



COMMUNITY HEALTH REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, September 24, 2026, 6:30pm-9:00pm

Judge Henry Ramsey Jr. South Berkeley Senior Center

2939 Ellis Street, Berkeley, CA 94703

Phone: 510-981-5170

Commission Members:

Chair Andy Katz, Commissioner Kassandra Bacon, Commissioner Victoria Breckwich Vasquez,
Commissioner Harriet Charney, Commissioner Taj Herzer-Baptiste, Commissioner Manel Kappagoda,
Commissioner Carole Marasovic.

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid model with both in-person and virtual attendance. Attend this meeting remotely using [Zoom link CHC](#)

To request to speak, use the “raise hand” function in Zoom. To join by phone: Dial **1-669-254-5252 or 1-833-568-8864 (Toll Free)** and enter **Meeting ID: 165 6910 2043 and Passcode: 334447**. To provide public comment, Press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair. To submit a written communication for the public record, email kknox@berkeleyca.gov.

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting, however, if you are feeling sick, please do not attend the meeting in person. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Kellie Knox 510-833-0478 or kknox@berkeleyca.gov

Roll Call

Land Acknowledgement -Attachment 6

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Minutes for Approval

1. **Draft Minutes of June and July 2026 Regular Meetings -Attachments 1 and 2**
From: Commission Secretary
Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the June 25 and July 23 meetings.

Public Health Officer's Report

Chairperson's Report

Commission Action Items

2. **Election of Vice Chair**
From: Commission Chair Katz
Recommendation: Elect a new Vice Chair to fill the recently vacated position.
3. **Community Health Improvement Plan**
From: Commissioner Marasovic
Recommendation: Discuss the Community Safety Workgroup Activities.
4. **General Plan Environmental Justice Element**
From: Commission Chair
Recommendation: Discuss to consider Commission's response.
5. **Sub-Committee Membership**
From: Commission Chair Katz
Recommendation: Discuss and identify sub-committee needs.

Information Items

6. **Sub-Committee Updates**
From: Commission Chair Katz

Items for Future Agendas

Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update

Adjournment

Attachments

1. Draft minutes 6/25/2026 Regular Meeting
2. Draft minutes 7/23/2026 Regular Meeting
3. CHC Work Plan 2026-2027
4. CHC Meeting Calendar 2026
5. City Council and CHC Timeline 2026
6. Land Acknowledgement
7. Environmental Justice Element FAQ

8. Environmental Justice Element Project Update – December 2024
9. Environmental Justice Element Links

Notices

Notice of Public Record

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: E-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required but, if included in any communication to a City board, commission, or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission, or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary at the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Health, Housing and Community Services located at 2180 Milvia St, Berkeley CA 94704 during regular business hours. The Commission Agenda and Minutes may be viewed on the City of Berkeley website: [Boards & Commissions | City of Berkeley \(berkeleyca.gov\)](https://www.berkeleyca.gov/boards-commissions) (SB 343)



Communication Access 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 Disability Services specialist at ada@berkeleyca.gov, (510) 981-6418 (V), or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Attendees at public meetings are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various scents, whether natural or manufactured, in products and materials. Please help the City respect these needs.

Video and audio recordings of the Community Health Commission meetings are available upon request. Please contact the Commission Secretary at kknox@berkeleyca.gov or 510-981-5301 to obtain a recording.

Certification of public posting

I hereby certify that the agenda for this meeting of the Berkeley City Commission was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on September 18, 2026.

Kellie Knox

Kellie Knox, Secretary Community Health Commission



Community Health Commission
Andy Katz, Chair
Susan Reese, Vice Chair
Kellie Knox, Staff Secretary

Community Health Commission
DRAFT MINUTES
Regular Meeting, Thursday, June 25, 2026

The meeting convened at 6:35 p.m. with Commissioner Katz presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Kappagoda, Katz, Marasovic, and Reese.

Absent: None.

Excused: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez and Bacon.

Staff present: Kellie Knox

Community Members: None

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

ACTION ITEM

3. M/S/C (Reese/Kappagoda): Motion to approve the draft minutes from meeting on May 28, 2026.

Ayes: Commissioners Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Kappagoda, Katz, Marasovic, and Reese.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None

Absent from Vote: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez and Bacon.

Excused: None.

Motion Passed.

Discussion and Action Items

1. HHCS Director Report – Director not present. Staff answered questions.
2. CHC Chair's Report -Discussion
3. Approval of Draft Minutes from 5/28/26 Regular Meeting – Action
4. City Manager's FYI 2027 & 2027 Proposed Budget Balancing Plan - Discussion
5. Community Health Improvement Plan - Working Group Updates - Discussion
6. CHC FY 26-27 Work Plan Review - Discussion
7. Commission Workgroups -Not discussed.

Future Agenda Items:

- PH Program Presentations
- MIH/CP pilot and CARE/Health One presentation
- Briefing on Housing funding by Homeless Panel of Experts or Housing Advisory Commission
- Environmental Justice/Safety Elements Presentation Plan –September
- Proposal to Resume Operations of BEAR Program
- Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update – October
- Hybrid Commission meetings

This meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Minutes will be reviewed and approved on Thursday, July 23, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie Knox, Commission Secretary _____



Community Health Commission
Andy Katz, Chair
Susan Reese, Vice Chair
Kellie Knox, Staff Secretary

Community Health Commission
DRAFT MINUTES
Regular Meeting, Thursday, July 23, 2026

The meeting convened at 6:40 p.m. with Commissioner Katz presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bacon, Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Kappagoda, Katz, Marasovic, and Reese.

Absent: None.

Excused: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez.

Staff present: Kellie Knox; Scott Gilman

Community Members: Two

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

ACTION ITEM

6. M/S/C (Reese/Kappagoda): Motion to confirm the commission's Work Plan for 2026-2027 with edits made during meeting.

Ayes: Commissioners Bacon, Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Kappagoda, Katz, Marasovic, and Reese.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None

Absent from Vote: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez.

Excused: None.

Motion Passed.

ACTION ITEM

7. M/S/C (Herzer-Baptiste/Charney): Motion to form a Health Facilities Ad Hoc Subcommittee with members identified as Commissioners Katz, Harney and Herzer-Baptiste.

Ayes: Commissioners Bacon, Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Kappagoda, Katz, Marasovic, and Reese.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None

Absent from Vote: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez.

Excused: None.

Motion Passed.

Discussion and Action Items

1. HHCS Director Report – Discussion and Updates on Budget.
2. CHC Chair's Report -Discussion
3. Approval of Draft Minutes from 5/28/26 Regular Meeting – No Action Taken
4. Presentation Dr. Amy Barden from Seattle's CARE program.
5. Community Health Improvement Plan - Working Group Updates - Discussion
6. CHC FY 26-27 Work Plan Review - Discussion and Action Taken.
7. Commission Workgroups -Discussion and Action Taken.

Future Agenda Items:

- PH Program Presentations
- Briefing on Housing funding by Homeless Panel of Experts or Housing Advisory Commission
- Environmental Justice/Safety Elements Presentation Plan –September
- Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update – October
- Concurrent Special Meeting with another Commission.

This meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Minutes will be reviewed and approved on Thursday, September 24, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie Knox, Commission Secretary _____



Community Health Commission

Att-03

Community Health Commission 2026-27 Work Plan

Guiding Philosophy: To look at health through an equity lens in order to address, ameliorate, and abolish health inequities in Berkeley while addressing and supporting public health efforts in collaboration with the City of Berkeley City Council, City of Berkeley Public Health staff, and community members.

I. Mission/Purpose:

- A. Collaborate with the community, the City of Berkeley Health Officer Unit, Public Health Division, and Berkeley City Council to eliminate health inequity by:
 - 1. Advocating to the City Council for policies that have the potential to improve the health of Berkeley residents and that can be implemented, monitored and evaluated.
 - 2. Increasing public education and engagement to develop greater understanding and awareness of public health issues.
 - 3. Advocating with the residents of Berkeley most affected by institutional, social, and organizational inequities and disparities.
 - 4. Providing a public forum for all community members to share their public-health related concerns and ideas
- B. Achieve progress in attaining general good health for all Berkeley residents by being responsive to community needs and facilitating general health and safety.

II. Overall issues to be addressed through a health equity lens.

- A. Be responsive to recommendations that will help Berkeley residents, care providers, and clinics cope with spending cuts to local, state, and federal funding.
- B. Continue to be a community advocate to City Council to address structural, institutional, and health inequities impacting all underserved populations, taking into account the social determinants of health.
- C. Evaluate and act on health status data such as the 2018 Health Status Report, and data updated in the Community Health Assessment and other periodic reports.
- D. Increase healthy food security, particularly preparing for SNAP/CalFresh changes, including advocating for the necessary support for the Berkeley Food Network / Pantry, and access to fresh groceries.
- E. Support expansion of affordable housing as a part of addressing root causes of health disparities.
- F. Advise the City Council as HHCS and Public Health Division develop the strategic plan and Results-Based Accountability framework, Key Performance Indicators, and Community Health Improvement Plan.

III. Priorities:

1. Basic Needs Security

- a. Advocate for affordability and accessibility of healthy foods by supporting programs in Berkeley that address these issues.
- b. Advocate for affordable housing and rent protections for Berkeley residents.
- c. Connect with community-based organizations and appropriate City of Berkeley departments to acquire information about available resources for Berkeley residents.

2. Chronic Disease Prevention

- a. Recommend interventions to address diabetes, obesity, heart diseases, and other chronic conditions highlighted by the updates to Berkeley health status report and Community Health Assessment.
- b. Engage with Public Health Division staff development of Results-Based Accountability framework evaluation of public health programs.

3. Health Equity

Engage with Public Health staff and community members to advocate for the implementation of strategies that will reduce health inequities, detailed in the Health Status Report:

- a. Monitor the utilization and support outreach for the West Berkeley Family Wellness Center.
- b. Continue to support the development of the African American Holistic Resource Center.
- c. Investigate and implement efforts to improve immigrant access to health care.

4. Health Facilities

- a. Address the planned closure and replacement of Alta Bates Hospital to maintain acute care services for Berkeley residents, including evaluation and advocacy of the adequacy of the number of replacement beds in the successor acute care hospital facility, and the inclusion of critical care services such as Labor and Delivery, Cardiac Catheterization, and Burn Units.
- b. Continue to engage with and monitor city council actions related to implementation of the Commission's recommendation and council referral on ombudsperson funding and safe staffing at long-term care / skilled nursing facilities.

5. Environmental Health

- a. Monitor and engage with city council actions responding to the City Auditor's audit of restaurant health and safety.
- b. Monitor environmental health programs to protect environmental health and safety.
- c. Engage with the Planning Division to provide input to the City of Berkeley General Plan Environmental Justice element.
- d. Monitor enforcement of ordinance s that address secondhand smoke.

2026 Commission Meeting Schedule

Att-04

Please complete this form and email it to the
commission@berkeleyca.gov by: **Wednesday, January 7, 2026**

Name of Commission: Community Health

Commission Secretary: Kellie Knox

Example

Month	Meeting Day	Meeting Date	Time
February 2026	Wednesday	2/11/2026	7:00 pm

Month	Meeting Day	Meeting Date	Time
January 2026	Thursday	1/22/2026	6:30 pm
February 2026	Thursday	2/26/2026	6:30 pm
March 2026	Thursday	3/26/2026	6:30 pm
April 2026	Thursday	4/23/2026	6:30 pm
May 2026	Thursday	5/28/2026	6:30 pm
June 2026	Thursday	6/25/2026	6:30 pm
July 2026	Thursday	7/23/2026	6:30 pm
August 2026	Thursday	No Meeting	
September 2026	Thursday	9/24/2026	6:30 pm
October 2026	Thursday	10/22/2026	6:30 pm
November 2026	Thursday	No Meeting	
December 2026	Thursday	12/03/2026	6:30 pm

HHCS DEPARTMENT

2026 COUNCIL MEETING TIMELINE

Att-05

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COUNCIL MEETING	THURSDAY 5:00 PM Reports Due to Director	THURSDAY 12:00 PM - Day 33 - DEPT. REPORTS DUE TO CLERK	THURSDAY 12:00 PM - Day 19 - AGENDA COMMITTEE PACKET TO PRINT	MONDAY 2:30 PM - Day 15 - AGENDA COMMITTEE MEETING	WEDNESDAY 11:00 AM - Day 13 - FINAL AGENDA MEETING (PRINT AGENDA ON WED.)	THURSDAY By 5:00 PM - Day 12 - COUNCIL AGENDA DELIVERY
Winter Recess [December 3, 2025 through January 19, 2026]						
Jan 20	12/4	12/18	1/2 (Fri)	1/5	1/7	1/8
Jan 27	12/11	12/26 (Fri)	1/8	1/12	1/14	1/15
Feb 10	12/26	1/8	1/22	1/26	1/28	1/29
Feb 24	1/8	1/22	2/5	2/9	2/11	2/11 (Wed)
Mar 10	1/22	2/5	2/19	2/23	2/25	2/26
Mar 24	2/5	2/19	3/5	3/9	3/11	3/12
Spring Recess [March 25 through April 13, 2026]						
Apr 14	2/26	3/12	3/26	3/31 (Tue)	4/1	4/2
Apr 21	3/5	3/19	4/2	4/6	4/8	4/9
Apr 28	3/12	3/26	4/9	4/13	4/15	4/16
May 12	3/26	4/9	4/23	4/27	4/29	4/30
May 19	4/2	4/16	4/30	5/4	5/6	5/7
Jun 9	4/23	5/7	5/21	5/28 (Thur)	5/28 (Thur)	5/29 (Fri)
Jun 16	4/30	5/14	5/28	6/1	6/3	6/4
Jun 30	5/14	5/28	6/11	6/15	6/17	6/18
Jul 7	5/21	6/4	6/18	6/22	6/24	6/25
Jul 14	5/28	6/11	6/25	6/29	7/1	7/2
Jul 28	6/11	6/25	7/9	7/13	7/15	7/16
Summer Recess [July 29 through September 14, 2026]						
Sep 15	7/30	8/13	8/27	8/31	9/2	9/3
Sep 29	8/13	8/27	9/10	9/14	9/16	9/17
Oct 13	8/27	9/10	9/24	9/28	9/30	10/1
Oct 27	9/10	9/24	10/8	10/13 (Tue)	10/14	10/15
Nov 17	10/1	10/15	10/29	11/2	11/4	11/5
Dec 1	10/15	10/29	11/12	11/16	11/18	11/19
Dec 15	10/29	11/12	11/25 (Wed)	11/30	12/2	12/3
Winter Recess [December 16, 2026 through January 18, 2027]						

VTO Affected Dates	Holiday Affected Dates	Religious Holiday Affected Date
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Updated 10/22/25

Reports not submitted by the deadlines listed will not be included on the agenda.

HHCS COMMISSIONS

2026 COUNCIL MEETING TIMELINE

COUNCIL MEETING	Thursday	THURSDAY 5:00 PM	THURSDAY 12:00 PM - Day 33 -	THURSDAY 12:00 PM - Day 19 -	MONDAY 2:30 PM - Day 15 -	WEDNESDAY 11:00 AM - Day 13 -	THURSDAY By 5:00 PM - Day 12 -
	Commission needs to take action by	Reports Due to Director	DEPT. REPORTS DUE TO CLERK	AGENDA COMMITTEE PACKET TO PRINT	AGENDA COMMITTEE MEETING	FINAL AGENDA MEETING (PRINT AGENDA ON WED.)	COUNCIL AGENDA DELIVERY
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Jun 30	5/7	5/14	5/28	6/11	6/15	6/17	6/18
Jul 7	5/14	5/21	6/4	6/18	6/22	6/24	6/25
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Dec 15	10/22	10/29	11/12	11/25 (Wed)	11/30	12/2	12/3
Winter Recess [December 16, 2026 through January 18, 2027]							

VTO Affected Dates	Holiday Affected Dates	Religious Holiday Affected Date
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Updated 10/22/25

Reports not submitted by the deadlines listed will not be included on the agenda.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (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 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.

As we begin our meeting tonight, 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's 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.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Plans

What is a General Plan?

A General Plan is a high-level document outlining how the City plans to meet the community's long-term vision for the future. A general plan is typically made up of community goals and actionable policies, and includes an implementation plan to guide the achievement of that vision.

The State guides the content of many parts of the General Plan and requires it to include goals and policies for the topics of land use, housing, mobility and transportation, open space and natural resources management, noise, natural hazards safety, and environmental justice. Individual cities and counties may also include other topics that are community priorities to the General Plan.

Environmental Justice

Why is the City of Berkeley preparing a new Environmental Justice Element?

Senate Bill 1000 amended State law to require jurisdictions with “disadvantaged communities” to include environmental justice policies in their general plans. Disadvantaged communities, which the City of Berkeley will be referring to as Environmental Justice, or EJ, Communities, are neighborhoods that encounter systemic challenges, lack resources, are unequally exposed to pollution, and are disproportionately deprived of common community services.

Berkeley has a longstanding commitment to addressing inequities created by past harmful government policies and promoting environmental justice. Developing an Environmental Justice Element aligns with the City’s ongoing efforts to create a more equitable, healthy, and sustainable community for all.

What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental justice is about making sure that all communities have equal access to a healthy environment, and reducing health risks in communities that have been historically underserved by social and government institutions by decreasing pollution exposure, increasing community assets, and improving overall health. The State specifically defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” In the context of land use planning, this means that no neighborhood should be unfairly burdened with more pollution or lack important resources like parks, clean air, and safe housing.

For example, as a result of unfair housing practices some neighborhoods might be near factories or busy highways, which can lead to more pollution and health problems for the people

living there. People may live in neighborhoods that do not have nearby places to buy healthy food or play outside. Environmental justice seeks to address these imbalances by ensuring that city planning decisions are transparent and that all communities benefit from clean and safe environments. This involves actively working to reduce pollution in overburdened areas, providing better access to healthy food, green spaces, safe housing and other services and amenities, and promoting civic engagement in government decisions that contribute to a healthy and vibrant community.

What is the purpose of the Environmental Justice Element?

There is broad recognition that health is heavily influenced by where you grow up and live your day to day life. Social determinants of health, or the conditions in the environment that can effect health outcomes, can be grouped into five categories, including economic stability, education access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, healthcare access and quality, and social and community context. Financial stressors, as well as an environment that is polluted, are the largest obstacles to good health.

Planners and policy makers acknowledge the importance of addressing past injustices and institutionalized discriminatory decisions. While many of these practices are no longer in effect, their lasting impacts can still be seen in our community today and must be addressed.

The Environmental Justice Element will have strategies that seek to reduce pollution and improve quality of life in the areas most under-resourced or impacted by these inequities. These strategies will be developed in close partnership with the Ecology Center and affected community, and will inform citywide programs and actions, as well as the annual City budget that directs money to these efforts. This focus will help advance improvements in environmental justice neighborhoods and throughout Berkeley. By focusing on equity and environmental justice in our General Plan, we can create a more inclusive and healthier environment for all.

How will the City consider equity when drafting the Environmental Justice Element?

Long before the term "environmental justice" was coined, communities across California experienced unequal and unjust land use practices. From the Spanish colonizers who institutionalized the Mission system and intentionally disrupted tribal culture and environmental stewardship, to the practice of redlining in cities during the 20th century, these practices along with many others have left a lasting impact.

The State of California formally designates certain areas as "disadvantaged communities" using CalEnviroScreen, a mapping tool that provides statewide data that can be used to identify communities who are disproportionately impacted by, or at risk from exposure to, environmental pollution and contaminants. However, the City recognizes that this State designation may not fully capture the unique historic, environmental, and socioeconomic contexts of communities in Berkeley. In developing the Environmental Justice Element, the City is collaborating with affected communities to create a more localized and comprehensive identification of environmental justice areas and groups to ensure our efforts are tailored to the specific needs and realities of historically marginalized Berkeley community members.

What will be included in the new Environmental Justice Element?

The Environmental Justice Element will include maps, data, and strategies that are aimed to improve access to safe housing, facilities and services, healthy food and physical activity; reduce exposure to pollutants; and encourage and facilitate community engagement in the planning processes. To develop these strategies, the Element will:

- Identify communities that face more pollution and environmental problems
- Assess how vulnerable Berkeley's communities are to these issues
- Lay out policies to improve the health, safety, and resilience of these communities
- Encourage and strengthen meaningful community engagement in the City's planning process

What other efforts is the City of Berkeley working on to promote environmental justice?

Several existing community-led projects and programs are working to advance environmental justice in Berkeley. This work must continue to be elevated through supportive goals and policies that inform future data gathering, projects, and funding priorities. Some of these plans are listed below. You can find them on the Adopted [Plans page of our website.](#)

- Age-Friendly Berkeley Action Plan (2018)
- 2020 Pedestrian Plan City of Berkeley (2021)
- Berkeley Bicycle Plan – Executive Summary and Chapter 2: Goals and Policies (2017)
- Berkeley Climate Action Plan (2009)
- Berkeley Electric Mobility Roadmap (2020)
- Berkeley Strategic Transportation Plan (2016)
- Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP) (2013)
- Vision Zero Action Plan (2019)
- City of Berkeley Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (2020)
- City of Berkeley General Plan Housing Element (2023)
- City of Berkeley General Plan Environmental Management Element (2002)
- City of Berkeley General Plan Citizen Participation Element (2002)

Safety Element

What is the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element?

The City's existing General Plan includes a Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, which fulfills State requirements to address and mitigate natural hazard risks. Berkeley's Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element expands on this and has rules and actions to help reduce the impacts from disasters, whether natural or human-made. It also provides a policy framework to support the City's efforts in preventing human-made disasters, responding to emergencies, dealing with disasters, and recovering after these events. The last comprehensive update to this element was in 2002.

What will be included in the updated Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element?

The update to the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element will include new information to comply with recent State laws, and to reflect the updated vision of a safe and resilient Berkeley.

The Element will:

- Identify known hazards and risks, assess vulnerability to them, and discuss ways to reduce those risks, including climate-change related hazards
- Include strategies to improve disaster event notifications, communications, and evacuation
- Lay out policies for improving community safety and responding to climate change

You can watch videos about the hazards and risks that will be covered in the update to this Plan on the [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update](#) webpage.

How is the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element related to a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)?

The Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element provides the high-level framework to guide the City's future efforts in preventing disasters, responding to emergencies, and recovering after events. The [LHMP](#) is a part of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element and provides a more comprehensive analysis of natural and human-caused hazards and vulnerability of the population and critical assets, as well as a targeted five-year plan to reduce risk. The LHMP also keeps the City eligible to receive Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hazard mitigation grant funding. How is climate change and resilience being considered in this project?

Berkeley is preparing a climate adaptation assessment to determine potential risks to the most vulnerable members of the community to the effects of climate change, including flooding, wildfire, drought, extreme heat, sea level rise, and storm activity. The findings of this assessment will inform the development of climate resilience and community adaptation policies in the Environmental Justice and Disaster Preparedness and Safety Elements.

The City is collaborating with the community to find out what measurements would best show success in achieving climate change action and resilience goals. The end result will be the creation of a plan to track Berkeley's progress in meeting climate goals that is fair and transparent to all our community members. A new dashboard will show an easy-to-understand summary of important measurements and indicators to more clearly show progress.

How can I participate in the update process?

Partnership and collaboration with the community is crucial to ensure the policies and programs reflect the priorities, resources, and values of all of Berkeley.

Here are some ways to be involved:

- Sign up for General Plan project email updates.
- Contact the project team with questions.
- Reach out to a local community leader through the advisory committee
- Participate in upcoming engagement opportunities such as surveys, focus groups, public meetings, or other events (dates will be announced via email and posted on the [home page of this site](#)).



Prepared, Safe, and Healthy Berkeley for All

City of Berkeley Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element
Update, Environmental Justice Element, and Equitable Climate
Resilience Metrics Project Introduction

Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element Update, Environmental Justice Element, and Equitable Climate Resilience Metrics

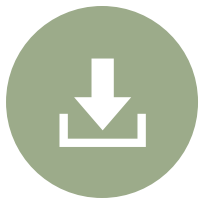
Project Summary

In June 2023, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) awarded a grant to the City of Berkeley (the “City”), in partnership with the Ecology Center and the Berkeley Climate Equity Collaborative, as part of the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP). The grant helps to fund a new, multi-year project to update the City’s General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, develop a new General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element, and create metrics to monitor and evaluate the City’s progress towards advancing its climate action and resilience goals.

The Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element and Environmental Justice Plans will focus on ensuring everyone in Berkeley is safe and healthy, with a focus on historically underserved communities. We aim to strengthen our community’s ability to adapt to climate changes by inviting all community members to participate in the early planning stages. With your help, we can create plans that identify how climate change and environmental justice issues affect our city and develop strategies to support a more inclusive community for us all.

How to Participate

Community meetings, informational events, surveys and interactive workshops will be held throughout the planning process. We invite you to join this process to give your input by:



Signing up for email updates



Visiting the website



Contacting the project team



Attending workshops



Commenting at public meetings

General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element Update

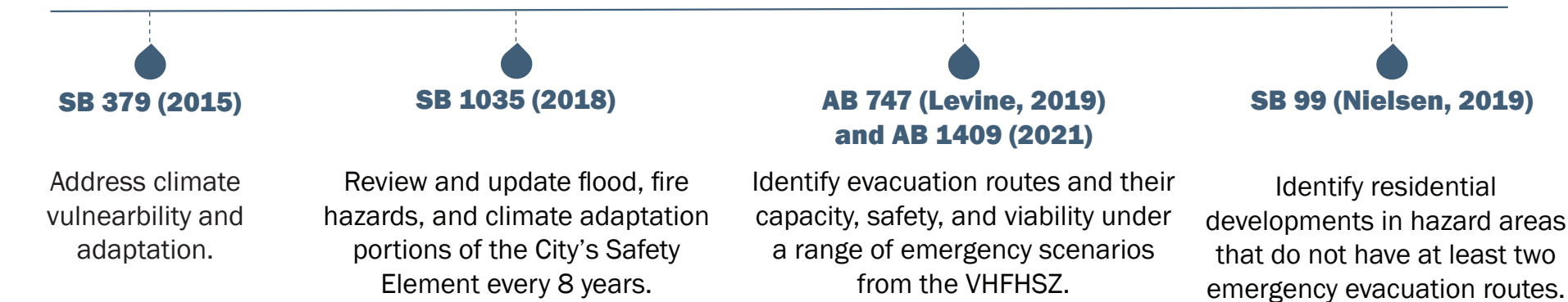
The City’s existing General Plan includes a Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element. This plan has rules and actions to help reduce the risk of dangers and disasters, whether they are natural or human-made. It also supports the City’s efforts in preventing disasters, responding to emergencies, dealing with disasters, and recovering after any of these events. This Element provides the policy framework to support the City’s mitigation, emergency preparedness, disaster response, and future recovery efforts. The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is part of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, and will continue to be updated periodically, as required by State and Federal regulations.

This project will update the Element with new information in compliance with recent State laws, and reflect the community’s vision of a safe, resilient Berkeley.

Topics to be addressed:

- 1 Identify known hazards and risks, assess vulnerability to them, and discuss ways to reduce those risks.
- 2 Evaluate the capacity, safety, and viability of potential evacuation routes and locations under a range of emergency scenarios. (AB 747).
- 3 Identify residential developments that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes (SB 99).
- 4 Create policies for community safety.

New State Laws Informing this Update



Hazards and Risks in Berkeley



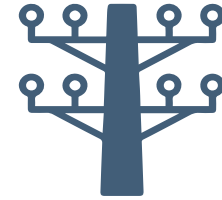
**Seismic and
Geological**



**Hydrology and
Flooding**



Air Quality



**Utility
Interruption**



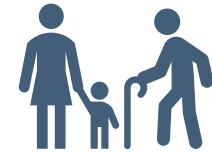
**Fire,
Wildland and Urban**



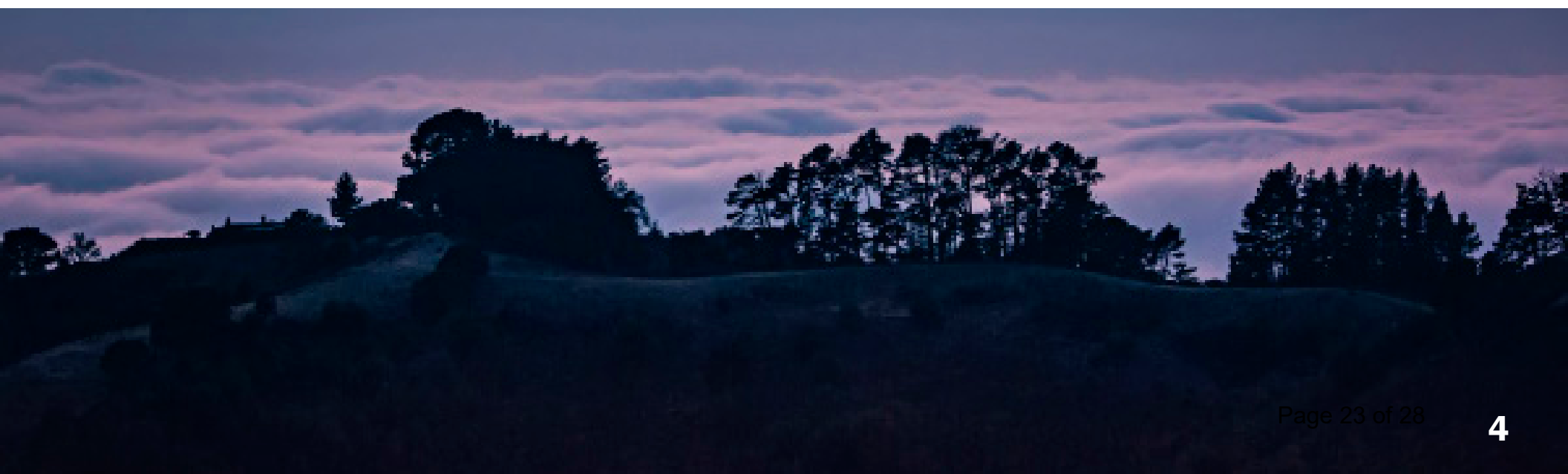
**Climate Change-
related**



**Human-made
Hazards**



**Social
Vulnerability**



New General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element

Senate Bill (SB) 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires the City to adopt an EJ element. The core goals of SB 1000 are to promote social equity, align with public health, and to involve affected communities in the decisions that impact their lives.

What is environmental justice?

The State defines environmental justice as: “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

Government Code § 65040.12(e)

Berkeley has a history of segregated neighborhoods due to past redlining policy. As a result, low-income households are more likely to be located towards the west side of Berkeley, while more affluent communities are more likely to be located on the east side. According to CalEnviroScreen, neighborhoods closest to the San Francisco Bay and along Interstate 580 experience the highest environmental burdens, including pollution from diesel particulate matter (PM), increased exposure to lead risk in homes, closer proximity to cleanup sites, groundwater threats, and exposure to hazardous waste. Due to higher exposures of environmental burdens and systemic inequities, these neighborhoods face public health impacts, including asthma and cardiovascular disease.

In addition, immediately south and southeast of the University of California, Berkeley, almost half of all residents located within three census tracts are considered housing-burdened, paying a considerably large percentage of their monthly income on housing. These same census tracts also have considerable rates of poverty, ranking in the top 5 percent of all census tracts across the state.

Topics to be Addressed

The Environmental Justice Element will identify communities that face more pollution and environmental problems within Berkeley, and address these topics, consistent with SB1000:

1

Reduction of pollution exposure

2

Prioritization of needs of disadvantaged communities

3

Access to public facilities, services and community amenities

4

Promotion of:

- Physical activity
- Safe and sanitary homes
- Healthy food access
- Civic engagement

Equitable Climate Resilience Metrics

The City is creating a plan to track Berkeley's progress in meeting climate goals that is fair for all our community members. A new dashboard will show an easy-to-understand summary of important measurements and indicators.

The City has been tracking climate progress for many years but realize that these measurements might not be representative of the

experiences of all Berkeleyans, particularly those living in Berkeley's underrepresented and underserved areas.

We want to work with you to find out what measurements would show success in climate change, action, and resilience in addition to being accountable to these measurements developed by community

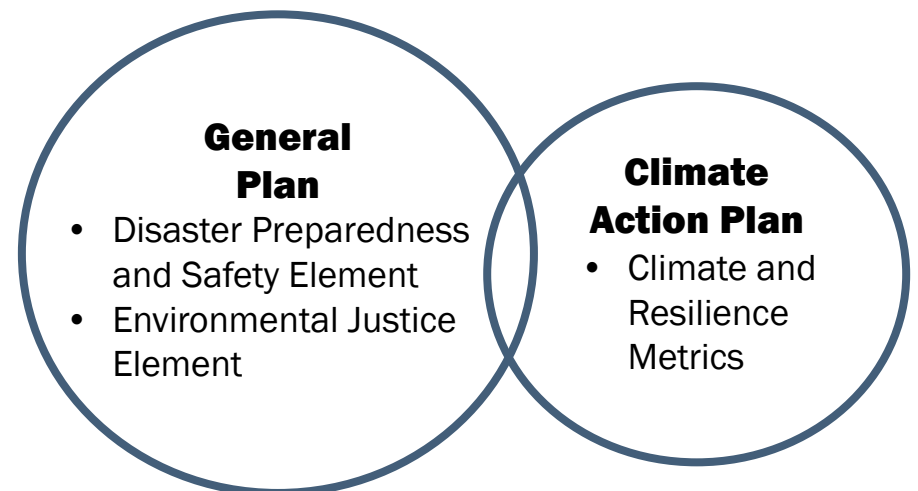
How is this all related?

The Berkeley General Plan is a comprehensive and long range statement of the City's priorities and values developed to guide public decision making in future years. All land use approvals and decisions must be consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

There are currently nine "Elements" contained within the Berkeley General Plan, including: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Disaster Preparedness and Safety, Open Space and Recreation, Environmental Management, Economic Development and Employment, Urban Design and Preservation, and Citizen Participation. This project includes an update to the existing Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, as well as the creation of a new element, the Environmental Justice Element.

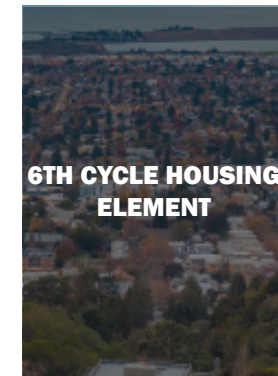
While not a General Plan Element, the Climate Action Plan (CAP) sets goals aimed at reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions, as well as sets forth a vision of a more sustainable, livable, equitable, and economically vibrant community. The CAP overlaps with the

goals and policies put forth in both the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, as well as the Environmental Justice Element, which is why this project is also focused on developing Climate and Resilience Metrics with which to measure the progress made towards the City's climate goals.

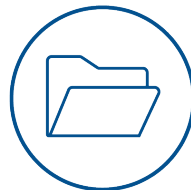


Related City Plans

The City of Berkeley is addressing climate and environmental justice-related challenges, as reflected in recently adopted plans and strategies. This project will reference and incorporate these adopted plans and strategies where appropriate.



Project Phasing



Phase 1: Initiation & Data Gathering

- Social Vulnerability Methodology Map
- Climate Adaptation Assessment
- Equity Guardrails
- Groundwater Rise and Toxic Materials Analysis



Phase 2: Existing Conditions

- Environmental Justice Environmental Hazard and Pollution Technical Memorandum
- Safety Element Hazards Technical Memorandum
- Safety Element Hazards Technical Memorandum
- Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy Metrics



Phase 3: Policy Development

- Environmental Justice Policy Topics
- Safety Element Policy Topics
- Equity Guardrails
- Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy Metrics



Phase 4: Element Finalization and Adoption

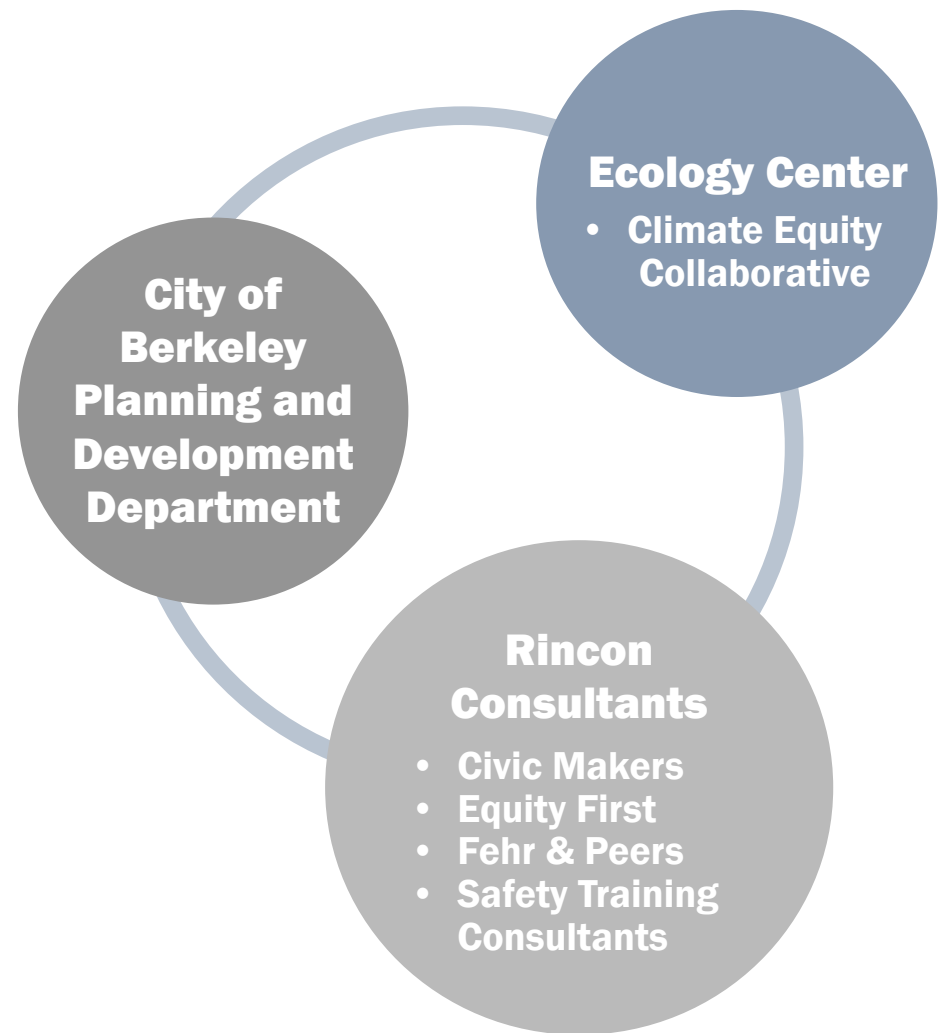
- Environmental Justice Element
- Safety Element
- Dashboard

Project Team

This effort is led by the **Planning and Development Department**, in partnership with the **Ecology Center**.

The Ecology Center, a Berkeley non-profit founded in 1969 that works to improve the health and environmental impacts of urban residents, works with other community-based organizations to convene the Climate Equity Collaborative. The Collaborative works to engage organizations that represent low-income, BIPOC and frontline communities, to amplify their voices, elevate their experiences and build their capacity to collaborate as partners in developing and implementing climate change and resilience solutions. The Ecology Center is leading equitable community engagement efforts for this project, including holding community meetings, doing focus groups, conducting interviews, and taking surveys in our City's most vulnerable locations.

Rincon Consultants, a science and planning firm, is working with City staff and the Ecology Center to support this project. The Rincon team provides expertise in the policy areas this project addresses, and includes **Civic Makers, Equity First Consulting, Fehr & Peers**, and **Safety Training Consultants**. Rincon recently collaborated with the City and Ecology Center to develop the Existing Building Electrification Strategy (2021) – a plan to transition existing buildings in Berkeley to all-electric in a way that benefits all residents, especially members of historically marginalized communities.



***“This effort is led by the
Planning and Development
Department, in partnership with
the Ecology Center.”***

1. Environmental Justice Existing Conditions Report

[EJ Existing Conditions Report](#)

2. Safety Element and Environmental Justice Element Summary of Community
Engagement October 2024 - November 2025

[Safety element and Environmental Justice Element Summary of Community Engagement](#)