



**Civic Arts Commission
Policy Subcommittee
Friday, January 16, 2026
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

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Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

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 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. DISCUSSION ITEMS WITH POSSIBLE ACTION

- a) Event Producers Policy Recommendations (Attachment 1)
- b) Cultural District Policy

6. ADJOURNMENT

Attachments:

- 1. Event Producers Bill of Rights Draft

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Event Producers' Bill of Rights **DRAFT**

1. The Right to Partnership

Producers have the right to be recognized in partnership with the City of Berkeley in creating civic vitality.

- Event Producers are vital partners in building the civic identity, economic health, and cultural vibrancy of the City of Berkeley and should be acknowledged as such.
- From neighborhood block parties to city-wide festivals, their work transforms public spaces into places of connection, creativity, and pride.
- As an economic driver, Event Producers bring a great deal of funding into the City which should be considered when allocations for festival grants and fees are appropriated.
- Events should be encouraged, not discouraged. We do not want to lose them to other more welcoming cities.
- The City should convene a quarterly forum with the Event Staff and Event Producers.

2. The Right to Competent and Efficient Service

Producers have the right to adequate City staffing and professional courtesy.

- The City should adequately staff the special events department to encourage as opposed to discourage events in Berkeley. The City of Berkeley Arts and Culture Plan specifically states that a major goal is to expand the staff capacity for the arts.
- Discussions should be encouraged to possibly create a Special Events Department under Civic Arts leadership. Since the vetting and funding for festivals is here, it would make sense for the permitting to be here as well.
- Discussion should be encouraged to create Entertainment Zones in each district, simplifying mapping and permitting for multiple events.
- City staff should provide informed, solution-oriented guidance.
- Communication should be courteous, consistent, and proactive.
- Departments should collaborate internally, so producers receive coordinated feedback rather than conflicting directives.

3. The Right to Clarity and Efficiency

Producers have the right to a timely, consistent, and transparent process for event approval.

- The City should provide a single, accessible, online source detailing all required permits, documents, fees, and deadlines.
- The City should consolidate Park and Street Permits.
- Fees should be payable online or in person at the Permit Center.
- The City should provide clear points of contact in each department with defined response timelines.

- The City should create a unified workflow that minimizes redundant paperwork and repetitive plan reviews.
- The City should provide reasonable expectations that allow event organizers to plan responsibly and confidently as many events require a long planning timeframe.
- The City should create a simple online questionnaire form to allow event producers, City staff, and affected businesses to submit feedback after each major event cycle to continuously improve clarity and efficiency.

4. The Right to Fair and Proportionate Fees

Producers have the right to fees that reflect both real costs and public benefits.

- Costs should be transparent, standardized, and equitable across all event types and be scaled appropriately to event size and impact.
- Any fee increases must correspond to measurable improvements in City service, such as faster processing, better field support, and clearer public communication.
- Producers should know precisely what services are covered for the fees paid.
- Fees should be compared to other cities of comparable size.

5. The Right to Equitable Access

Producers of all large, small, commercial, nonprofit, and neighborhoods have the right to fair access to public space.

- Processes must accommodate first-time organizers and grassroots events, not just professional producers.

6. The Right to Safe, Clean Public Spaces

Producers have the right to event-ready streets, parks, and plazas that meet baseline safety, cleanliness, and accessibility standards.

- The City should provide a clean, landscaped public space prior to the event. Event producers should be responsible for leaving it in the condition in which it was found.
- The City should maintain clear, documented guidelines for emergency access, electrical availability, ADA compliance, and sanitation needs in public event spaces.

7. The Right to Reliable Safety Coordination

Producers have the right to predictable and professional collaboration with public safety departments.

- Fire, Police, Transportation, Public Works and other impacted City department representatives should coordinate through clear, standardized protocols.
- Reusable Traffic Management plans should be created by the City and paid for as part of the event permit fee.

- Requirements for crowd management, propane use, tents, fire watchmen, etc. should be documented and uniformly enforced.
 - City field staff should be trained to support, not obstruct, safe event operations.
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8. The Right to Marketing Support

Producers have the right to be included in City marketing.

- The City should promote permitted events through its own channels to encourage attendance and community pride.
 - Public reports should highlight the positive economic and cultural impacts of community events.
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9. The Right to Predictability and Continuity

Producers have the right to stable rules and consistent expectations from year to year.

- Permitting criteria and fees should not change mid-season or without adequate notice.
 - Event organizers should be notified well in advance of any regulatory adjustments to allow proper budgeting and planning. When appropriate, detailed explanation(s) of major changes in standards and/or procedures should be provided. Large events need lead time of 6-12 months prior to the event date.
 - An annual calendar and timeline for citywide events should help departments and producers plan efficiently, discouraging overlap and dilution of resources.
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10. The Right to Joy

Above all, producers have the right to bring joy to Berkeley's residents and visitors without unnecessary barriers.

- Regulations should protect public safety while encouraging celebration, art, community building, and expression.
- The City should view cultural events not as logistical burdens, but as opportunities to strengthen civic life and local business vitality.