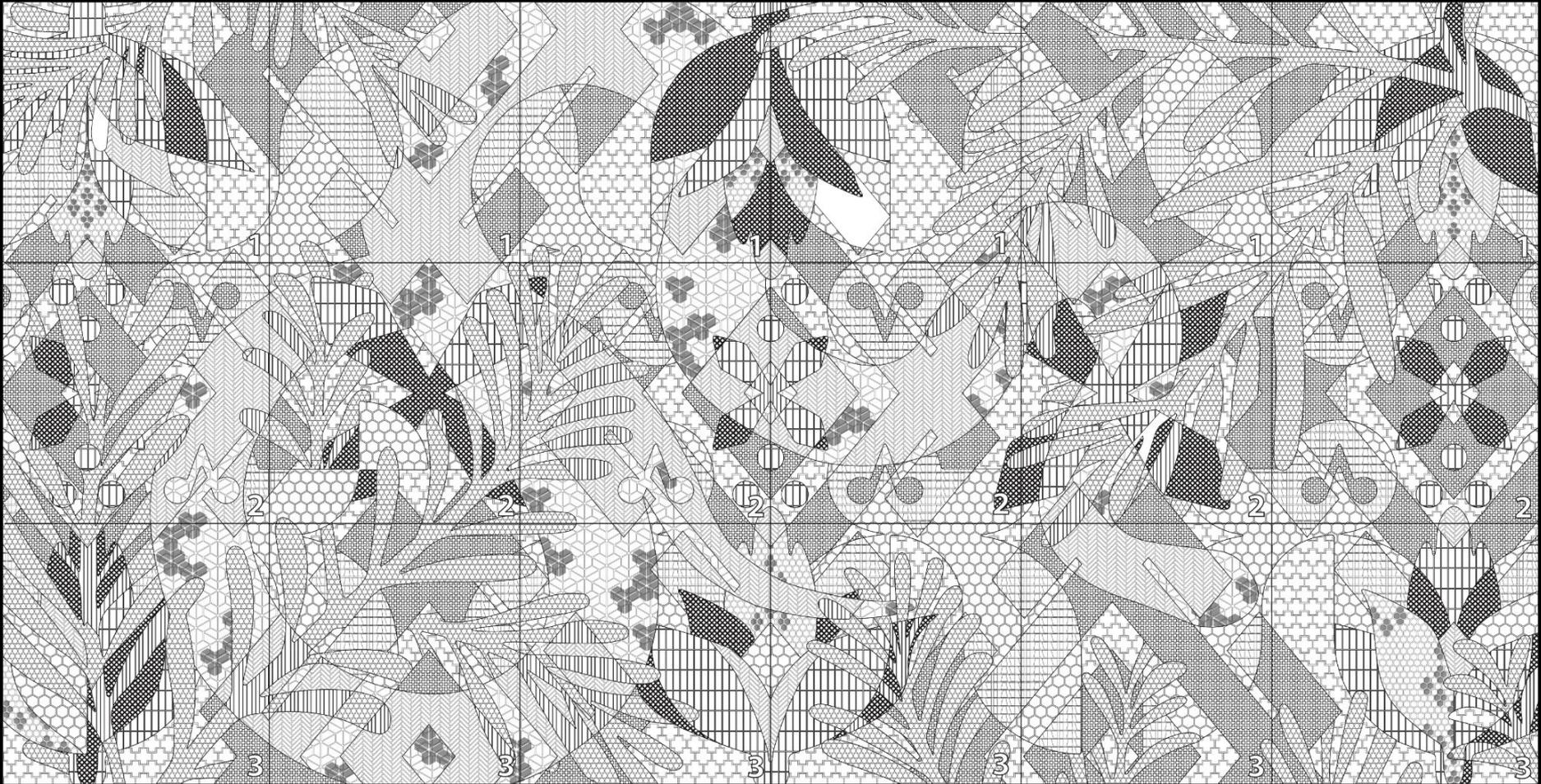
Pre-set matte and gloss porcelain, ceramic, stone and glass tiles will be used to create additional moments of visual interest.



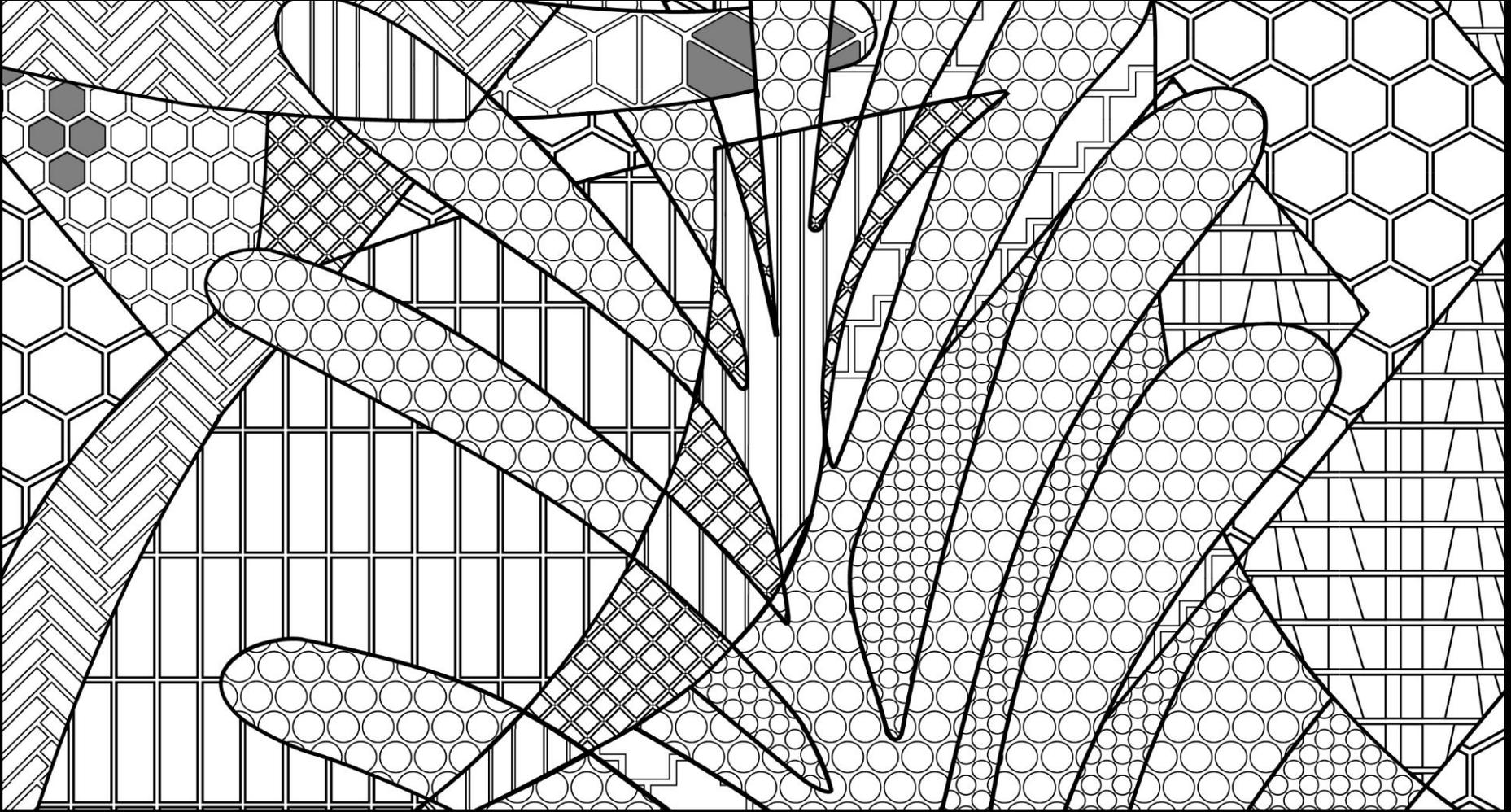
Willard Clubhouse Public Art Plan



Willard Clubhouse Public Art In-Situ

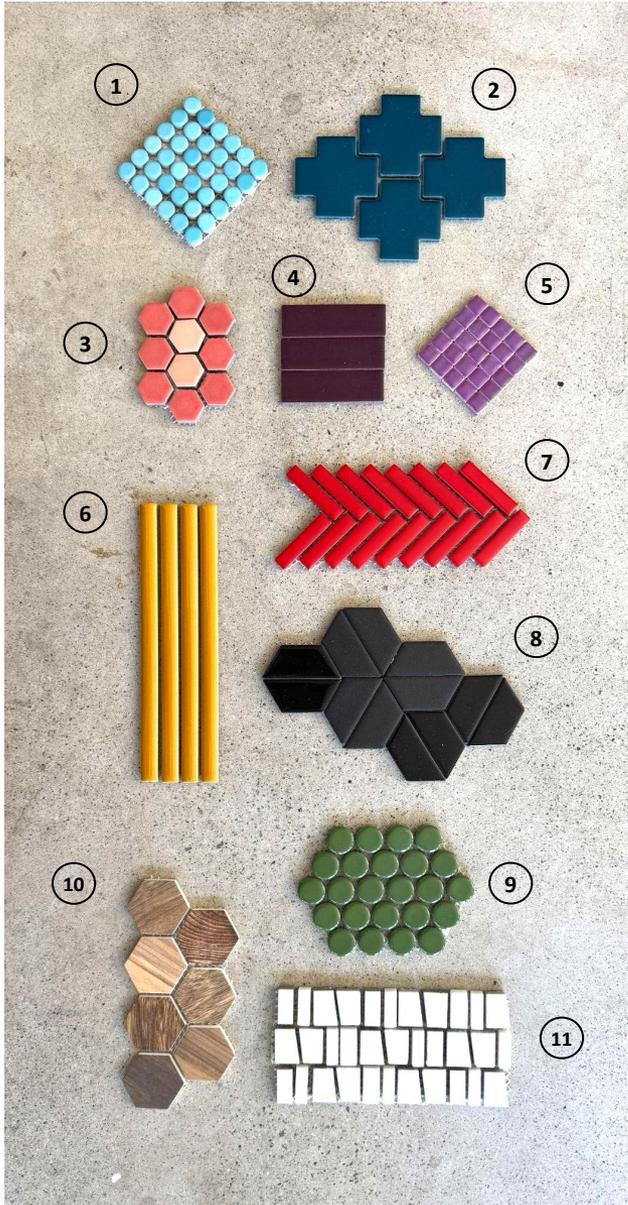


Willard Clubhouse Design Layout



Willard Clubhouse Design Layout Detail

Tile Specifications



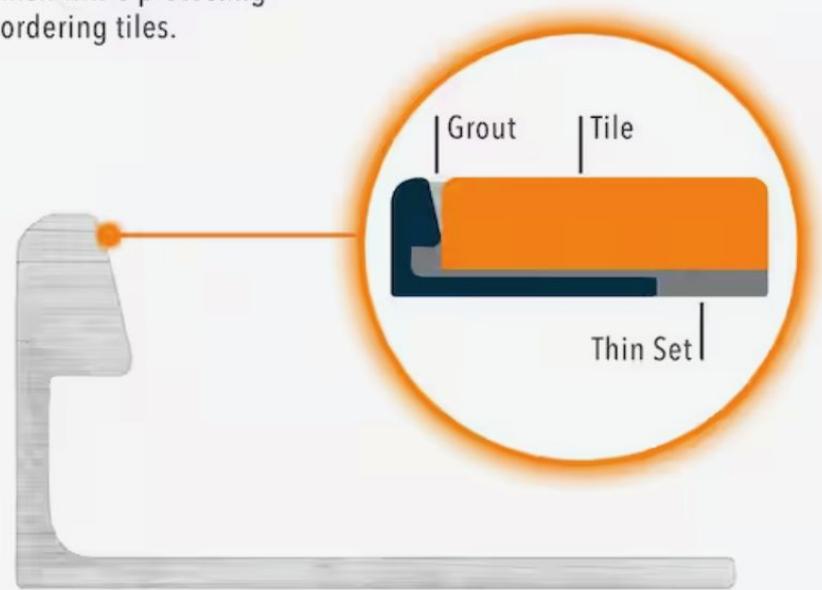
- ① ½" Dot: Cotton Candy Blend: Gloss Porcelain (6mm)
- ② 2 ¼ " x 2 ¼ " Cross : Teal Matte Porcelain (6mm)
- ③ ⅞" x 1" Hexagon: Sienna Red/Peach Matte Porcelain (6mm)
- ④ 1" x 3" Straight: Plum Crazy Gloss Ceramic (6mm)
- ⑤ ½" Square: Purple Gloss Ceramic (5mm)
- ⑥ ½" x 8" Pencil Trim: Honey Gloss Ceramic (7mm)
- ⑦ ½ " x 2" Herringbone: Red Gloss Ceramic (6mm)
- ⑧ 1" x 2" Half Hexagon: Black Matte/Gloss Porcelain (6mm)
- ⑨ ½" Penny Round: Kermit Green Porcelain (6mm)
- ⑩ 1 ½" x 1 ⅞" x 1 Crosswood Matte Glass Mosaic (6mm)
- ⑪ 1" Varied Trapezoid: Cloud Matte Ceramic and Stone (8mm)

Mosaic Trim



L-SHAPE

The L-Shape trim features a slightly sloped vertical rail that provides a decorative finish while protecting bordering tiles.



Grout



Color to match Interior Doors/Frames - Benjamin Moore Iron Mountain 21134-30

Project Timeline

Design Approval	June 30, 2025
Shop Drawings	July 2025
Materials Delivered	July 2025
Fabrication Start	September 1, 2025
Fabrication 50% Completion	October 15, 2025
Fabrication 100% Completion	November 21, 2025
Installation Start	* December 1, 2025
Installation Completion	** December 21, 2025

* to be arranged in coordination with City of Berkeley

** 3-5 days after installation start date

Project Budget

Artist Fee	\$30,000
Materials	\$20,000
Fabrication - Precita Eyes	\$47,000
Fabrication - JWC	\$15,000
Delivery	\$4,000
Installation	\$15,000
Administration	\$4,000
Contingency	\$15,000
Total	\$150,000

Fabricator/Installer

Precita Eyes

susancervantes@precitaeyes.org

2981 24th Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

(415) 285-2287

General Contractor *

Schrobsdorff Construction

License #: 964003

schrobsdorff.construction@gmail.com

722 Southview Way

Woodside, CA 94062

(415) 285-2287

* This GC has agreed to hold the contract for installation with Precita Eyes as their sub.

Maintenance

Routine cleaning

Use a dry cloth or feather duster to prevent dirt and debris from settling in the grout or on the surface.

Spot cleaning

Clean up spills immediately to reduce the risk of stains and water damage.

Mild soapy water

Use a solution of warm water and mild dish soap to gently clean the surface.

Avoid harsh chemicals

Avoid abrasive scrubbers, harsh chemicals, and acidic cleaners, which can damage the tiles, grout, or discolor grout. When necessary, Goof-off can be used for stubborn stains or graffiti removal.

Rinse and dry

Rinse the mosaic thoroughly with clean water and dry with a clean, dry cloth or towel.

Avoid excessive force

Don't use excessive force when drying, as this can damage the grout or dislodge tiles.

Sealing

A water based sealant like Stonetech BulletProof Sealer will be applied to the surface to provide additional stain and moisture protection after installation. Reapplication is recommended every 1-5 years depending on the level of traffic.

Regular inspection

Periodically inspect the mosaic artwork for loose or missing tiles and damaged grout. Promptly address any issues to prevent further damage.

Festival Title	Applicant Organization	Festival Summary	Website	District	Start Date
West Side De Berkeley Festival and Car Show	West Side De Berkeley Car Club 5013c	West Side De Berkeley Car Show and Festival features classic cars, cultural performances, food vendors, family activities, and community engagement.	www.westsidedeberkeley.com	District 2	7/12/2025
North Shattuck Block Party	North Shattuck Association	Celebrate the Arts in Berkeley – local musicians, artists, barbecue, wine and beer. Outdoors on historic Vine Street at Shattuck	www.northshattuck.org	District 4 District 5	7/27/2025
Community Health Day- The Art of Collective Healing	Berkeley Herbal Center	Connect underserved communities to holistic health. Build a healer network for collective healing exchange.	www.berkeleyherbalcenter.org	District 2	8/17/2025
SF Bay Brazilian Day & Lavagem Festival	BrasArte the Damasceno Brazilian Cultural Exchange	A free community festival featuring a day long celebration of African Brazilian music and dance.	www.brasarte.com	District 4	8/31/2025
Solano Avenue Stroll	Solano Avenue Association	A free, annual, closed-street festival with over four hundred vendors; entertainers; food booths; government and non-profit agencies, makers, and more!	www.SolanoAvenue.org	District 5	9/14/2025
Berkeley Old Time Music Convention	Berkeley Old Time Music Convention	Five days of old-time music: concerts, dances, workshops, family activities, hosted jamming, featuring national, regional and local old-time musicians.	https://www.berkeleyoldtimemusic.org/	District 1 District 3 District 4	9/17/2025
Fist Up Film Festival	Fist Up Film Festival	We screen and discuss films that help us envision the world we want to create.	https://www.fistup.tv	District 8	10/1/2025
33rd Annual Indigenous Peoples Day Powwow & Indian Market	Indigenous Peoples Day Committee	A family-friendly, inclusive Pow-Wow and Indian Market centering on Native culture with drummers, singers, dancers, food and authentic vendors.	https://ipdpowwow.org/	District 4	10/11/2025
BORP Adaptive Sports Expo	BORP Adaptive Sports and Recreation	Expo is a free, daylong event where participants with disabilities and the public can try over 10 adaptive activities.	https://www.borp.org/expo/	District 1 District 2	10/18/2025
Berkeley Bird Festival	Golden Gate Bird Alliance	Berkeley Bird Festival is a one day event celebrating local birdlife through a variety of family-friendly activities.	https://berkeleybirdfestival.org/	District 1 District 2 District 3 District 4 District 5 District 6 District 7 District 8	10/19/2025
EBCLC's Fall Legal Festival	East Bay Community Law Center	EBCLC is actualizing community power by hosting a civic engagement festival to provide legal services, workshops and celebrate Berkeley's diversity.	www.ebclc.org	District 3	10/23/2025
Dia de los Muertos	R.I.S.E.	Celebration honoring ancestral traditions and cultural resilience. Rooted in art, tradition, and collective healing, celebrating life, remembrance, and cultural pride.	www.riseyouth.org	District 4	10/25/2025



**Draft Minutes
Civic Arts Commission
Wednesday, June 25, 2025
6:00 PM**

**Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703**

Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER: 6:05 PM

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo

Commissioners Absent: Pineda, Scott

Staff Present: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead; Jennifer Lovvorn, Commission Secretary/Chief Cultural Affairs Officer; Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead

Members of the public present: 3

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda): None

5. COMMUNICATIONS: None

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

- a) Activities related to State Cultural District Designation
- b) Civic Arts Commission's Poet Laureate & Festival Funding requests
- c) Budget advocacy within difficult budget climate

7. PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- a) **Presentation:** FY26 Civic Arts Grants Memo. Presented by Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead.

Public Comment: None

- b) **Action Item:** FY26 Individual Artist Projects Grant Awards. Presented by Grants Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve FY26 Individual Artist Projects Grant Awards.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: 4
- c) **Action Item:** FY26 Community Festivals Grant Awards. Presented by Grants Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve both scenarios for the FY26 Community Festivals Grant Awards.
Vote: Ayes — Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Recuse — Bachrach; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: 2
- d) **Action Item:** FY26 General Operating Support Grant Awards. Presented by Grants Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Blecher/Bullwinkel) to approve FY26 General Operating Support Grant Awards.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: 2
- e) **Action Item:** Civic Arts Commission FY26 Work Plan. Presented by Jennifer Lovvorn, Commission Secretary/Chief Cultural Affairs Officer.
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve Civic Arts Commission FY26 Work Plan.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: 1
- f) **Action Item:** FY26 Public Art Budget. Presented by Public Art Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Blecher/Woo) to approve FY26 Public Art Budget.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: 4
- g) **Action Item:** Design Development of Willard Clubhouse public art project by Julie Chang. Presented by Public Art Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve Design Development of Willard Clubhouse public art project by Julie Chang.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.

Public Comment: None

- h) **Action Item:** Cube Space Curator Kevin Chen: Artist Mary Anne Kluth: October – December 2025. Presented by Public Art Subcommittee.
M/S/C (Blecher/Bullwinkel) to approve Cube Space Curator Kevin Chen: Artist Mary Anne Kluth: October – December 2025.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: None
- i) **Action Item:** State of California Cultural District Designation application. Presented by Introduced by Cameron Woo, Chair.
M/S/C (Blecher/Bullwinkel) to approve selecting Black Arts & Culture District for State of California Cultural District Designation application.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: None

8. STAFF REPORT

- a) Civic Arts Program Updates, Jen Lovvorn
- b) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah
- c) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Grants – No Report.
- b) Public Art – No Report.
- c) Policy Subcommittee – No Report.
- d) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission – Upcoming item in July.
- e) Representative on Design Review Committee – Two projects under review.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) **Action Item:** Draft May 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve Final May 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — Montgomery; Absent — Pineda, Scott.
Public Comment: None

11. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT: 7:59 PM

M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to adjourn.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None;
Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda, Scott

Public Comment: None

Staff Contact:



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