COMMUNITY HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, October 22, 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:

Andy Katz, Chair	Manel Kappagoda
Taj Herzer-Baptiste, Vice Chair	Katherine Kim
Kassandra Bacon	Carole Marasovic
Victoria Breckwich Vasquez	
Harriet Charney	

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 5

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Introductions and Announcements

Minutes for Approval

1. **Draft Minutes of September 2026 Regular Meeting -Attachment 1**

From: Commission Secretary

Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the September 24 meeting.

Public Health Officer Report

Chairperson's Report

Commission Action Items

2. **Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update – Attachment 6**

From: Commission Chair Katz

Recommendation: Presentation and discussion.

3. **General Plan Environmental Justice Element -Attachment 7**

From: Commission Chair Katz

Recommendation: Discuss Commission Comments.

4. **Emeryville Medical Center – Attachment 8**

From: Commission Chair Katz

Recommendation: Discuss Commission Comments.

5. **BEAR 2.0 Status and Public Health Action – Attachment 9**

From: Commissioner Herzer-Baptiste

Recommendation: Determine recommendations on program review.

6. **Sub-Committee Membership**

From: Commission Chair Katz

Recommendation: Add or remove committee members from Commission committees.

Information Items

7. **Community Health Improvement Plan**

From: Commission Chair Katz

Sub-Committee Updates

Items for Future Agendas

Adjournment

Attachments

1. Draft minutes 9/24/2026 Regular Meeting
2. CHC Work Plan 2026-2027
3. CHC Meeting Calendar 2026
4. City Council and CHC Timeline 2026
5. Land Acknowledgement
6. Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update
7. Draft Environmental Justice Element
   https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/Environmental-Justice-Element-Draft-1.0_20260924.pdf
8. Emeryville Medical Center Council Presentation
9. BEAR 2.0 Successor Program

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) (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 October 16, 2026.

Kellie Knox

Kellie Knox, Secretary Community Health Commission

COMMUNITY HEALTH COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

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

The meeting convened at 6:40 pm with Commission Chair Katz presiding.

Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Bacon, Breckwich Vasquez, Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Katz, Marasovic (7:00pm),

Absent: None

Excused: Commissioner Kappagoda

Staff Present: Kellie Knox

Community Members: None

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters: None

Minutes for Approval

1. (Charney/Bacon) **Motion to approve the draft minutes of June 25, 2026, and July 23, 2026, meetings.**

Ayes: Commissioners Bacon, Charney, Herzer-Baptiste, Katz.
Noes: None
Abstain: Commissioner Breckwich Vasquez
Absent From Vote: Commissioner Marasovic
Excused: Commissioner Kappagoda
Motion Passed

Commission Action Items

2. (Charney/Herzer Baptiste) **Motion to Nominate Commissioner Marasovic for Vice Chair.**
(Charney/Bacon) **Motion to Nominate Commissioner Herzer Baptiste for Vice Chair.**
(Bacon/Breckwich Vasquez) **Motion to Elect a new Vice Chair.**

Ayes for Commissioner Marasovic: Commissioners Marasovic and Charney.
Ayes for Commissioner Herzer Baptiste: Commissioners Breckwich Vasquez, Bacon, Katz
Abstain: None
Absent From Vote: None
Excused: Commissioner Kappagoda
Commissioner Herzer Baptiste was elected to Vice Chair.

3. **Community Health Improvement Plan** – Discussion

4. **General Plan Environmental Justice Element -** Discussion

5. **Sub-Committee Membership –** Discussion

Information and Discussion Items

6. **Sub-Committee Updates -** Discussion

Public Health Officer's Report – review of written submission

Chairperson's Report - discussion

Items for Future Agendas

Environmental Health Restaurant Inspection Audit Update

Public Health Audit by City Auditor's Office

Speaker on Pros and Cons of Berkeley having its Services outside the County's.

Environmental Justice Element

Adjournment: 9:10pm

Minutes will be reviewed and approved on Thursday, October 22, 2026.
Respectfully submitted, Kellie Knox, Secretary Community Health Commission

Community Health Commission

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.

Att-03

2026 Commission Meeting Schedule

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-04

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

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 Commission needs to take action by	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
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Jun 16	4/23	4/30	5/14	5/28	6/1	6/3	6/4
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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Nov 17	9/24	10/1	10/15	10/29	11/2	11/4	11/5
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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

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.

Office of the City Manager

Att-06

INFORMATION CALENDAR
September 29, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Scott Gilman, Director, Health, Housing, and Community Services

Subject: Restaurant Inspection Audit Status Report

INTRODUCTION

On July 10, 2024, the City Auditor submitted an audit report[1] on the status of Restaurant Inspections to the City Council, including recommendations to improve the overall delivery of services for the food safety inspection program. This is the fourth status report updating the City Council on the implementation of those recommendations.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The audit included nine recommendations. Since our last update on February 24, 2026, the implementation progress is as follows:

- **Fully Implemented:** Three recommendations are complete.
- **Partly Implemented:** Four recommendations are underway.
- **Started:** Two recommendations have commenced.

The full implementation of the four “partly implemented” recommendations depends on new technological solutions and adequate staffing. Progress has been significantly impacted by delays in the upgrade and conversion to the Accela database; the anticipated go-live date for the new database is January 2027. This database conversion has grown increasingly complex as the technical integration has progressed. There was also a month delay in our fee proposal which has delayed the integration of these fees into the new database.

Once active, the new database will allow operators to make direct payments. Although this feature is a convenient option for the public, configuring the system to align with existing City financial processes and current transactional workflows has proven challenging. Nonetheless, staff are working in close collaboration with the City’s Finance and IT Departments and are making progress with the database vendor.

Additionally, food facility inspection reports will become accessible to the public via the new Accela database. EHD has been unable to publish these inspection reports online

[1] https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Berkeley_Restaurant_Inspections_-_Chronically_Understaffed_Program_Did_Not_Meet_Targets.pdf

due to 1) City's shift away from attaching PDFs to web pages due to accessibility requirements, and 2) several reports are outdated or incomplete.

One of the recommendations is to establish a restaurant placarding system. Because a low placard score can directly and severely impact a business's revenue and reputation, the Environmental Health Division (EHD) is committed to ensuring absolute fairness, consistency, and accuracy before launching the system. To get this right, all food inspectors have completed formal "classroom" standardization training earlier in the year, which will be followed by field shadowing alongside a state-certified inspector. Additionally, EHD is establishing clear checks and balances, documented administrative appeal procedures, and an automated inspection scoring system within the new database to ensure objective and reliable evaluations. The new placarding program will not begin until the new database is on-line stably and staff are confident it is functioning properly. The anticipated launch date for the placarding program is early Spring 2027.

Please see Attachment 1 for a detailed table outlining the audit recommendations, corrective action plans, and implementation progress. The next status report to Council is scheduled for presentation in the Fall of 2027.

BACKGROUND

This report represents the fourth status update provided to the City Council since the City Auditor released the Berkeley Restaurant Inspections audit report on July 10, 2024. The audit highlighted how historical staffing shortages, pandemic emergency reassignments, and statewide hiring challenges created a backlog in routine food safety inspections. This update highlights key operational milestones achieved through the audit's recommendation framework:

- **High-Risk Backlog Cleared:** Addressing core audit findings regarding inspection delays, the EHD implemented revised policies to adapt to periods of understaffing while maintaining a baseline of at least one inspection per year. EHD has now successfully inspected all high- and very-high-risk food facilities that were overdue from 2023.
- **Enhanced Complaint Response:** EHD updated its internal intake workflows to ensure all public and customer complaints regarding alleged foodborne illnesses are formally cataloged within 24 hours or one business day for rapid inspector prioritization.
- **Technology Modernization & Public Transparency:** While full execution of remaining audit items depends on the rollout of the new inspections database, now scheduled for launch in January 2027, the upgraded system is being built with a public-facing portal. While inspection data is not currently available through the City's former Open Data portal, the Accela database implementation is intended to restore online public access to full inspection histories for all permitted food facilities in Berkeley through a new public facing portal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS
There are no identifiable environmental effects associated with the subject of this report.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION
Council could approve funding for two additional FTE Environmental Health inspector staff. Adequate program staffing is necessary to ensure the full implementation of the Auditor's recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION
Implementation of the remaining audit recommendations may have fiscal impacts associated with staffing, database implementation, and a future placarding program. Council previously directed staff to return during the FY 2027 Annual Appropriations Ordinance #1 process regarding the request for two additional Environmental Health FTEs. Any additional appropriation or staffing authorization will be presented to Council as part of that process.

CONTACT PERSON
Scott Gilman, Director, Health, Housing, and Community Services (510) 981-5100

Attachments:
1: Food Inspections Recommendations Status Update Table – August 2026

Attachment 1

Audit Title: Berkeley Restaurant Inspections: Chronically Understaffed Program Did Not Meet Targets

Issue Date: July 10, 2024

Table: Audit Recommendation Statuses

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
The Division was significantly behind on inspections in 2023, increasing health risk.	**1.1** Develop a plan to improve coverage of routine inspections throughout the City, which may require the Division to prioritize health and safety duties over other responsibilities. As part of this process: (a) Evaluate inspection targets to determine if current inspection frequencies are achievable, or establish different temporary targets to adapt to periods of understaffing. (b) Establish a baseline of inspection coverage for all permitted food facilities in the City and prioritize inspection of facilities with high risk and very high-risk designations that were not inspected in 2023.	HHCS	Implemented	**Implemented.** The Division developed new policies that include revised inspection targets for periods of short staffing and a baseline of at least one inspection per year. According to the Division, all high and very high-risk facilities that were not inspected in 2023 have now been inspected.
The Division was significantly behind on inspections in 2023, increasing health risk.	**1.2** Develop a plan to ensure timely response to complaints involving alleged foodborne illness, which may require the Division to prioritize health and safety duties over other responsibilities.	HHCS	Implemented	**Implemented.** The Division has strengthened its internal policy for addressing complaints in a timely fashion. Policy improvements include documented responsibilities for staff to ensure complaints are received by admin staff and/or other designated staff and prioritized by inspectors within 24 hours or one business day.

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
The Division did not track spending and left critical positions vacant.	**2.1** Work with the Budget Office to track how the food inspection program revenues are used.	HHCS	Partly Implemented	**Implemented.** The Division is able to track and produce reports comparing revenues and expenditures related to food facility inspections for several fiscal years.
The Division did not track spending and left critical positions vacant.	**2.2** Take the following steps to fill positions and assess program staffing: (a) Open recruitment for the supervisor position. (b) If the recruitments for the supervisor and food inspector positions do not yield qualified candidates, work with the Human Resources Department (HR) to develop targeted recruitments for the inspector and supervisor roles. This may include conducting an analysis of compensation or other factors that affect recruitment. (c) Develop a trainee program to build a pipeline into the Division's inspector positions. (d) Work with HR as needed to identify staffing resources needed to meet inspection targets.	HHCS	Partly Implemented	**Partly Implemented.** In June 2026, City Council approved a new fee schedule for food facility permits that is expected to increase revenue. According to the Division, Council agreed to revisit their request for 2 additional FTEs to help meet inspection targets during the FY 2027 Annual Appropriations Ordinance #1 process. In a future update, the Division will need to show that it pursued Council approval for these 2 additional FTEs. We will also follow up on the Division's plans to develop a training program once staffing stabilizes.

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
The Division did not track spending and left critical positions vacant.	**2.3** Make the following updates to the inspection data: (a) Add a risk designation to all food facilities in the Envision database. (b) Correct the date of last inspection in the Envision software that inspectors use during inspections, or develop a workaround to ensure inspectors have an accurate list of facilities prioritized by last inspection date. (c) Develop a process to regularly verify that the Envision database includes all food facilities that should be permitted and inspected.	HHCS	Partly Implemented	**Partly implemented.** The Division postponed the release date of the new inspections database from summer 2026 to fall 2026 to complete the preparation needed for it to go live. To mark this recommendation as implemented, the Division would need to confirm the new database can produce an accurate list of facilities prioritized by the last inspection date.
The Division did not track spending and left critical positions vacant.	**2.4** Work with the Department of Information Technology (IT) to develop list of database functionalities and/or data points needed to help meet the Division's targets and produce reports. If the current database cannot provide this functionality, document the limitations of the current database and include these requirements in the future request for proposals for a new database.	HHCS	Partly Implemented	**Partly implemented.** The Division postponed the release date of the new inspections database from summer 2026 to fall 2026 to complete the preparation needed for it to go live. We will reassess the status of this recommendation once the new database is in place.

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
The Division did not track spending and left critical positions vacant.	**2.5** Identify performance metrics and report them to the public at least annually.	HHCS	Partly Implemented	**Partly implemented.** The Division has finalized the performance metrics for the Food Safety and Inspection program. However, the Division will wait until the new database goes live to track and report these measures. We will reassess the status of this recommendation once the new database is in place.
Public information about food safety was limited.	**3.1** Work with Department of Information Technology (IT) to update the online system for sharing information on food inspections. As part of this process: (a) Develop internal guidance informed by state code that details what information the Division will share with the public online and defines responsibility for managing the data. (b) Make inspection history available online for all permitted food facilities in Berkeley. This could include sharing a copy of the most recent inspection report.	HHCS	Not Started	**Started.** Since our last follow up, the Division has not returned to publishing food inspections information online after it removed this information from the City's Open Data Portal. According to the Division, they have started to work with IT and Finance to prepare to launch the new inspections database with a public facing portal. The estimated launch date for the new inspections database has been delayed from summer 2026 to fall 2026.

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
Public information about food safety was limited.	**3.2** Develop a plan to implement placarding in Berkeley once staffing levels are stable. As part of this process: (a) Assess resources needed to implement placarding. (b) Consider adding elements such as community engagement for designing and implementing evidence-based, equitable placarding.	HHCS	Started	**Started.** Since our last follow up, all of the Division's food inspectors completed a training on food inspection standardization, which is the first step in the inspection standardization process. The next training step will be shadowing with certified inspectors. Additionally, according to the Division, the new database will be set up to work with a placarding program and will include a scoring system for inspections. To mark this recommendation as implemented, the Division would need to develop a documented plan or procedures for a future placarding process.



General Plan

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

Adopted by City Council
Resolution XX-XXX
Adopted on XXX XX, 2026
Public Review Draft 1.0 (9/24/26)

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1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Berkeley's Environmental Justice (EJ) Element advances health equity, considers longstanding patterns of environmental harm, and strengthens community resilience. Guided by the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1000 and informed by extensive community engagement, this Element provides a framework to reduce pollution burdens, improve access to essential services, expand opportunities for civic participation, and safeguard the cultural identity of communities most affected by historical and ongoing inequities.

EJ in Berkeley is shaped by a legacy of discriminatory land-use policies, including racially restrictive covenants, redlining, and exclusionary zoning, which concentrated environmental hazards in South and West Berkeley and limited access to opportunity and public investment in neighborhoods that have been historically marginalized. The impacts of these historical practices continue to influence health, safety, and quality of life in Berkeley today. The EJ Element aims to repair these harms through equitable policies and targeted investments that uplift disproportionately affected communities and areas within the City.

1.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

The EJ Element fulfills the City's obligation under SB 1000 to incorporate EJ policies and programs into its General Plan. More specifically, Berkeley's new EJ Element sets goals to address the needs of communities who have been historically impacted by environmental justice issues and systemic inequities and establishes policies and programs that achieve the following objectives:

- **Reduce pollution exposure and improve air quality,** with a focus on census tracts and block groups identified as EJ Areas.
- **Revitalize and equitably distribute public facilities,** including parks, community centers, and libraries.
- **Improve access to healthy food,** clean drinking water, and essential services.
- **Strengthen housing stability** and ensure that residents can remain in their communities as conditions improve.
- **Promote physical activity and active transportation** by enhancing safe routes, sidewalks, bicycle networks, and recreation spaces.
- **Expand civic engagement and decision-making power** for communities historically excluded from planning processes.
- **Center cultural belonging and preserve community identity,** particularly for communities facing displacement.

These objectives are informed by the extensive environmental determinants of health assessment in the Berkeley EJ Existing Conditions Report, included as Appendix A to this Element, which documents the spatial concentration of pollution, social vulnerability, and inequitable access to resources.

1.2 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

SB 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires cities with identified disadvantaged communities to integrate EJ directly into their General Plans. Under Government Code Section 65302(h), jurisdictions must address the ways in which environmental burdens and socioeconomic conditions intersect to create compounded health risks for certain populations. This mandate shapes the purpose and scope of Berkeley's EJ Element.

State law directs cities to include objectives and policies that reduce exposure to pollution and other environmental hazards, improve air quality, and expand access to public facilities, safe and sanitary housing, healthy food, and opportunities for physical activity. The law recognizes that these issues are interdependent: communities facing higher pollution burdens often lack access to the amenities and services that support health and resilience.

SB 1000 also places strong emphasis on civic participation. Jurisdictions must ensure that residents, particularly those from communities disproportionately affected by environmental burdens, have meaningful opportunities to engage in public decision-making. This includes addressing barriers related to language, information access, and transportation, and historical exclusion from local planning processes. Another key requirement is the prioritization of improvements and programs that directly address the needs of EJ Communities. Rather than distributing resources evenly across a city, SB 1000 requires a focused approach that acknowledges past inequities and directs investments toward neighborhoods where disparities are most significant.

How to Define and Refer to Communities

Organizations, including the City of Berkeley, have used a range of terms to describe communities that have experienced disproportionate historical and structural harms and disinvestment, and that should be prioritized for future investment.

Under SB 1000, "disadvantaged communities" are defined as:

(1) areas identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 39711 based on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria; or

(2) low-income areas disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that may lead to adverse health effects or environmental degradation (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(A)).

Other terms, such as "Equity Priority Communities," have also been used by regional agencies like the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and in other City plans.

Through engagement with the Community Advisory Committee, participants expressed a clear preference to avoid deficit-based terminology such as "disadvantaged communities," and instead use language that acknowledges systemic causes of inequity (e.g., "communities most impacted by systemic harms"). **The City recognizes that this is the preferred way to speak about these communities, and therefore, rather than using the term "disadvantaged communities," the City uses the following terminology in this document:**

"**EJ Communities**" refers to communities in Berkeley whose residents have been historically impacted by environmental justice issues and systemic inequities.

"**EJ Areas**" refers to geographic areas that have experienced disproportionate environmental justice harms (primarily South and West Berkeley). For purposes of compliance with state law, "EJ Areas" is functionally equivalent to "disadvantaged communities."

1.3 OVERVIEW

EJ concerns in Berkeley arise from the intersection of environmental hazards, social and economic vulnerability, and a historical pattern of inequitable land-use decisions. To understand

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where these inequities are most concentrated today, the City prepared a comprehensive EJ Existing Conditions Report (Appendix A) that evaluates environmental burdens, public health indicators, socioeconomic factors, and access to opportunity using both data published by the State and locally specific datasets. This analysis serves as the foundation for the EJ Element and provides a data-driven approach to identifying the areas and communities referred to in this Element as "EJ Areas" and "EJ Communities" within Berkeley.

The methodology to identify EJ Areas follows the four-step screening process recommended by the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) and includes data from CalEnviroScreen 4.0 (CalEnviroScreen[1]), a tool which identifies California communities with the highest pollution burdens and vulnerabilities and is consistent with CalEPA's definition of "disadvantaged communities (DACs)." Berkeley's process starts by mapping CalEnviroScreen results, layers income-based thresholds, identifies areas of social vulnerability, and then incorporates local indicators that better reflect the City's compact geography, unique built environment, and community-identified concerns. Under SB 1000, census tracts that score at or above the 75th percentile statewide in CalEnviroScreen are identified as DACs. Berkeley's approach was intentionally designed to identify areas that meet State-defined criteria for DACs and experience disproportionate environmental burdens relative to the rest of the City. These areas are referred to as "EJ Areas" for the purpose of this Element This approach illustrates that inequities at the local scale may not be captured through statewide screening tools.

1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This project used a two-prong approach to community engagement. As the EJ Element is intended to ensure fair treatment and meaningful involvement for communities who have been disproportionately harmed by pollution and environmental hazards, the City partnered with a local community-based organization, the Ecology Center, to lead an equitable community engagement process. The Ecology Center's equitable community engagement activities varied depending on the goals of each phase of the larger project, however the central approach was to include community organizations and direct community input through a Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC was facilitated by the Ecology Center and provided a structure for the project team to collaborate with EJ Communities, guiding the development of the EJ Element based on the CAC's lived experiences, needs, and priorities. The second prong of the engagement strategy involved broader community outreach through traditional public events, meetings, and engagement activities, providing opportunities for all Berkeley residents to learn about the process and contribute input.

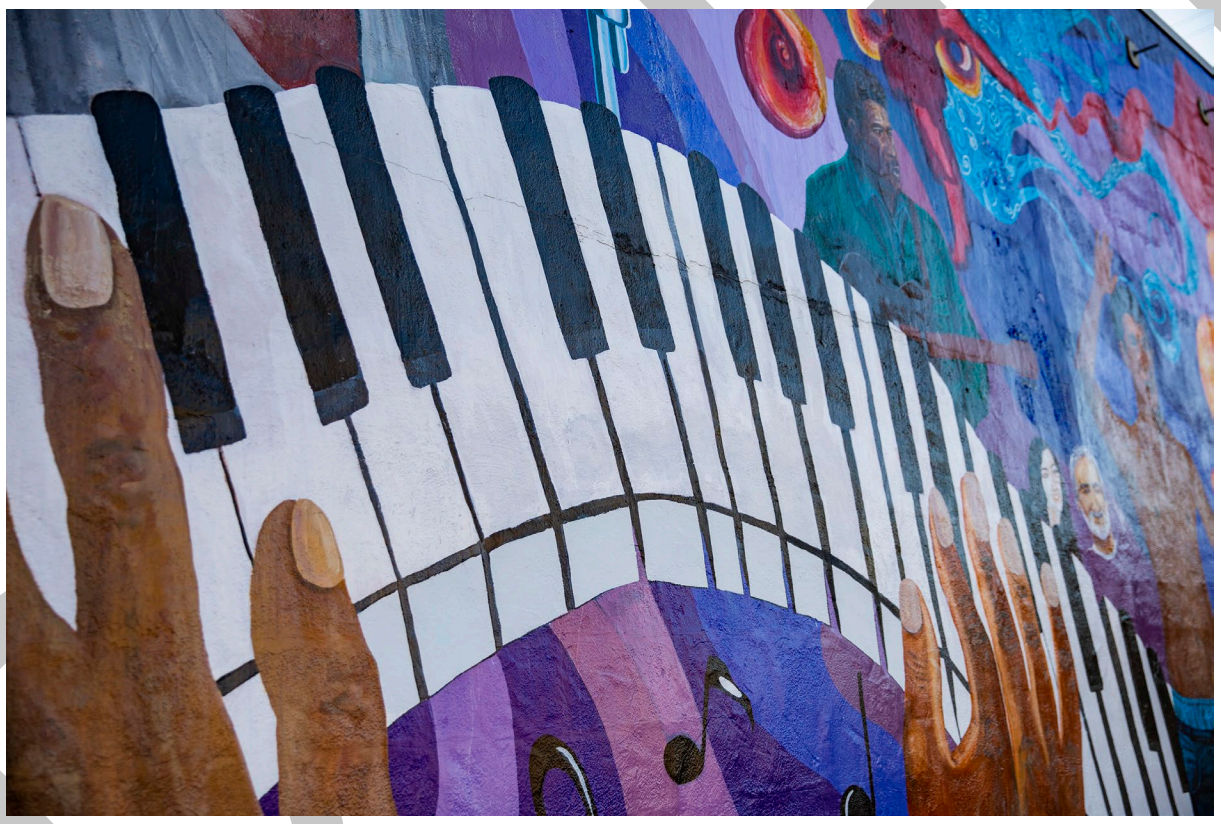
The CAC was composed of a group of nine local community-based organizations that serve communities most sensitive to harmful systems and natural disasters. Participating organizations included Berkeley Food Network, The Center for Food, Faith, and Justice, The Center for Independent Living, The Gray Panthers of Berkeley/the East Bay, Healthy Black Families, Latinos Unidos de Berkeley, Multicultural Institute, Pacific ADA, and Waterside Workshops. These organizations were compensated for their time and developed memoranda of understanding that were tailored to each organization's needs and capacity.

The Ecology Center used the Movement Generation's Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership (SCEO) tool to evaluate their engagement experience, seeking to shift from historical

[1] For the purposes of this Element, "CalEnviroScreen" refers to "CalEnviroScreen 4.0" which was the version of the tool used at the time this Element was developed.

processes where community members felt they were minimally informed to one where they were consulted and involved and headed towards collaboration[2]. Over the course of the project, while Ecology Center partnered with the CAC, participants rated their experience on a scale of 0 to 5, where 0 represented feeling marginalization and 5 represented feeling community ownership. At the beginning of the project, CAC members indicated feeling their participation was Phase 1 (Inform) on the spectrum. By the end of the project, some members indicated feeling their participation had moved to Phase 3 ("Involve") or Phase 4 ("Collaborate"). With Ecology Center's help, the project team achieved its goal of changing the way the City approached engagement on this one project. Teachings from this experience have been carried over into the policies and programs in this EJ Element.

The Ecology Center began with deep engagement with partners, trust building, and listening to potential members of the CAC to incorporate their needs, expectations, and capacities into a flexible and responsive process, resulting in a series of Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) and compensation for community expertise and participation.



The Ecology Center conducted mapping activities with community members associated with the Community Advisory Committee. This resulted in over 30 maps that carried individual experience and expertise of a very diverse selection of community members who live, work or learn in Berkeley. These maps provided real community members' lived experiences and directly informed the resulting EJ Areas map for this Element.

The CAC met at least once a month as a group between December 2024 and December 2025, and often the Ecology Center followed up directly with individual organizations between

[2] https://movementstrategy.org/resources/the-spectrum-of-community-engagement-to-ownership/

meetings multiple times. The City of Berkeley also continued to engage with CAC members directly through the publication of this Element.

In October and November of 2025, the City partnered with the Ecology Center and the CAC members to host 16 facilitated “pop-up” exhibits and workshops to share out the draft policies and programs that were co-developed with CAC. Several of these exhibits occurred at CAC partner sites, including an event at Waterside Workshop with youth, one at Healthy Black Families which included several non-English speaking families, one with clients of the Berkeley Food Network, one at the Ed Roberts Center with people of many abilities, one at the Center for Food Faith and Justice with families, and one at the UC Berkeley Latinx Resource Center with students. The input and feedback received during these events was extremely informative and valuable.



Safety and Environmental Justice “Pop-Up” Event at Ed Roberts Center in November 2025

In addition to these more equity-focused community engagement efforts, the City also conducted broad traditional outreach including a public workshop on February 1, 2025, a public online survey in June 2025, and several meetings with City Commissions including the Planning Commission (June 2024 and Fall 2026), Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (Fall 2026), and Environment and Climate Commission (June 2024 and Fall 2026).The Summary of Community Engagement Activities is included in this Element as Appendix B. The City is also consulting

with California Native American Tribes in accordance with Gov. Code, § 65352.3 for this project[3].

Community Partners

The success of this Element has been and will continue to be dependent upon the engagement of essential community partners. Residents and businesses are essential, as are CBOs and Tribal governments, which have unique relationships, expertise, and capacity to support outreach, engagement, education, and program delivery. Because organizational priorities, capacity, and funding may change over time, this Element does not assign implementation responsibilities to specific organizations. Instead, jurisdictions should work collaboratively with CBOs and Tribal governments to identify appropriate roles and partnerships during implementation.



1.4.1 Methodology Summary

To identify EJ Areas in a way that both meets State guidance and reflects Berkeley's local conditions, the City developed a composite screening methodology that combines CalEnviroScreen data to be consistent with SB 1000 and adds locally relevant indicators and

[3] Senate Bill 18 requires consultation with Native American Tribes when a jurisdiction adopts or amends a General Plan Element and Assembly Bill 52 requires consultation with Native American Tribes when a public agency undertakes a discretionary project that is subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

data from community mapping exercises conducted with CAC members and their constituents to uplift community voices and reflect the City's unique needs.

Under California SB 1000, jurisdictions must identify "disadvantaged communities (DACs)" when developing their EJ elements and many jurisdictions default to CalEnviroScreen's designation. Berkeley's process included starting with the State's CalEnviroScreen data, layering income-based thresholds, identifying areas of social vulnerability, and incorporating local indicators that better reflect the City's compact geography, unique built environment, and community-identified concerns.

For this analysis, the project team weighed indicators in the following manner: CalEnviroScreen: 60%; Areas of Social Vulnerability: 10%; Household Income: 10%; and Fine-Grained Air Pollution: 20%. Higher weights were assigned to indicators that most directly capture cumulative pollution exposure and environmental harm. Lower weights were assigned to indicators that provide important contextual information about social vulnerability and economic conditions. More specific information on Berkeley's methodology is provided in the EJ Existing Conditions Report (Appendix A).

Berkeley's methodology identified areas within the City experiencing an elevated combination of pollution exposure, social vulnerability, and income-based vulnerability. Results of this analysis went beyond the CalEnviroScreen DACs to include portions of South Berkeley near Adeline Street, Ashby Avenue, Sacramento Street, and San Pablo Avenue. These areas are collectively referred to as Berkeley's EJ Areas. This weighted approach allows Berkeley to remain consistent with SB 1000 guidance while addressing limitations of statewide screening tools applied to a compact, highly urbanized city. By combining statewide indicators with fine-grained local data, Berkeley's methodology captures both broad patterns of disadvantage and hyperlocal conditions that can vary significantly from block to block.

COMMUNITY MAPPING AND CAC INPUT

Members of the CAC and their networks were invited to participate in a community mapping exercise in which they identified locations throughout Berkeley that represent sources of resilience (e.g., places to access healthy food, green spaces) as well as locations where they experience challenges (e.g., illegal dumping sites). This activity served both as an information-gathering tool and trust-building exercise. It resulted in over 30 maps reflecting the lived experiences and expertise of a diverse group of community members who live, work, or learn in Berkeley. A summary of the community mapping findings can be found in Appendix B (Summary of Community Engagement Activities). These maps formed the foundation for subsequent conversations with the CAC, and those conversations directly informed the development of the City's EJ maps by:

- Increasing the number of social vulnerability indicators;
- Adjusting the median household income to reflect local conditions; and
- Creating an air pollution exposure metric specific to Berkeley.

The following section provides background information on areas of analysis and the corresponding weight assignment used in Berkeley's methodology for identifying EJ Areas:

CALENVIROSCREEN (60 PERCENT WEIGHT)

The results of the CalEnviroScreen analysis provide the foundation of Berkeley's methodology for identifying EJ Areas. The results were used as a weighted layer (60%) in combination with the additional components described above.

CalEnviroScreen assigns a statewide percentile score to every census tract, based on 21 indicators of pollution burden and population characteristics. A full list and description of these indicators can be found in the EJ Existing Conditions Report (see Appendix A of this Element).

CalEnviroScreen's 75th Percentile

A census tract that scores above 75 percent in CalEnviroScreen means that its health hazard assessment score is higher than 75 percent of census tracts statewide. In other words, it falls within the top 25 percent of areas with the highest cumulative environmental burdens and vulnerabilities.

Many cities in California use the CalEnviroScreen top 25 percent threshold to identify State-defined EJ communities or "disadvantaged communities (DACs)."

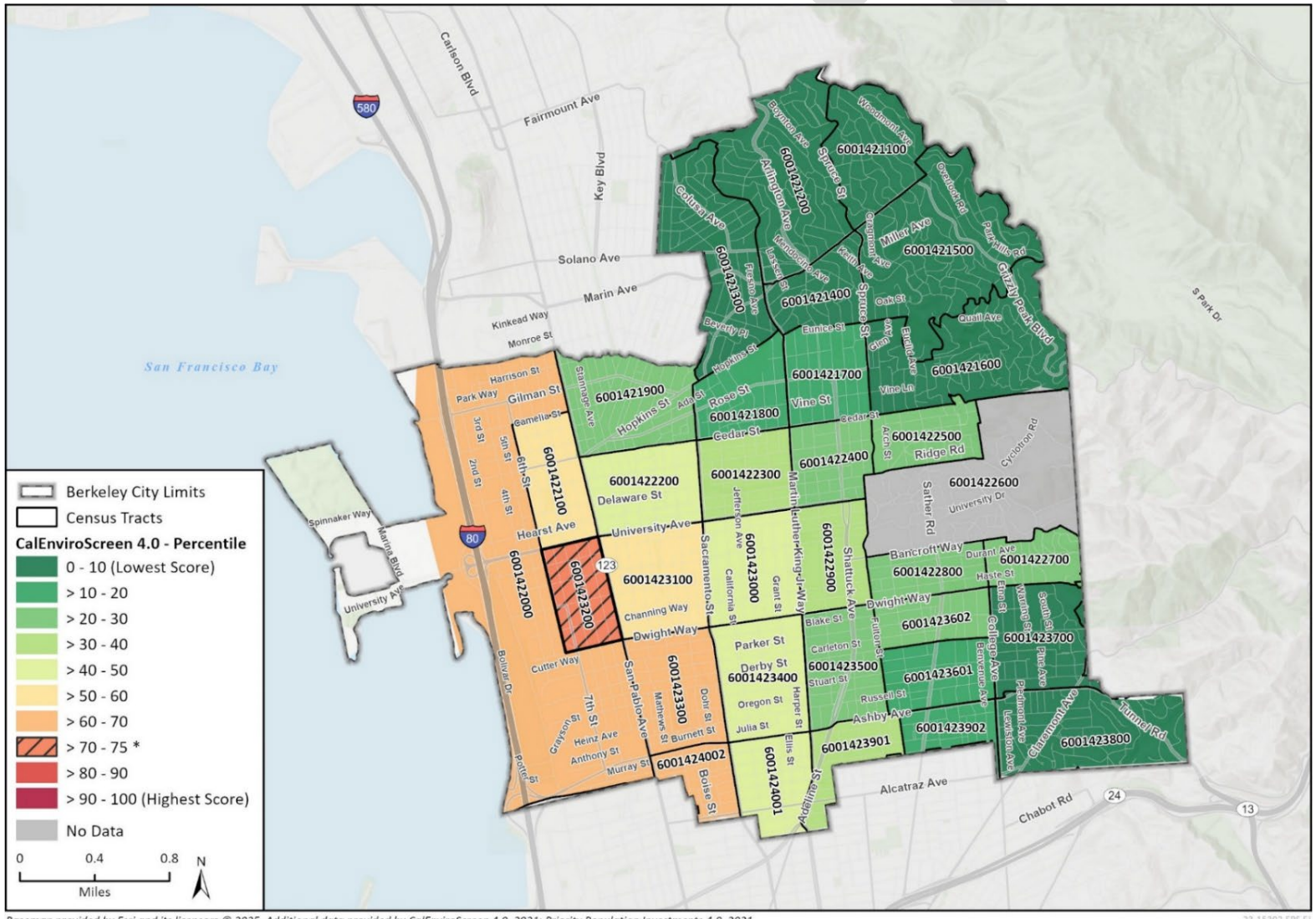
As shown in Figure 1, only one census tract in Berkeley (Census Tract 6001422000) scores above the 75th percentile in CalEnviroScreen and therefore meets the statewide threshold designation for a DAC. This tract's score is primarily driven by exposure to diesel particulate matter, proximity to major roadways, and the presence of cleanup sites, groundwater threats, and hazardous waste facilities.

While this statewide score captured an area of concern, Berkeley community members expressed concern that CalEnviroScreen underrepresented local burdens beyond this area. This feedback led the project team to include more localized data in the composite analysis for identification of EJ Areas.

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Figure 1- CalEnviroScreen "Disadvantaged Communities"

Berkeley Compared to Statewide Data



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2025. Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021; Priority Population Investments 4.0, 2021.
** Census tract in the 75th percentile is considered an EJ community.*

23-15392 EPS EJ
Fig 1 CalEnviroScreen Composite 75th Percentile

AREAS OF SOCIAL VULNERABILITY (10 PERCENT WEIGHT)

Why the EJ Element Does Not Use the Term "Vulnerable Communities"

The Environmental Justice Element does not identify communities as "vulnerable communities." While it is important to acknowledge that different groups experience disproportionate environmental burdens and barriers, this Element recognizes that communities are not defined solely by vulnerability or marginalization.

Berkeley's communities have diverse needs and face challenges in resilient, resourceful ways. Framing communities only in terms of vulnerability can overlook their strengths, assets, and capacity to adapt and lead. Instead, this Element focuses on addressing inequities and improving conditions while respecting and uplifting the resilience, knowledge, and cultural richness of all communities.

Recognizing that statewide tools cannot capture the full complexity of Berkeley's demographics, the City's composite analysis for social vulnerability, as explained in the EJ Existing Conditions Report, added six additional vulnerability indicators to CalEnviroScreen's five existing socioeconomic factors. Berkeley's analysis added renter status, zero-vehicle households, disability status, single-parent families, youth and elderly residents, and non-citizen voting-age populations. These six indicators were selected based on a social vulnerability framework that was developed while updating Berkeley's Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element[4].

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (10 PERCENT WEIGHT)

To better reflect the Bay Area's high cost of living, the City's analysis included a local indicator based on the California Department of Housing and Community Development Department's (HCD) income limits for Alameda County. This approach captured households earning below $96,650, the threshold for a very low-income two-person household. This indicator provided a locally appropriate measure of economic vulnerability that accounts for regional cost-of-living differences not fully reflected in statewide income thresholds.

FINE-GRAINED AIR POLLUTION EXPOSURE (20 PERCENT WEIGHT)

The City incorporated a high-resolution dataset developed by University of California (UC) Berkeley researchers that mapped exposure of particulate matter 2.5 micrometers in size or smaller (PM2.5) at a 100-meter scale. This fine-grained analysis revealed significant hyperlocal variation in pollution exposure that was not captured by the 1-kilometer grid used in CalEnviroScreen. The inclusion of this indicator allowed the City to identify block-by-block pollution hotspots, especially near Interstate 80, manufacturing zoning districts, and transit corridors such as Ashby Avenue, University Avenue, and San Pablo Avenue.

1.4.2 Analytical Approach

The City combined the data sets described above into a single map-based analysis to evaluate environmental and social conditions across Berkeley. Each dataset was standardized and weighted according to its relative importance before being combined to generate an overall

[4] The Disaster Preparedness Safety Element is available on the City website: https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/general-plan.

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score for each census block. These scores were then grouped into categories representing lower to higher cumulative environmental burden.

Because Berkeley is geographically small, many census tracts are comprised of a mix of land uses and population characteristics, which can mask localized conditions. To address this challenge, the analysis used census blocks rather than census tracts. This more granular approach better captured neighborhood-level EJ conditions. Census blocks with the highest overall scores, representing the top twenty five percent of cumulative burden citywide, were designated as EJ Areas.

1.4.3 Results of the EJ Area Identification

The EJ Areas identified in Berkeley's analysis are shown in Figure 2. Results highlight a few clear spatial patterns:

- EJ Areas are primarily located in South and West Berkeley.
- A large portion of the EJ Areas overlap with manufacturing zones.
- EJ Areas include all Berkeley neighborhoods adjacent to I-80.
- The EJ Areas identified west of I-80 are either part of East Bay Regional Parks or the Berkeley Waterfront.

The areas shown in Figure 2, serve as the primary geographic focus for the EJ Element's policies and programs. Acknowledging that EJ concerns exist beyond designated areas, the EJ Element's policies and programs also focus on EJ Communities who may or may not live in EJ Areas. Furthermore, all Berkeley neighborhoods and communities will benefit from the equity- and sustainability-focused strategies proposed in this Element.

The Value of Community Perspective

Community-identified issues such as illegal dumping, high levels of noise, food inaccessibility, and park access gaps align closely with the composite EJ Areas map and reinforce the need for geographically targeted interventions.

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Impacts of Historic Berkeley Zoning

In the early 1900s, Berkeley established zoning districts that separated manufacturing, commercial and residential uses. Factories, warehouses, refineries, and tanneries were concentrated in the manufacturing districts of West Berkeley. Residential uses were not entirely prohibited in these districts; however, industrial activities made these areas less suitable for residential living.

The broad outlines of past zoning remain today, with manufacturing districts occupying much of West Berkeley, commercial districts line high-traffic corridors, and residential districts found throughout much of the rest of the City. More information can be found at: https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/OfficialZoningMap

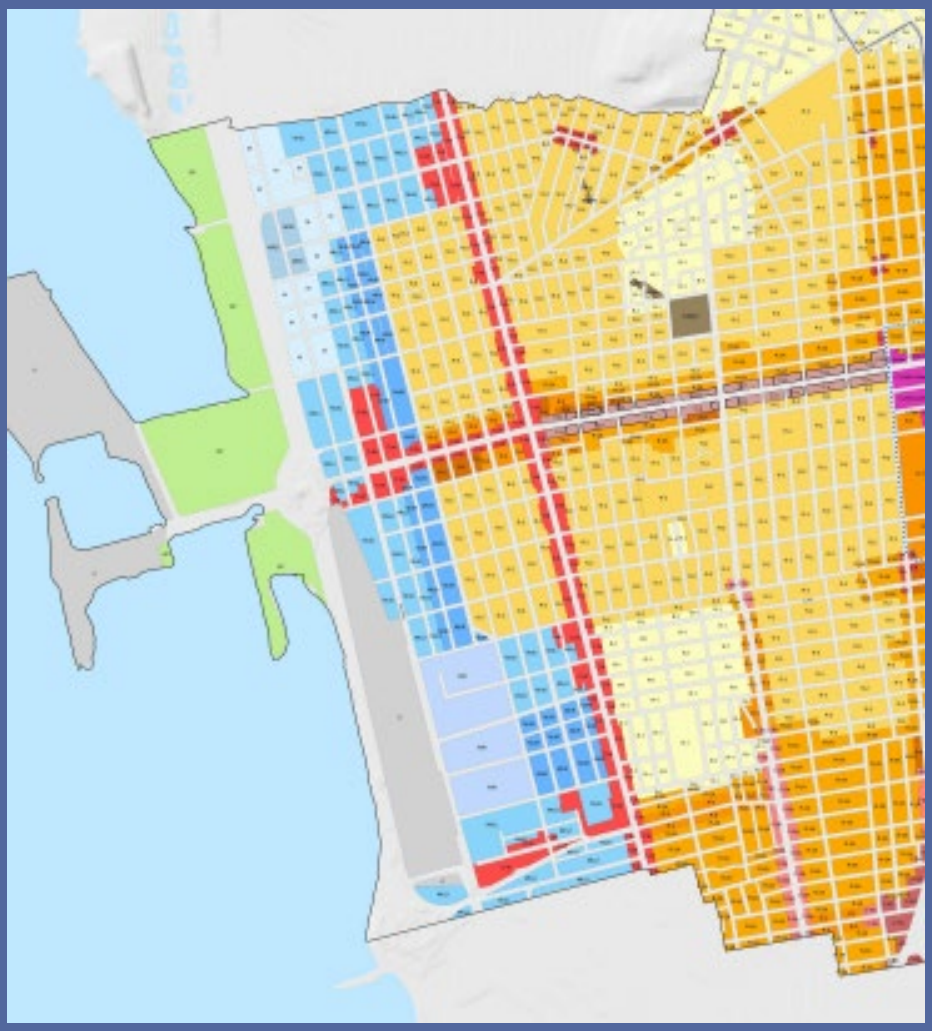
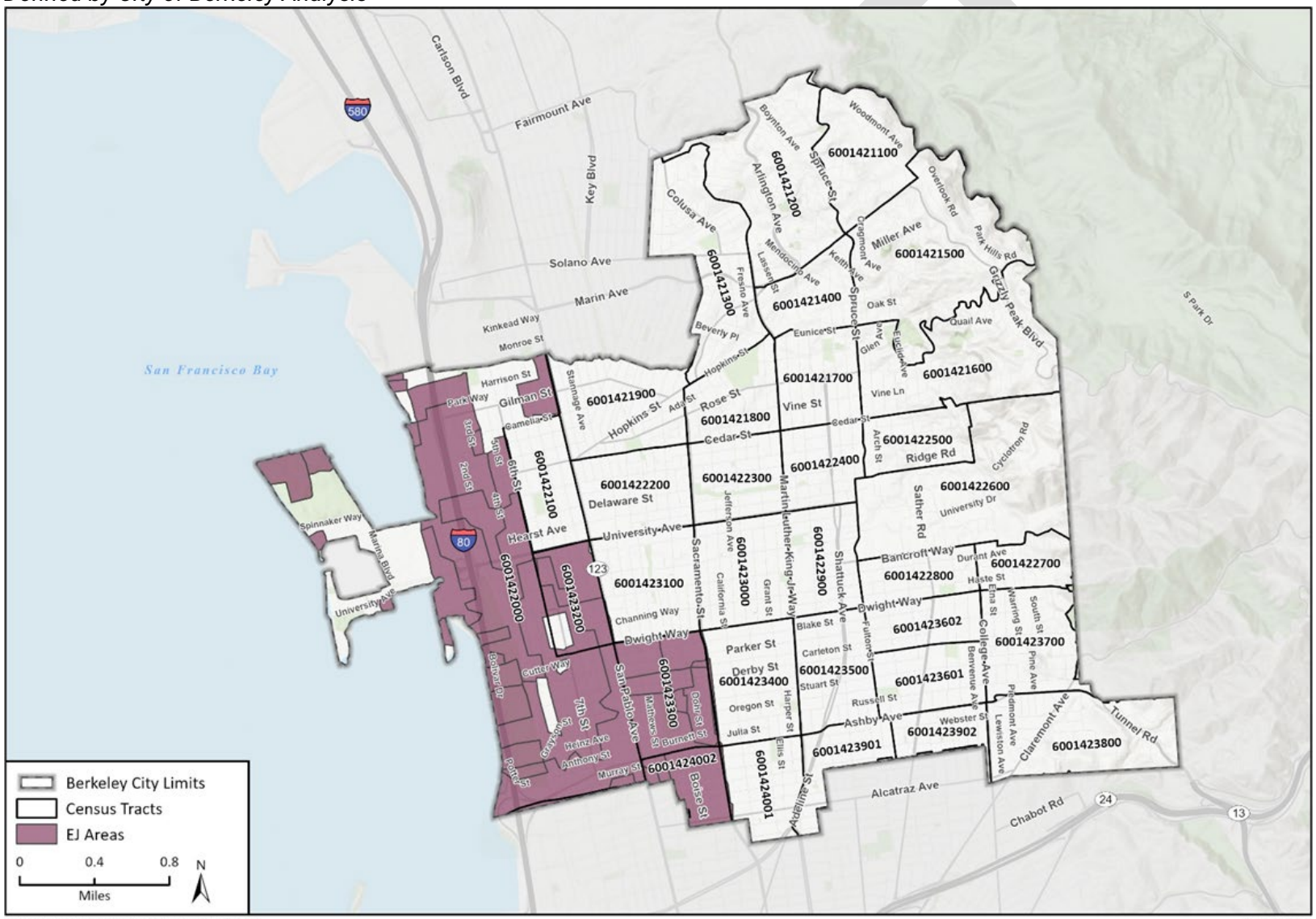


Figure 2 - EJ Areas

Defined by City of Berkeley Analysis



1.5 EQUITY PRINCIPLES

The Equity Principles were co-created with the CAC to provide a framework for this project that ensures proposed goals, policies and programs advance community-supported equity objectives. Each policy and program in the EJ Element was evaluated against the Equity Principles, and, if necessary, revised to ensure alignment. The principles are numbered for reference only; numbering does not indicate priority, as all principles carry equal weight.



Principle #1: Promote Healthy and Resilient Communities. Prioritize safety and well-being by fostering resilient, interconnected neighborhoods with a focus on communities who face historic and current marginalization.

Principle #2: Ensure Accountable Government and Accessible Leadership. Recognize the importance of accountability and representative leadership in policy development and program implementation to ensure effectiveness and transparency in the City's work and to foster trust and collaboration with communities.

Principle #3: Provide Equitable Access to Information. Provide equitable access to information that is tailored to the specific needs of the communities who make up the City of Berkeley.

Principle #4: Provide Equitable Access to Resources. Advance safety and reduce disproportionate impacts to communities who have been most impacted by systemic harm by providing equitable access to resources and opportunities.

Principle #5: Build Capacity for Equity and Resilience. Strengthen the ability of communities and organizations to meaningfully engage in decision-making.

What Is Equitable Access?

Equitable access means ensuring that public information, programs, and City practices are inclusive, culturally relevant, and responsive to the specific needs of Berkeley's diverse communities. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, equitable access recognizes that people have different languages, cultural practices, abilities, and lived experiences that shape how they access and benefit from City services and programs.

By tailoring communication, outreach, and service delivery to reflect this diversity, the City can reduce barriers to participation and ensure that all community members have meaningful opportunities to engage with and benefit from public resources.

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1.6 GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The EJ Element works in concert with all other elements of the Berkeley General Plan. California Government Code Section 65300.5 requires the General Plan and its elements to comprise an integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of policies. The City reviewed the goals, policies, and programs of this EJ Element in relation to the other elements of the Berkeley General Plan. The EJ Element works in concert with the other General Plan elements, and the relationships with the elements having the most direct substantive overlap are summarized below. Ensuring consistency among these documents strengthens the City's ability to address cumulative impacts and advance equitable outcomes.

- The EJ Element supports the **Land Use Element** by informing future development decisions and land use policies in ways that reduce environmental conflicts and improve access to essential services, especially in communities experiencing the highest burdens.
- The EJ Element aligns with the **Housing Element** by reinforcing the importance of safe, sanitary, and affordable housing and by acknowledging that housing stability is essential to achieving EJ goals.
- The EJ Element complements the **Transportation Element** through its emphasis on safe, multimodal mobility options and the need to address high-injury corridors in historically underserved neighborhoods.
- The EJ Element also aligns with the **Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element** by prioritizing the protection of vulnerable populations, improving emergency preparedness and response, and reducing exposure to environmental hazards such as extreme heat, poor air quality, and flooding.
- The EJ Element's focus on expanding access to parks and recreation facilities reinforces the goals of the **Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Element**, particularly in areas with limited access to green space.

Together, these connections ensure that EJ priorities are woven throughout the City's planning framework, helping to create a more coordinated, equitable, and effective approach to long-term community well-being. These connections also demonstrate that the EJ Element is consistent and compatible with the General Plan and maintains internal consistency among the General Plan elements. EJ priorities are woven throughout the City's planning framework, supporting a coordinated, equitable, and effective approach to long term community wellbeing. The City's review did not identify any conflict requiring a conforming amendment to another General Plan element.

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2 COMMUNITY PROFILE AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

EJ outcomes in Berkeley are shaped by a combination of social, environmental, and physical conditions that vary across neighborhoods. Factors such as demographic characteristics, exposure to environmental hazards, access to public resources, housing stability, and neighborhood infrastructure influence residents' health, safety, and quality of life in interconnected ways. Understanding these conditions provides essential context for how environmental burdens are distributed and how access to opportunity varies throughout the city.

While Berkeley benefits from many assets that support sustainability, public health, and civic life, patterns of cumulative burden and uneven access persist, reflecting the effects of historical land-use decisions, infrastructure investments, and broader socioeconomic forces. Examining existing conditions at the neighborhood scale reveals where inequities are most pronounced and highlights where focused attention can help support healthier and more equitable outcomes for current and future residents.

CalEnviroScreen measures each California community using 21 indicators, categorized into a "Pollution Burden" component and a "Population Characteristics" component. Scores are expressed as percentile rankings that compare each census tract to other census tracts within California. A high percentile indicates that a census tract has a higher pollution burden or more population characteristics that result in increased vulnerability relative to other communities across the state. For more information on these two CalEnviroScreen components and their indicators, see inset box below.

CalEnviroScreen Indicators Used to Evaluate Community Conditions

Pollution Burden is defined as potential exposures to pollutants and the adverse environmental conditions caused by pollution. It is measured with the following indicators:

- **Exposures:** Ozone Concentrations, PM2.5 Concentrations, Diesel PM Emissions, Drinking Water Contaminants, Children's Lead Risk from Housing, Pesticide Use, Toxic Releases from Facilities, Traffic Impacts
- **Environmental Effects:** Cleanup Sites, Groundwater Threats, Hazardous Waste, Impaired Water Bodies, Solid Waste Sites and Facilities

Population Characteristics are defined as physiological traits, health status, or community characteristics that can result in increased vulnerability to pollution. They are measured with the following indicators:

- **Sensitive Populations:** Asthma Emergency Department Visits, Cardiovascular Disease (Heart Attacks), Low Birth-Weight Infants
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Educational Attainment, Housing-Burdened Low-Income Households, Linguistic Isolation, Poverty, Unemployment

CalEnviroScreen data was used as a starting point to identify areas in Berkeley that face a higher pollution burden or include more sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors that

create more vulnerabilities to pollution impacts. The indicators used to define these categories are explained in the following sections.

2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS AND VULNERABILITY

Berkeley is a racially and culturally diverse city with a population of more than 121,000 residents.[5] Nearly half of the population identifies as people of color, and more than one in five residents is foreign-born. The city also includes a large renter population, significant student population, and a substantial number of residents who speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish, Chinese, and Asian languages being the most spoken. About six percent of residents have limited English proficiency. The most linguistically diverse communities are concentrated in South, West, and Central Berkeley.

Figure 3 Racial and Ethnic Composition in Berkeley EJ Areas Compared to Berkeley City-Wide

Race/Ethnicity	Total in EJ Areas	% in EJ Areas	Total City-Wide	% City-Wide
Hispanic/Latino	2,464	19%	17,018	14%
White	5,326	40%	62,450	50%
Black/African American	2,710	20%	9,495	8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	55	0.4%	226	0.2%
Asian	1,503	11%	24,701	20%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	89	1%	253	0.2%
Other Race	151	1%	1,109	1%
Multiple Races	974	7%	9,069	7%
Total	**13,272**	**100%**	**124,321**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census Survey Data, 2020, Table P9 DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics (Accessed August 2026). EJ Areas include census block groups 60014240021, 60014240022, 60014220002, 60014220001, 60014232001, 60014232002, 60014233001, 60014233002, and 60014233003.

Figure 3 provides a breakdown of race and ethnicity within the EJ Areas and within the City of Berkeley as a whole. Past government policies and programs (such as redlining and restrictive covenants) resulted in a segregated pattern of neighborhoods that is still visible today. These demographic characteristics contribute to a rich cultural landscape; however, they also reflect ongoing social, economic, and institutional inequities that have shaped where people live, housing quality, environmental quality, and access to opportunity. Specifically, patterns of residential segregation, exclusionary housing practices, infrastructure placement, and uneven public investment have concentrated environmental burdens and social stressors in certain areas, increasing vulnerability for the people living in them over time.

CalEnviroScreen uses the term “Population Characteristics” to represent physiological traits, health status, and community characteristics that can result in increased vulnerability to pollution.

As shown in Figure 4, communities facing vulnerabilities can be found throughout Berkeley, although they are less common in the northeast and southeast areas of the City. As shown in

[5] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate, 2021. Accessed August 2026.

the EJ Existing Conditions Report (Appendix A), census tracts and neighborhoods of South, West and Central Berkeley have a higher percentage of renters, housing-cost-burdened households, limited English speakers, seniors, people with disabilities, and households with lower educational attainment live. These same census tracts are identified in CalEnviroScreen's analysis as those with "population characteristics" that increase the chances of vulnerability.

These population characteristics identified by CalEnviroScreen are not inherent sources of vulnerability; rather vulnerability arises from conditions that have been produced and reinforced by systemic biases in housing, transportation, land use, and public investment. These same areas identified in the analysis are also where a higher proportion of zero-vehicle households, non-citizen residents, and single-parent households, as well as residents living alone at older ages live. These factors, taken together, can increase social isolation and reduce access to services during emergencies. They are also where a higher proportion of residents employed in frontline or service-sector jobs live, increasing exposure to environmental hazards and limiting flexibility during emergencies.

Together, these conditions reflect the cumulative effects of systemic factors on health, mobility, and economic stability. As a result, rates of asthma, cardiovascular disease, depression, and low birthweight infants are elevated in several of these neighborhoods, reflecting the combined impacts of environmental exposure, housing instability, chronic stress, and barriers to care.

These demographic patterns highlight opportunities for the City to better align planning, public health, housing, and service delivery efforts within certain neighborhoods. Recognizing where social vulnerability overlaps with environmental burdens allows the City to prioritize interventions that address multiple needs simultaneously, such as health, mobility, housing quality, and emergency preparedness. Targeting outreach, investments, and engagement strategies in areas where multiple vulnerability factors overlap allows City actions to respond more directly to lived conditions, while building on existing social networks, cultural institutions, and community leadership.

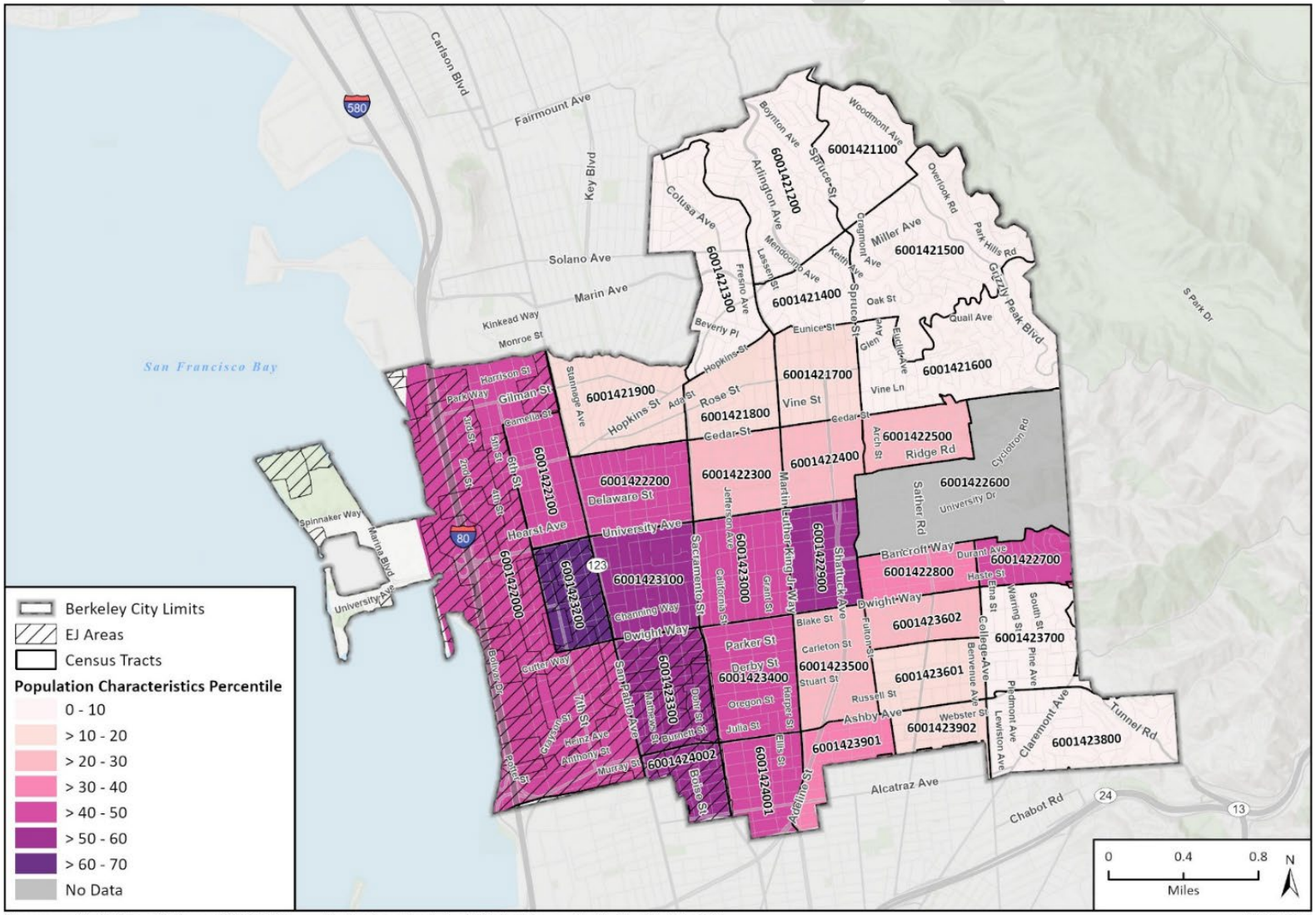
The Impact of Exclusionary Policies and Practices

Early zoning, coupled with government policies and practices (such as racially restrictive covenants and redlining), restricted Black residents and other communities of color to certain areas of the City, particularly in South and West Berkeley. Many of these areas in South and West Berkeley are identified as EJ Areas in Figure 2.

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Figure 4 - CalEnviroScreen Population Characteristics by Census Tract

Berkeley Compared to Statewide Data



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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021.

2.2 POLLUTION BURDEN

Pollution Burden represents the potential exposures to pollutants and the adverse environmental conditions caused by pollution. The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment defines cumulative pollution impacts as the combined exposures, public health effects, and environmental impacts from emissions and discharges within a geographic area. This includes environmental pollution from all sources, whether single medium or multiple media, and whether released routinely, accidentally, or otherwise. Where applicable, and to the extent that data is available, impacts take into account sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors.

Pollution burden in Berkeley is shaped by historical land-use patterns, transportation infrastructure, manufacturing uses, and proximity to the shoreline. Areas in West and South Berkeley experience higher cumulative impacts from pollution burden due to their proximity to Interstate 80, transit corridors, former and active manufacturing sites, rail corridors, and the marina. As a result, residents in these areas experience elevated exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5), diesel exhaust, traffic-related air pollution, and noise.

To measure disparities in exposure to pollution, CalEnviroScreen uses a percentile ranking system which compares census tracks across California. For example, a census tract in the 50th percentile has a pollution burden that is higher than 50 percent of census tracts statewide. CalEnviroScreen identifies Census Tract 6001422000, which lies primarily in West Berkeley with portions extending into Southwest and Northwest Berkeley (Figure 5), as having a pollution burden above the statewide 75th percentile. These impacts are largely driven by traffic density, toxic releases, contaminated sites, groundwater threats, and particulate matter exposure.



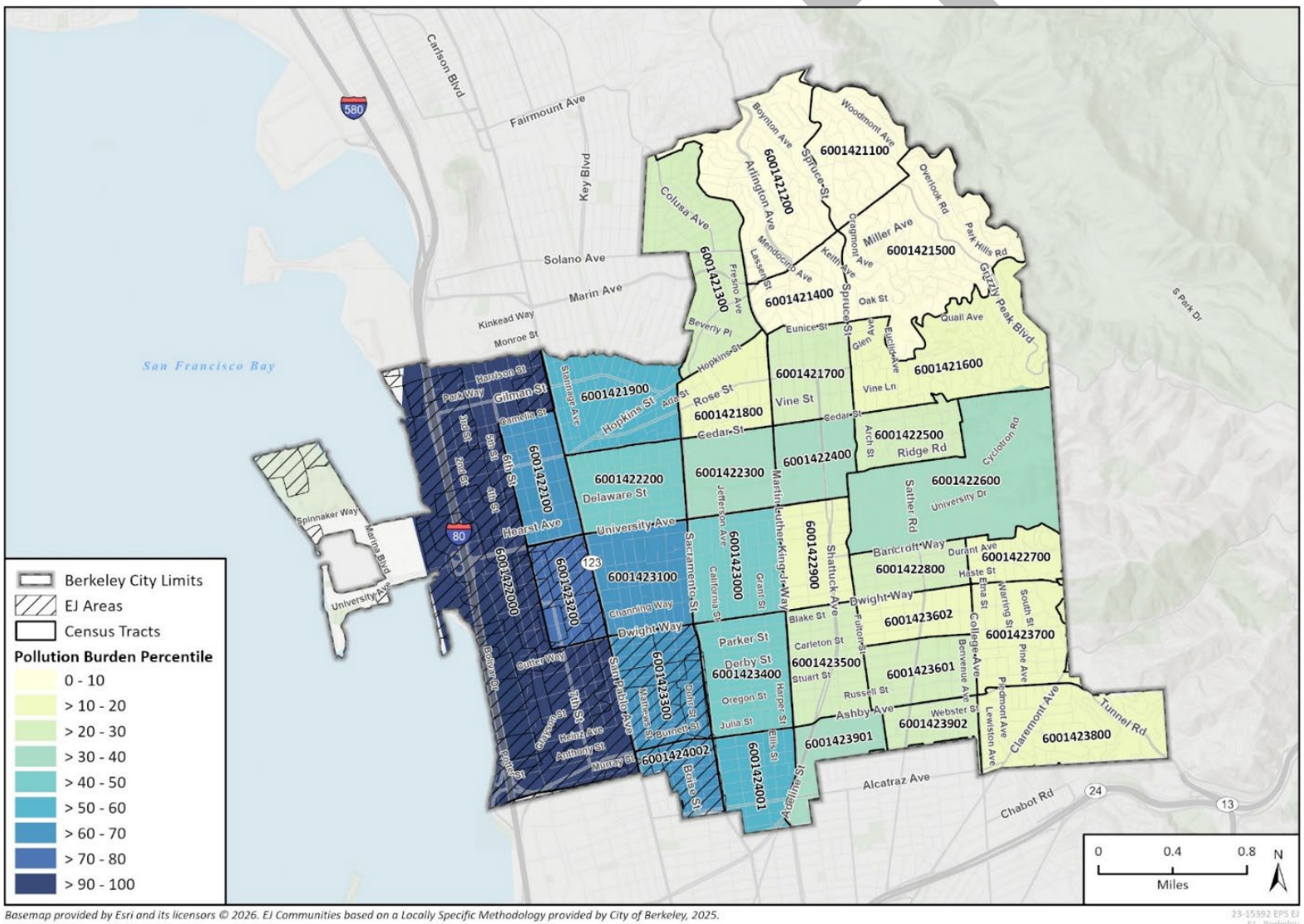
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The concentration of environmental burdens in specific locations creates opportunities to address cumulative impacts in a coordinated, place-based manner. Integrating air quality monitoring, land-use controls, enforcement, and infrastructure investment enables the City to address the combined effects of pollution, noise, and environmental degradation in neighborhoods with persistent exposure. Focusing mitigation and enforcement efforts in neighborhoods experiencing multiple overlapping stressors allows the City to more effectively reduce health disparities and long-standing inequities, rather than addressing issues in isolation.

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Figure 5 - Cal EnviroScreen Pollution Burden by Census Tract

Berkeley Compared with Statewide Data



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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021.

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EJ - Berkeley

2.3 ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Access to opportunity in Berkeley, including education, employment, transportation, recreation, and services, is closely tied to EJ concerns. While the City benefits from strong regional transit connections, a high walkability score, and proximity to major job centers, not all neighborhoods experience the same level of access. Residents in parts of South and West Berkeley report challenges related to transit reliability, safe pedestrian infrastructure, and east–west connectivity across major barriers such as freeways and high-volume arterials. These barriers can limit access to employment centers, health care, food resources, green spaces and educational opportunities, particularly for residents without access to a private vehicle. These disparities are compounded by differences in access to public facilities, parkland, and neighborhood services, leading to longer travel times to reach essential services, fewer safe routes to schools and transit, and limited access to community gathering spaces.

These conditions point to opportunities to improve physical connectivity and access to services in neighborhoods where barriers are most pronounced. Investments that improve transit reliability, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood-serving infrastructure can reduce reliance on private vehicles while expanding access to jobs, services and community programming. Strengthening connections between homes, transit, employment centers, and community assets can help expand access to opportunity and reduce the compounding effects of environmental and infrastructure-related inequities.



2.3.1 Housing Stability and Displacement

Housing stability is a central EJ concern in Berkeley. Availability of safe, sanitary and affordable housing reduces vulnerability to climate related impacts and supports recovery. Rising housing costs, limited affordability, and gentrification have driven long-term displacement, particularly in South and West Berkeley. Over time, these pressures have contributed to the significant decline of the Black population and the loss of long-standing community ties.

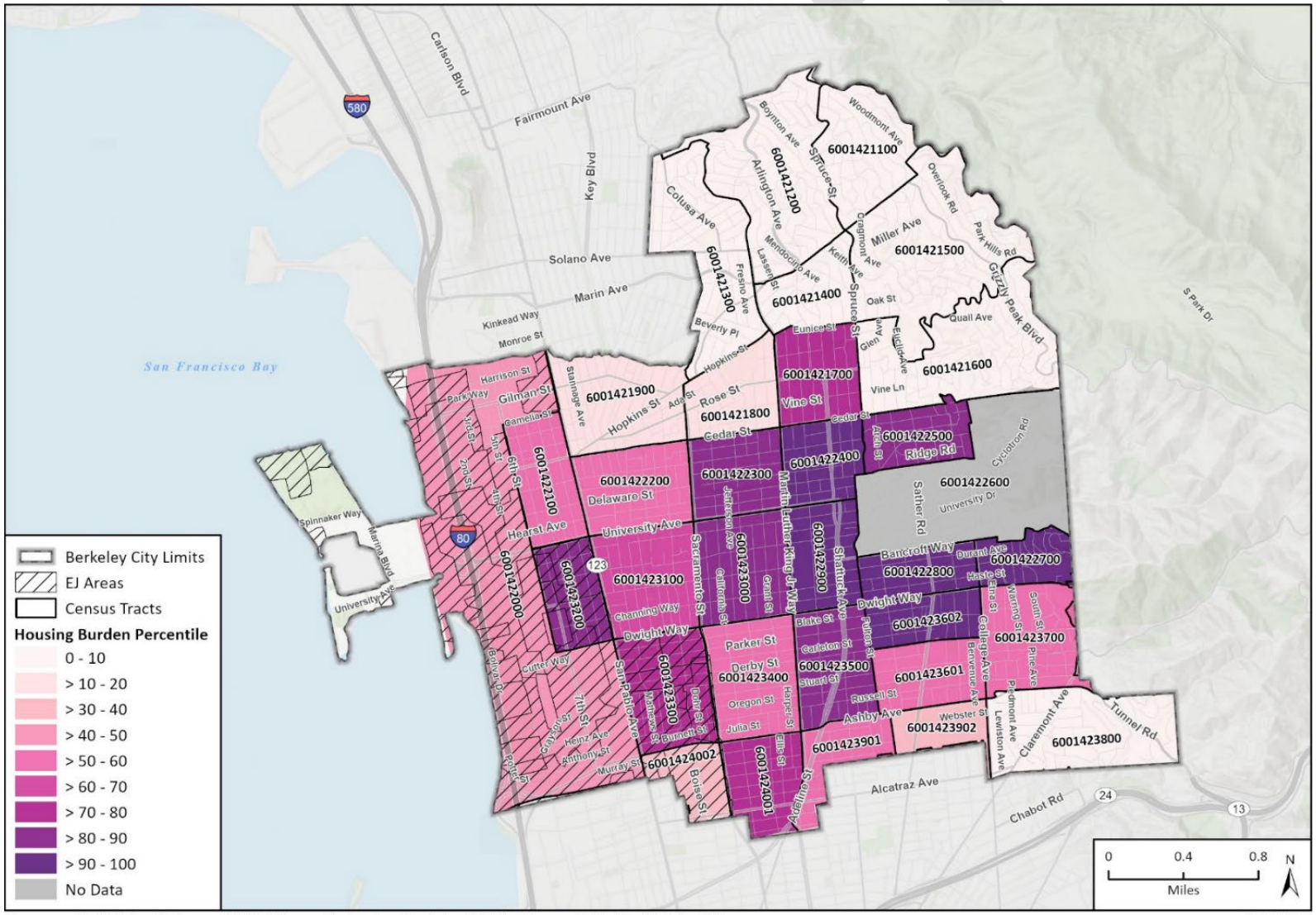
Factors including household income, market rents and home prices, available unit sizes, and household size can all contribute to cost burden. CalEnviroScreen measures housing burden by identifying the percent of households that are experiencing both high housing cost burden (paying greater than 50 percent of their income to housing costs) and are low income (earning less than 80 percent of the Area Median Income). As shown in Figure 6, housing cost burden in Berkeley is generally highest in the areas adjacent to the UC Berkeley campus. The average housing burden percentile score in Berkeley is about 54, which is slightly higher than the average in California of about 50.

Recognizing housing stability as a foundational component of environmental health creates opportunities to better coordinate environmental improvements with efforts to support existing residents. Policies that address housing quality, affordability, and tenant protections alongside investments in improving environmental quality will help ensure that improvements do not inadvertently accelerate displacement. Integrating equity considerations into environmental planning will prioritize investments contributing to healthier neighborhoods without increasing displacement pressures or eroding community ties.

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Figure 6 - CalEnviroScreen Housing Cost Burden by Census Tract

Berkeley Compared with Statewide Data



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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021.

2.3.2 Healthy Food Access

Berkeley residents have cultivated a distinct food culture that reflects the city's diversity and celebrates the resilience of its communities. Despite this vibrant food culture, barriers to food access persist and can influence health outcomes for some community members. These barriers include proximity to specialized and full-service grocery stores, reduced availability of locally produced foods, affordability and transportation challenges and shrinking nutrition assistance programs.

Access to Healthy and Culturally Relevant Food

Access to healthy food is a priority for the CAC. Beyond basic nutrition, food plays a vital role in nurturing Berkeley's diverse communities and fostering a sense of belonging. Sharing food creates opportunities for people to learn about one another and celebrate their cultures. It can also be especially welcoming when individuals accessing food distribution programs are able to find ingredients that are familiar and reflective of their cultural traditions. For these reasons, ensuring access to both healthy and culturally appropriate food is essential.

As shown in Figure 7, there are areas near the UC Berkeley campus where residents must travel between 0.5 and 1 mile to the nearest food retailer. While food retailers are present in many areas of the city, proximity alone does not necessarily ensure access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food. Access challenges may be particularly significant for residents with limited mobility, fixed incomes, or language barriers.



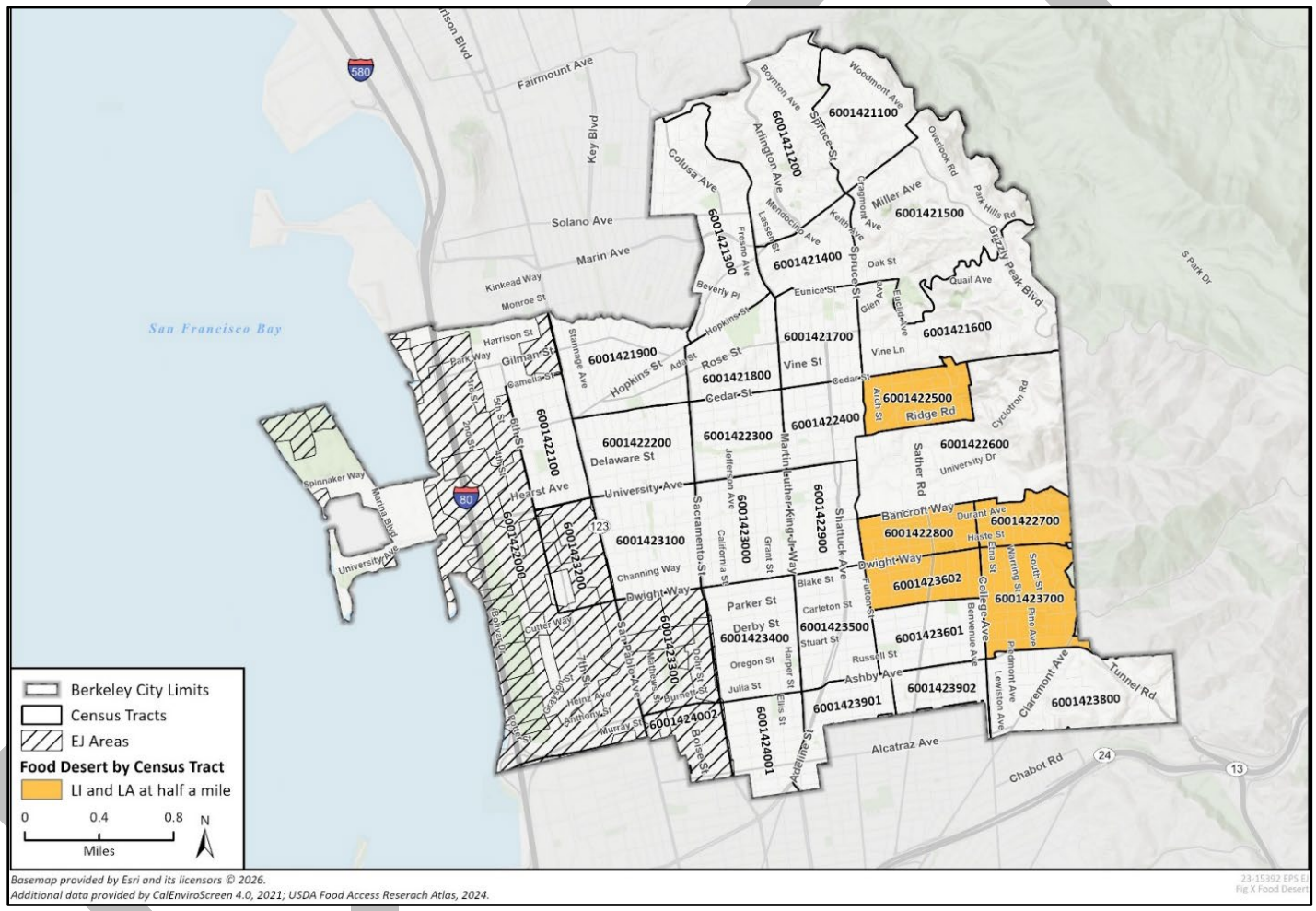
These conditions also present opportunities to reinforce neighborhood-scale food systems and better integrate food access into community planning. Supporting food recovery, neighborhood distribution points, and culturally relevant food programming can improve resilience during everyday conditions and emergencies. For example, community expressed interest in expanding opportunities for community kitchens that provide affordable and healthy food. Strengthening connections between housing, transportation, and food resources can support both public health and neighborhood resilience, particularly in areas most affected by cumulative burdens.



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Figure 7 - Food Deserts in Berkeley

Data generated by USDA[6]



[6] The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a Food Access Research Atlas that identifies areas with limited access to healthy food (referred to as "low-income" (LI) and "low-access" (LA) at the census tract level. LI is a census tract with a poverty rate of 20% or greater, or median family income at or below 80% of the statewide or metropolitan area median family income. LI is a census tract with at least 500 people or 33% of the tract's population living more than 0.5 mile (urban areas) from the nearest supermarket or grocery store, as well as the number of housing units in the area without access to a vehicle and that are more than 0.5 mile from one of these stores.

2.3.3 Parks, Open Space, and Recreation



Parks and open space are essential to physical and mental health. Figure 8 shows that the majority of EJ Areas have access to three or more acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, as do two census tracts in Berkeley hills. In only one neighborhood just north of campus, residents must travel more than half a mile to reach the nearest park (Figure 9). Although mapping shows a consistent amount of open space and parks throughout the City, community mapping exercises highlighted a desire for more of these amenities.

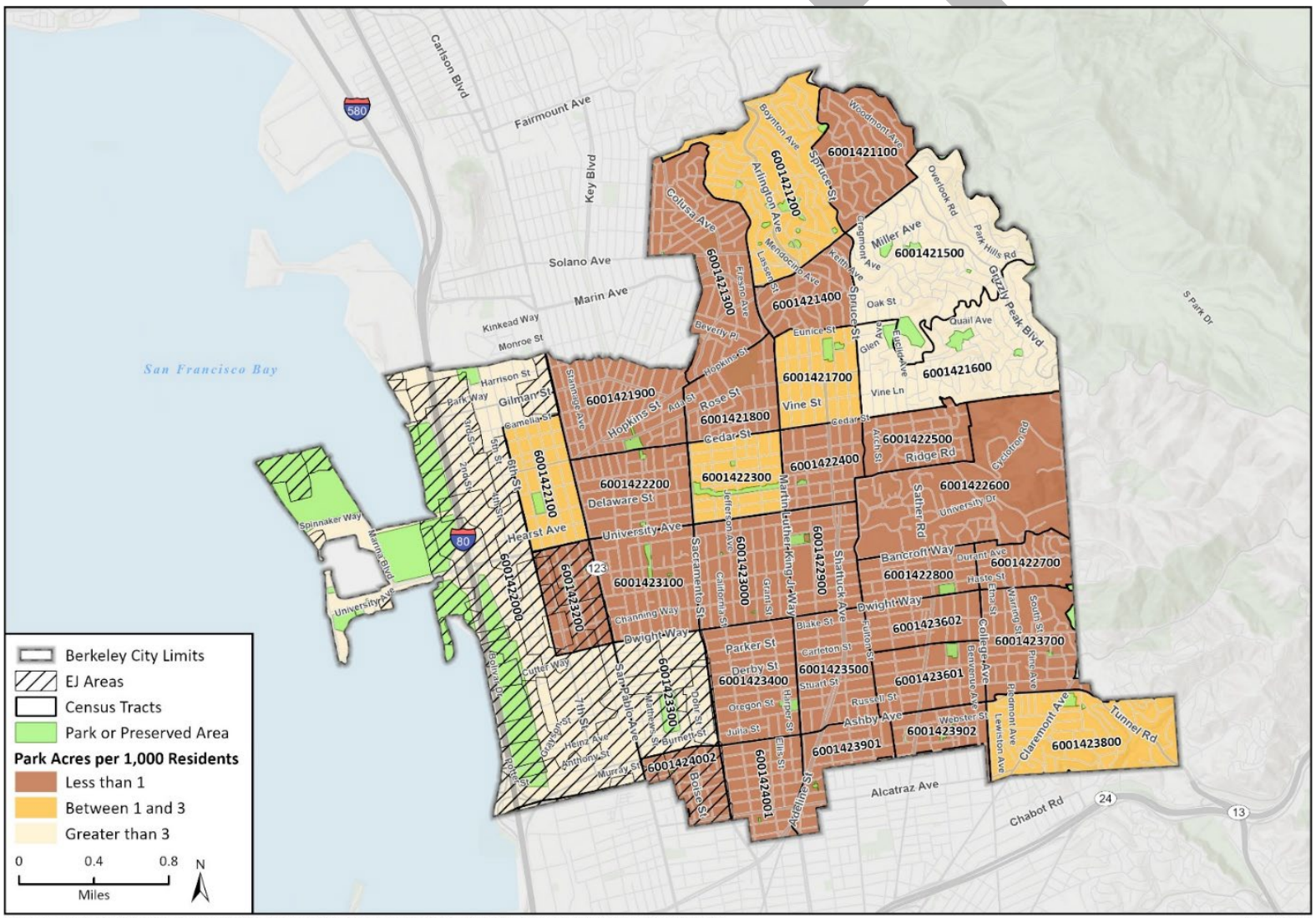


Similarly, members of the community voiced a desire for increased tree canopy and shade to reduce heat exposure and increase comfort and usability of outdoor spaces. Neighborhoods with lower canopy coverage experience higher surface temperatures during heat events, which can discourage outdoor activity and increase health risks. Expanding tree canopy, improving park amenities, and enhancing safety and programming can increase park usage while delivering co-benefits for physical activity, heat mitigation, air quality, and community well-being.

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Figure 8 – CalEnviroScreen Acres of Park in Berkeley Per 1,000 Residents

Berkeley Compared with Statewide Data

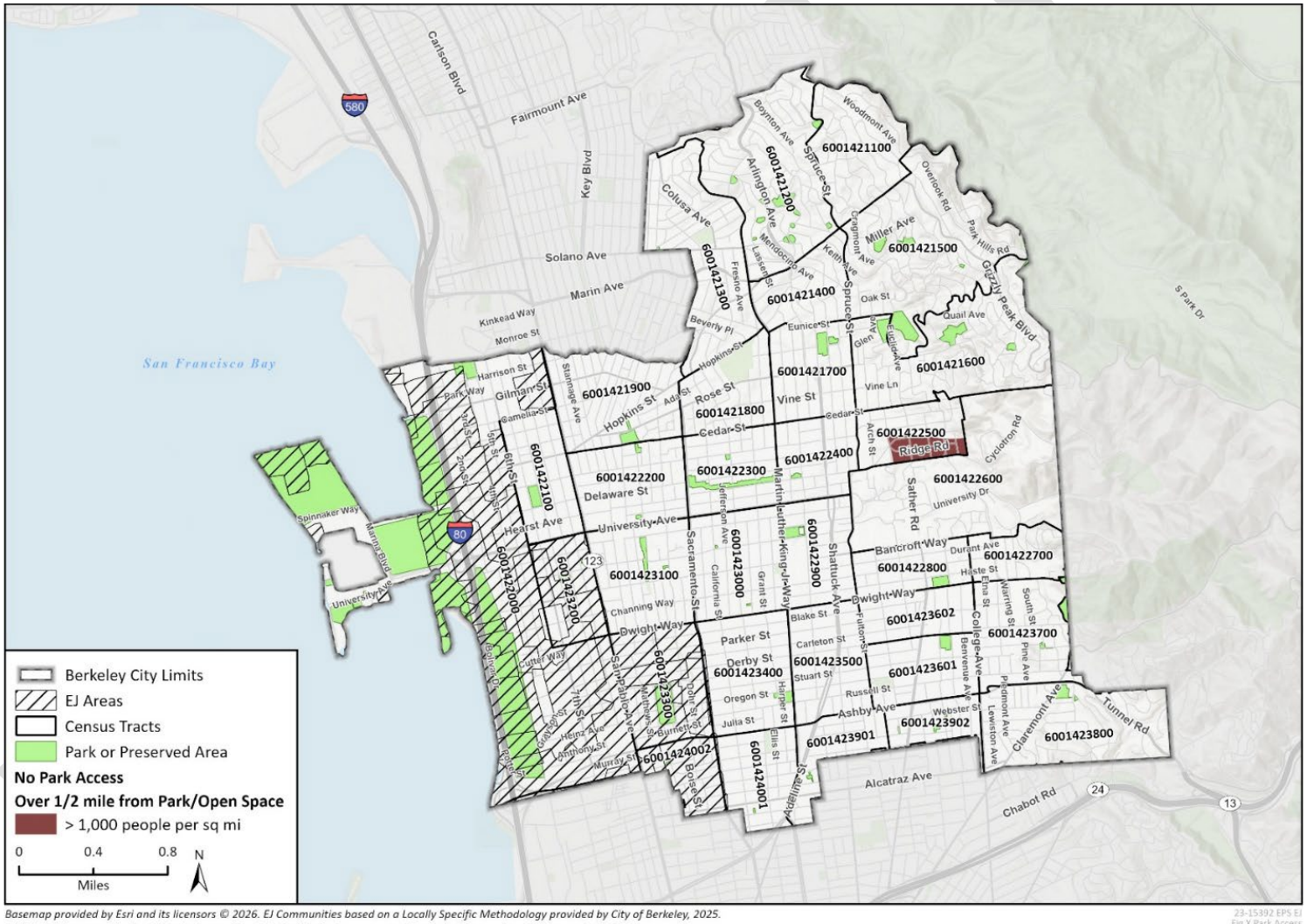


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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021; California Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Access Tool, 2020.

23-15392 EPS EJ
Fig X Park Access

Figure 9 – CalEnviroScreen Areas in Berkeley with No Park Access within 0.5 Miles

Berkeley Compared with Statewide Data



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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021; California Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Access Tool, 2020.

23-15392 EPS EJ
Fig X Park Access

2.3.4 Public Facilities and Safe Transportation

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND EQUITY

Public facilities play a critical role in access to essential services, community connection, and public health across Berkeley (see Figure 10). Libraries, community centers, senior centers, recreation centers, schools, health clinics, and other civic facilities serve as key access points for information, social services, and emergency response. Facilities are distributed throughout Berkeley, primarily in residential and commercial districts where population density is highest or where there is a specific need. There are fewer facilities in the Berkeley hills, where public land is scarce; directly to the north and south of campus, where student population (served by UC Berkeley) is high; and in manufacturing districts, where resident population is low.



Facility conditions, staffing levels, hours of operation, language access, and cultural responsiveness vary from location to location. Addressing these disparities is a critical component of advancing environmental justice and community resilience and provides opportunities to target investments, improve programming, and enhance accessibility for historically underserved neighborhoods.

SAFE AND EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems shape daily mobility, access to services, and exposure to environmental and safety risks across Berkeley. Residents in parts of South and West Berkeley often face challenges related to unsafe crossings, inconsistent transit service, and aging pedestrian infrastructure. These challenges are most pronounced along major, high-injury corridors like San Pablo Avenue, University Avenue, Ashby Avenue, Adeline Street, and Gilman Street, many of which pass through or border neighborhoods that face higher cumulative environmental burdens in West and South Berkeley (see Pollution Burdens). The City is responsible for

maintenance of local streets, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure (see Figure 11), and land use decisions, while transit service levels and freeway infrastructure are the responsibility of regional and state agencies such as AC Transit, MTC, and Caltrans.

It is important to reduce injury risk, improve access to essential services, and support healthier, lower-emission travel choices, particularly in EJ Areas with overlapping transportation and environmental burdens. The City's Complete Streets Policy provides a tool for improving safety, accessibility, and comfort on local roadways by prioritizing walking, biking, transit, and mobility device travel modes. When paired with coordination among providers and regional agencies, the City's Complete Streets Policy and other corridor-focused investments contribute to a safer and cleaner transportation network.

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Figure 10- Schools, Libraries, and Community Centers in Berkeley

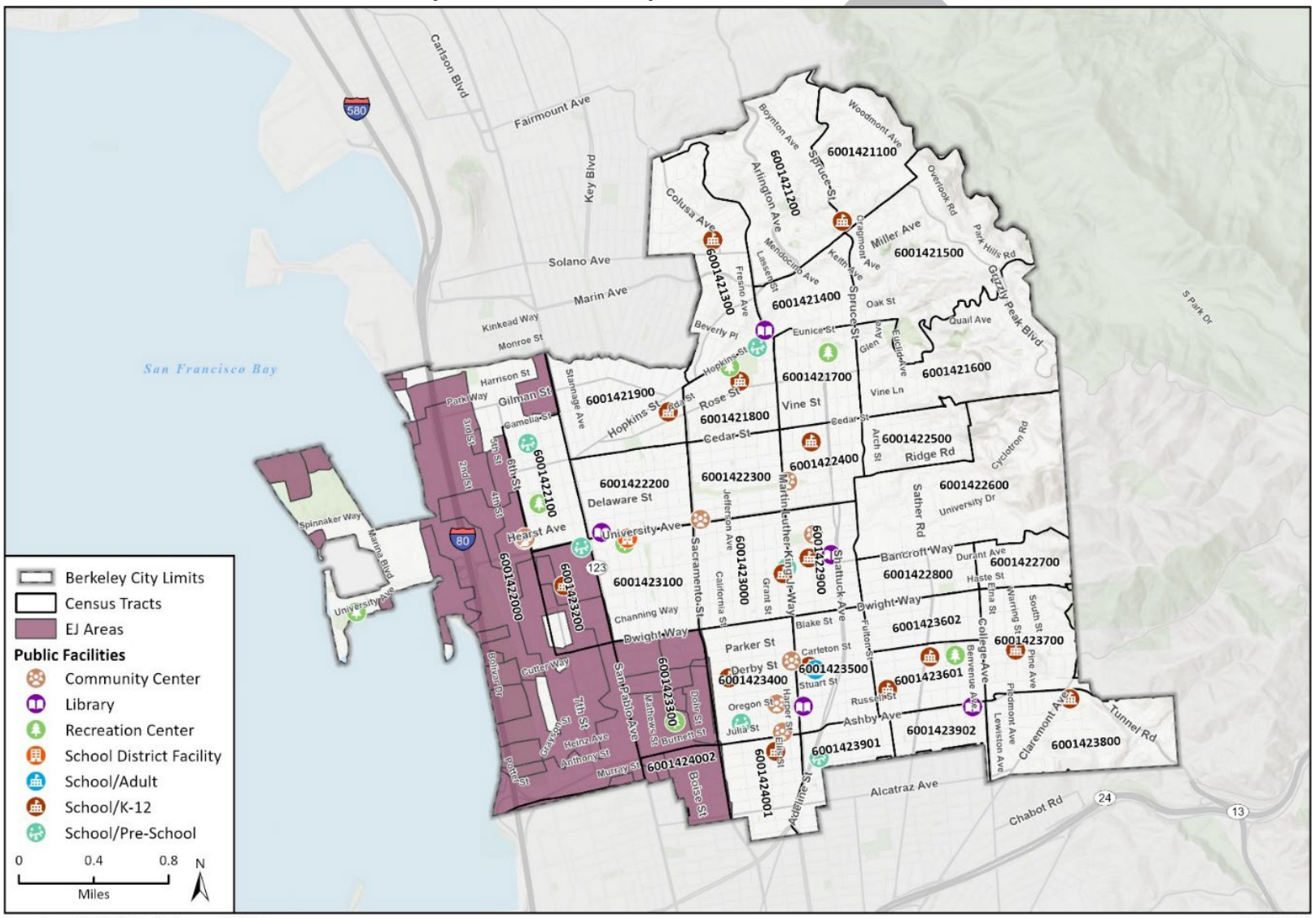
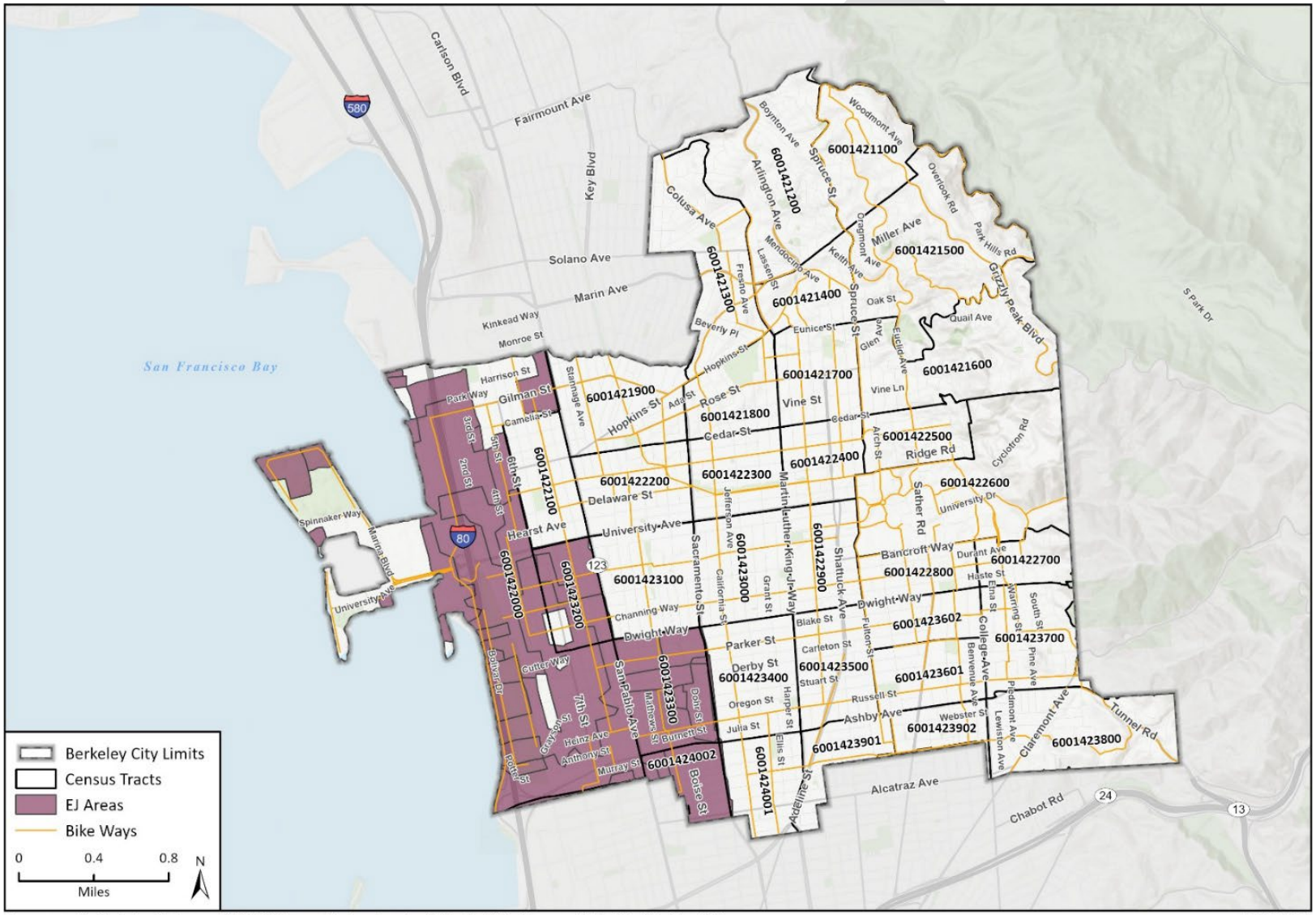


Figure 11 - Bicycle Lanes in Berkeley



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Additional data provided by City of Berkeley, 2025.

23-15392 EPS EJ
Fig X Bike Ways

2.3.5 Healthcare Access and Health Outcomes

Access to healthcare in Berkeley reflects broader patterns of exposure to environmental pollution, housing stability, and socioeconomic conditions documented in the EJ Existing Conditions Report. Barriers related to insurance coverage, language access, transportation, and housing instability limit access to consistent and preventive care for some residents. These challenges are more pronounced in South and West Berkeley, where households are more likely to rely on transit, face scheduling constraints due to employment in frontline industries, or encounter difficulty navigating the healthcare system. Areas with higher exposure to traffic-related air pollution, manufacturing activity, and noise also tend to experience higher rates of respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. Based on CalEnviroScreen, prevalence of asthma[7] for all neighborhoods in Berkeley west of Martin Luther King Jr. Way are high (60-90th percentile) when compared to all other census tracts in the State (Figure 12). These disparities reflect the cumulative effects of long-term environmental exposure and may be exacerbated by housing quality issues and barriers to timely care, rather than individual health behaviors alone.



Mental and community health outcomes are also shaped by neighborhood conditions. Figure 14 shows a concentration of depression (greater than the national average) on and around UC Berkeley campus. Academic stress, social pressures, and pressure to find affordable housing and work may contribute to these findings. Chronic exposure to environmental stressors, displacement pressure, and limited access to green space can contribute to anxiety, other

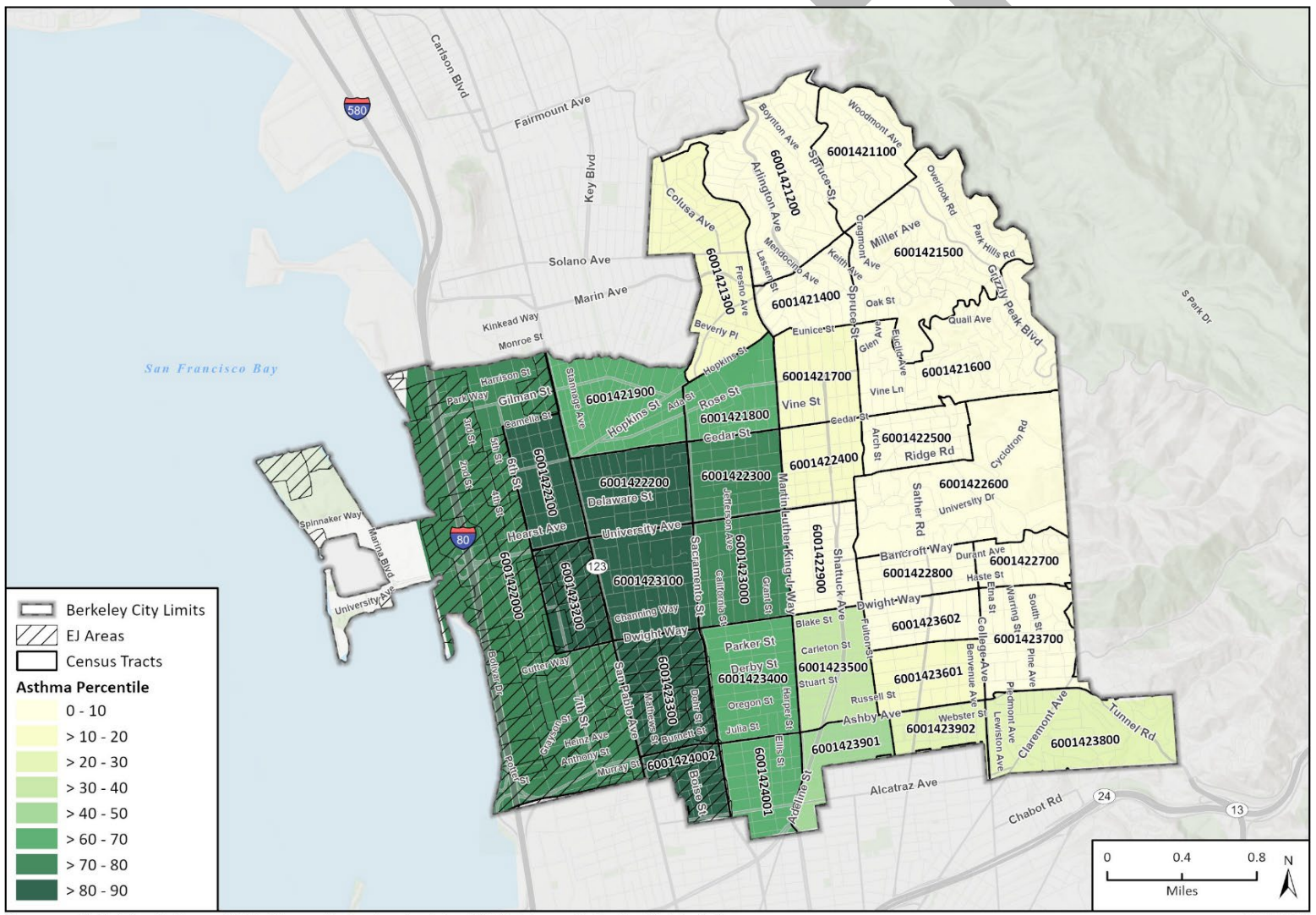
[7] CalEnviroScreen asthma prevalence represents the number of asthma emergency department visits per 10,000 people within a census tract, California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/fact-sheet/asthma

mental health challenges, and social isolation, particularly among seniors, people with disabilities, and residents living alone. Together, these patterns underscore the importance of integrating public health considerations into land use, transportation, and environmental planning, and advancing strategies that reduce environmental burdens while improving access to health-supportive infrastructure and services in neighborhoods experiencing the greatest cumulative impacts.

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Figure 12 – CalEnviroScreen Prevalence of Asthma by Census Tract

Berkeley Compared with Statewide Data

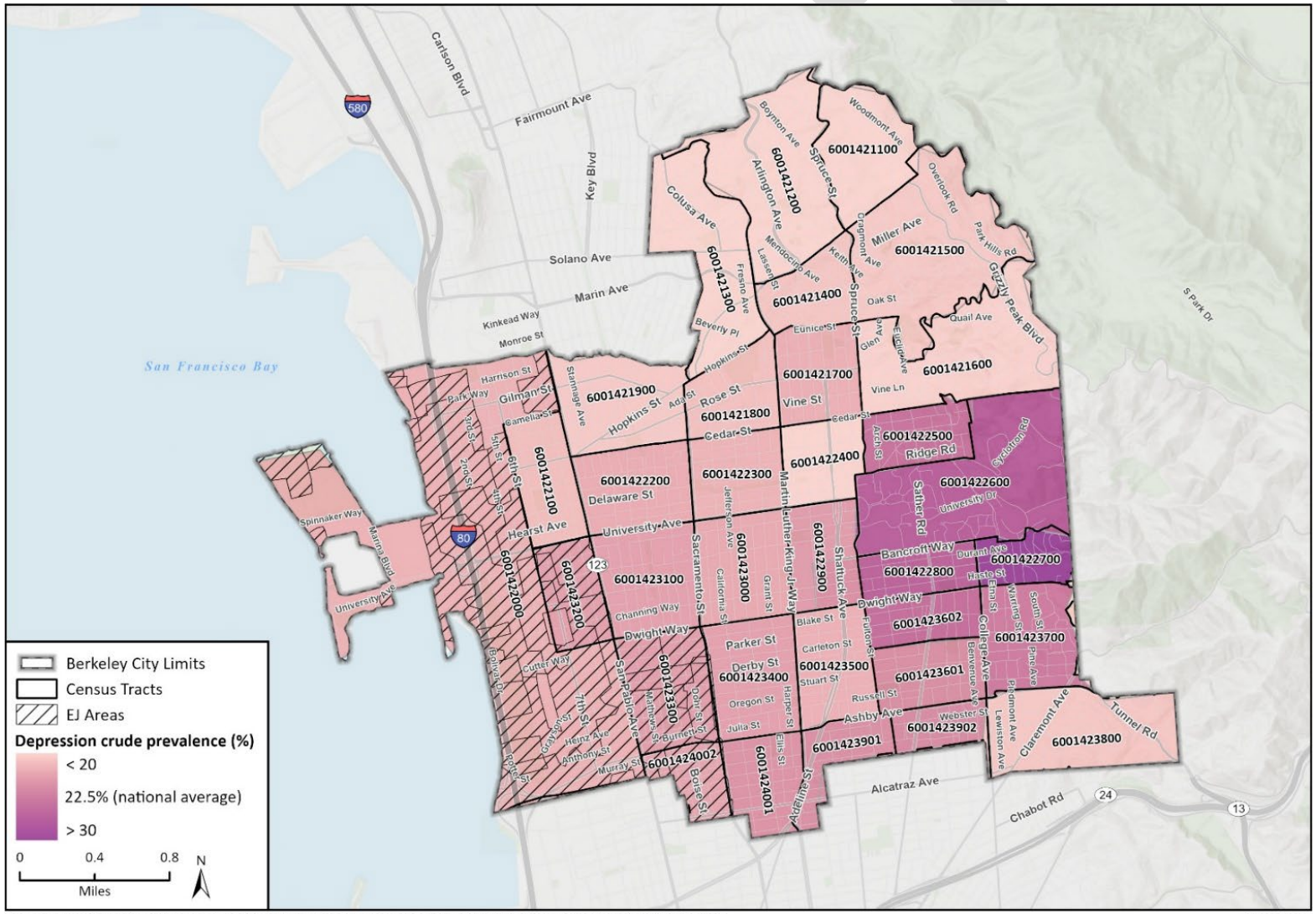


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Additional data provided by CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021.

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EJ - Berkeley

Figure 13 - Prevalence of Depression in Berkeley

Measured by the CDC



2.4 CULTURAL BELONGING AND SOCIAL EQUITY

Cultural belonging and social equity are fundamental to EJ, shaping whether residents are able to remain in their communities, participate in civic life, and benefit from environmental improvements. Cultural belonging refers to the ability of individuals and communities to maintain social connections, traditions, and identities in the places where they live. It encompasses culturally significant spaces, local institutions, and opportunities for expression that support community cohesion and continuity. Social equity reflects the fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, as well as equitable access to resources, services, and decision-making opportunities.



In Berkeley, cultural belonging and social equity are inseparable from the city's history of racial segregation, displacement, and community organizing, particularly in South and West Berkeley. Environmental improvements that do not account for cultural belonging risk accelerating displacement or eroding community identity. Further, changes in environmental conditions, housing markets, and land use can either strengthen or undermine cultural belonging and social equity. Recognizing the role of cultural identity and belonging is essential to ensuring that EJ efforts support not only cleaner and healthier environments, but also the continuity and vitality of the communities that call Berkeley home.

Defining Gentrification, Displacement, and Belonging

- **Gentrification:** A process of neighborhood change that includes economic change in a historically disinvested neighborhood through real estate investment and turnover to higher-income residents, as well as demographic changes, not only in income levels but also in residents' education level or racial composition. (Urban Displacement Project, UC Berkeley)
- **Residential Displacement:** The process by which a household is forced to move from its residence or is prevented from moving into a neighborhood that was previously accessible to them because of conditions beyond their control (Othering and Belonging Institute)
- **Belonging:** More than simply being seen or feeling included, belonging entails having a voice and the opportunity to use it to shape decisions and make demands of society and political institutions. It goes beyond access to include the power to co-create the structures, systems and conditions that shape a community.

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2.4.1 Cultural Identity and Expression

Berkeley's identity is influenced by the histories and ongoing presence of the Chochenyo Ohlone people, Black communities, Latinx/Hispanic communities, other people of color, immigrants, students, artists, and activists. Cultural expression and connection, through public art, language, food, events, and place-making, plays a vital role in fostering community identity, belonging and resilience building. These expressions are often rooted in specific neighborhoods and public spaces that carry historical and cultural meaning.

EJ concerns raised by residents during this process consistently connected environmental conditions to their ability to maintain cultural identity and community presence. Residents have emphasized that environmental improvements should reflect local history, lived experience, and community values, rather than imposing one-size-fits-all solutions. Therefore, centering cultural identity and expression during this EJ planning process has created opportunities to strengthen trust, foster meaningful community engagement, and to ensure that future neighborhood improvements and resilience building reflect local history, lived experience, and shared values.



2.4.2 Gentrification and Loss of Cultural Spaces



Gentrification has reshaped Berkeley's cultural landscape, particularly in South Berkeley, where historically Black communities once anchored vibrant networks of businesses, institutions, and gathering spaces. Between 2010 and 2020, South Berkley's Black population has shrunk by 30%, reflecting broader demographic shifts described in the Section 2.3.1 Housing Stability and Displacement of this Element. Displacement of residents has contributed to a loss of culturally significant places such as small businesses, faith institutions, and cultural venues face rising commercial rents, redevelopment pressures, and changes in neighborhood demographics. The loss of these spaces weakens community resilience and compounds the impacts of environmental and economic stressors.

Cultural institutions and gathering places play an important role in supporting social cohesion, informal support networks, and collective capacity to respond to change. Acknowledging that cultural and community-serving spaces are essential parts of a neighborhood's infrastructure presents an opportunity to sustain social networks and reinforce community stability in neighborhoods undergoing rapid change while improving environmental conditions. Acknowledging that cultural and community-serving spaces are essential parts of neighborhood infrastructure presents an opportunity to sustain social networks, reinforce community stability, and support equitable environmental improvements in neighborhoods undergoing rapid change.

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3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The Goals, Policies, and Programs listed below were developed in partnership with a Community Advisory Committee and subsequently reviewed by a Technical Advisory Group composed of City staff across departments, ensuring the Element meets State legislative requirements, reflects community priorities, and accounts for City operations. While adoption of the Element establishes these goals, policies, and programs as City policy, the timing and extent of implementation will be guided by future priorities and available resources through the City's regular referral and budgeting processes, as directed by the City Manager and City Council.

Goal EJ-1 Berkeley is committed to advancing environmental justice.

Policy EJ-1.1 **Comprehensive Approach to Environmental Justice.** Integrate Environmental Justice into all City goals, policies, programs and practices by implementing the programs outlined in Table 1 and reporting on progress to show actions taken.

Program EJ-1.1-A Develop an Environmental Justice performance tracking mechanism that provides transparent monitoring and evaluation on implementation of Environmental Justice Element goals, policies, and programs.

Policy EJ-1.2 **Investments in Environmental Justice.** Allocate public resources that advance the City's Environmental Justice goals, policies, and programs.

Program EJ-1.2-A *Develop equity-focused investment administrative regulation (A.R.) that ensures the City's Environmental Justice goals, policies and programs are considered when City expends public resources.*

Policy EJ-1.3 **Environmental Justice-Focused Staff.** Ensure City staff are trained and committed to serve all members of the Berkeley community equitably, and are well-coordinated to collaborate on implementation of Environmental Justice policies and programs.

Program EJ-1.3-A *Establish a new Office of Community Engagement and Collaboration that sets Citywide engagement standards, provides staff training, fosters inter-departmental collaboration, convenes an interdepartmental working group and partners with community to build trusted relationships.*

3.1 BELONGING, EQUITY, AND CIVIC EMPOWERMENT

Goal EJ-2 Berkeley empowers residents to fully participate in government by fostering a sense of belonging and equity.

Policy EJ-2.1 **Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation.** Ensure civic engagement processes reflect Berkeley's diversity and are community-centered by removing participation barriers.

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Program EJ-2.1-A *Develop and adopt citywide community engagement protocols that require early and ongoing partnership with Environmental Justice Communities. Include participant supports (see Programs EJ-2.1-B and EJ-2.1-C) to ensure that engagement is accessible and that community is a partner in decision-making.*

Program EJ-2.1-B *Explore funding opportunities to support equitable community engagement that minimizes barriers to participation. Supports could include stipends, on-site childcare, meals, transportation vouchers, translation and interpretation services, and accessible meeting materials and formats.*

Program EJ-2.1-C *Develop and maintain a dedicated community engagement webpage on the City's website that provides consolidated information about engagement opportunities and helps coordinate outreach to effectively engage with community.*

Policy EJ-2.2 **Partner with Community.** Establish partnerships with community-based organizations and members of Environmental Justice Communities to expand the City's capacity to deliver information and conduct engagement in Environmental Justice Areas.

Policy EJ-2.3 **Strengthen Community Networks.** Strengthen coordination among community-based service providers to expand service reach, build capacity, and leverage support to address shared challenges.

Program EJ-2.3-A *Consider establishing a Community Partner Network to facilitate collaboration among food, health, housing, and social service providers that support Berkeley residents. Maintain a shared contact directory, host convenings, and encourage partnerships, while minimizing duplication of existing collaborative efforts.*

Policy EJ-2.4 **Empower Youth.** Provide opportunities for youth to participate in public service and discover leadership opportunities.

Program EJ-2.4-A *Expand representation of youth commissioners on Berkeley commissions to provide opportunities for youth to meaningfully participate in civic engagement processes.*

Policy EJ-2.5 **Celebrate Berkeley's Diversity and Culture.** Celebrate Berkeley's cultural and social fabric to strengthen neighborhood pride and connection and to honor Berkeley's unique history.

Program EJ-2.5-A *Expand opportunities for neighborhood gatherings with outreach and financial support (e.g. grant opportunities) in Environmental Justice Areas. Use these events to build connections, provide safety and resiliency trainings, and share information on the City's Environmental Justice initiatives.*

Program EJ-2.5-B *Support local artists in activating public spaces through music, visual art, and performance, leveraging the City's existing Civic Arts Grants program and partnerships with youth, artists, and nonprofits to reflect Berkeley's diverse communities and strengthen the creative economy.*

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3.2 POLLUTION EXPOSURE AND AIR QUALITY

Goal EJ-3 Berkeley prioritizes resources and investments to reduce cumulative pollution burdens in Environmental Justice Areas.

Policy EJ-3.1 Equity-Driven Pollution Reduction. Apply an equity-focused approach to pollution reduction that prioritizes Environmental Justice Areas, directing clean air investments that reduce pollution exposure to sensitive receptors (such as schools, childcare centers, senior facilities), and ensuring that Environmental Justice Communities meaningfully contribute to decision-making.

Policy EJ-3.2 Clean Energy. Encourage clean energy in Berkeley's manufacturing districts.

Program EJ-3.2-A *Evaluate potential economic development incentives and business assistance strategies to encourage the establishment, retention, and expansion of low- or zero-emission and green economy uses in Berkeley, with a focus on the Manufacturing and Mixed-Manufacturing districts. Incentives may include grants, financing, fee reductions or other financial incentives, technical assistance, business attraction and retention programs, and leveraging available regional, State, and federal resources.*

Program EJ-3.2-B *Research and evaluate updates to the local Building Code, consistent with State law, that reduce pollution exposure from manufacturing uses and support the transition of existing businesses to clean energy and low-emission operations. This may include stricter performance-based building standards, electric-ready design measures, requirements for living walls and roofs, and additional indoor air quality, ventilation and filtration standards.*

Policy EJ-3.3 Regional Air Quality Coordination. Coordinate with Bay Area Air District (BAAD) and other regional agencies to reduce air pollution and related health risks in communities with the highest cumulative pollution burdens, using data-driven strategies and meaningful Environmental Justice Community input.

Program EJ-3.3-A *Partner with regional, state, and other stakeholders to expand localized air quality and heat monitoring networks in Environmental Justice Areas.*

Program EJ-3.3-B *Research options to improve reporting of air monitoring data. Consider disaggregating data by neighborhood, publishing data on a public-facing dashboard, increasing frequency of updates, and crowd-sourcing data.*

Policy EJ-3.4 Air Pollution Mitigation in Homes. Support home improvements that reduce indoor exposure to outdoor air pollution, such as air filtration systems, window upgrades, and weatherization, particularly in Environmental Justice Communities near major transportation infrastructure.

Program EJ-3.4-A *Enhance outreach to renters and homeowners in Environmental Justice Areas, following the programs in Policy EJ-2.1 (Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation) to increase education about indoor air quality risks and strategies to reduce exposure, including filtration, weatherization, and building upgrades.*

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Program EJ-3.4-B *Coordinate with agencies and organizations that provide housing and weatherization programs, such as Rebuilding Together and Center for Independent Living, to expand access to income-qualified financial assistance to low-income households in Environmental Justice Areas.*

Program EJ-3.4-C *Continue to partner with local contractors and community-based organizations through projects like Rebuilding Together's "Just Transition Pilot" to deliver retrofits mentioned in Program EJ-3.4-B to low-income households living in Environmental Justice Areas.*

Policy EJ-3.5 **Lower Vehicle Miles Traveled.** Reduce vehicle miles traveled by focusing on public transit and safe active transportation infrastructure improvements in the City's right of way and zero-emission travel modes, consistent with MTC's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy.

Program EJ-3.5-A *Expand first- and last-mile mobility options and innovative delivery services through bike, scooter, and e-bike lending programs and affordable car-share services that serve Environmental Justice Communities or are identified as one of MTC's Equity Priority Communities or subject to the MTC Transit-Oriented Communities Policy.*

Program EJ-3.5-B *Update Berkeley's Transportation Demand Management regulations (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23.334) to reduce transportation-related pollution and health disparities through measurable, equity-focused performance targets.*

Policy EJ-3.6 **Transportation Pollution Mitigation.** Reduce transportation-related air pollution impacts in Environmental Justice Areas and in neighborhoods adjacent to high-traffic corridors and freeways.

Program 3.6-A *Advocate to the state legislature that Caltrans implement pollution-exposure-reduction strategies along major corridors throughout Berkeley, focusing on locations where sensitive receptors are present. Consider vegetative buffers consistent with Policy EJ-8.2 (Sustainable Green Infrastructure).*

Goal EJ-4 Berkeley has reliable sanitation services that keep neighborhoods clean, safe and healthy.

Policy EJ-4.1 **Reduce Illegal Dumping.** Address structural barriers to proper waste disposal, prioritizing overburdened streets and neighborhoods in Environmental Justice Areas.

Program EJ-4.1-A *Host community clean-up events in Environmental Justice Areas that provide education on disposal options for bulky items and hazardous materials. Consider pairing these with "pop-up" drop-off locations or reduced-cost vouchers for use at the Berkeley Transfer Station.*

Program EJ-4.1-B *Continue to partner with regional agencies, shelters, and community-based (health) organizations to safely collect sharps in areas occupied by people experiencing homelessness. Positively frame services such as harm-reduction interventions, utilizing a trauma-informed approach.*

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Policy EJ-4.2 **Waste Reduction.** Partner with StopWaste and other community-based organizations focused on waste reduction and recycling to ensure outreach campaigns that promote zero-waste behaviors reach Environmental Justice Communities.

Program EJ-4.2-A *Evaluate existing outreach and education to Berkeley restaurants about reusable food-ware and food-litter reduction methods. Identify additional education, technical assistance, and compliance-focused approaches that will advance the City's efforts to reduce food-related waste.*

Program EJ-4.2-B *Use data collected through 311's reporting of illegal dumping and litter hot spots to guide targeted outreach, clean-up actions, and service adjustments developed in coordination with community-based organizations and neighborhood stakeholders.*

Goal EJ-5 Berkeley has clean, affordable, and safe water for all residents.

Policy EJ-5.1 **Water Quality Reporting.** Require periodic testing of water quality in rental properties, including checks for lead, per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and other contaminants where feasible and authorized, and ensure results are provided directly to renters.

Program EJ-5.1-A *Evaluate inclusion of water quality testing into the Rental Housing Safety Program inspections. This would include identifying chemicals of concern, fee increases to cover expenses, and reporting mechanisms for property owners and tenants.*

Policy EJ-5.2 **Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation.** Prioritize funding to support upgrades and maintenance of public right of way connections to residential water systems to ensure long-term water safety and resilience by prioritizing older housing stock in Environmental Justice Areas.

Policy EJ-5.3 **Home Water Safety Assistance.** Provide funding or subsidies for plumbing and water system upgrades in rental and owner-occupied housing, prioritizing low-income renters in older buildings, multifamily properties, and historically disinvested Environmental Justice Areas. Ensure clear eligibility and a simple application process and deliver outreach and navigation support through trusted community-based organizations and tenant organizations to protect affordability and facilitate access to repairs.

Policy EJ-5.4 **Water Affordability and Access.** Ensure all households have affordable access to clean and safe water through improved education and outreach to low-income households that may be eligible for assistance programs offered by public agencies and non-profits.

Program EJ-5.4-A *Identify opportunities to educate the community on existing water affordability programs that provide discounted rates or bill forgiveness for low-income renters and homeowners. Partner with community-based organizations and trusted partners, such as those referred to in Policy EJ-2.2 (Partner with Community) to increase participation of Environmental Justice Communities.*

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3.3 EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE FOOD

Goal EJ-6 Berkeley has a resilient, equitable, and culturally appropriate food system.

Policy EJ-6.1 **Equitable Access to Food.** Expand equitable access to fresh, locally based and culturally appropriate food.

Program EJ-6.1-A *Encourage farmers markets in Environmental Justice Areas to promote access to healthy, regionally grown and culturally appropriate foods.*

Policy EJ-6.2 **Increased Education and Outreach.** Ensure residents know how to access healthy, affordable food. Promote awareness of and access to local, State and federal food assistance and food distribution programs.

Program EJ-6.2-A *Integrate food access and recovery education into the City's existing outreach programs. Highlight programs such as Market Match, SNAP, WIC, local pantry networks, and soup kitchens. Map available food resources and incorporate community input when developing outreach strategies.*

Program EJ-6.2-B *Integrate dignity-centered, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed practices into the design, communication, and delivery of City-supported food assistance programs to reduce stigma and increase enrollment in programs.*

Program EJ-6.2-C *Partner with schools, non-profits, and community-based organizations to identify inclusive food-education opportunities, such as food gardens, food-recovery initiatives, and culturally responsive nutrition programs. Create opportunities for participants and volunteers to share feedback to address food access needs and program effectiveness.*

Policy EJ-6.3 **Resilient Food Systems.** Promote resilient food systems that ensure equitable food access during emergencies.

Program EJ-6.3-A *Improve food recovery coordination with Alameda County, community-based partners to reduce waste and support food security. Identify guidance and training for waste recovery workers or funding to support food recovery organizations to aid with surplus food donation and redistribution consistent with SB 1383 requirements.*

Program EJ-6.3-B *Collaborate with community-based organizations to ensure timely, equitable food access, including culturally appropriate food distribution and clear communication pathways.*

Policy EJ 6.4 **Community-Based Food Production and Kitchens.** Expand neighborhood-based food production such as community gardens and community-based food preparation such as community kitchens by removing financial and administrative barriers and incentivizing the creation and operation of these spaces.

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Program EJ-6.4-A *Assess vacant or underutilized parcels for potential use as community gardens and if found to be feasible, consider establishing City–community-based organization agreements for the long-term stewardship and maintenance of these spaces.*

Program EJ-6.4-B *Partner with community-based organizations and senior housing facilities to adapt underused kitchen spaces for shared community use.*

3.4 EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Goal EJ-7 Berkeley provides safe and accessible public facilities that welcome Environmental Justice Communities in a humanizing and welcoming manner.

Policy EJ-7.1 **Community-Centered Public Facilities.** Ensure public facilities are designed and maintained to foster safety, belonging, and accessibility for all by integrating community-led planning and engagement into operations and programming.

Program EJ-7.1-A *Conduct participatory workshops and/or focus groups, informed by facility-use surveys, to identify community priorities and gaps related to personal safety, cultural representation, and accessibility in public facilities. Ensure accountability through transparent documentation and reporting and by implementing the policies and programs under Goal EJ-2 (Belonging, Equity and Civic Empowerment).*

Program EJ-7.1-B *Conduct a funding gap analysis to determine the capital investment required to meet City facility and program needs identified Program EJ-7.1-A, including an assessment of capital costs and existing funding sources. Partner with community-based organizations to pursue federal, state, and philanthropic funding.*

Policy EJ-7.2 **Land Use for Public Facilities.** Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance allows for the establishment of public facilities in the areas they are needed.

Program EJ-7.2-A *Update the Zoning Ordinance to expand public and quasi-public uses in residential and mixed-use districts. Reduce permitting thresholds for public facilities serving Environmental Justice Areas and disseminate information following the direction in Policy EJ-2.2 (Partner with Community).*

Policy EJ-7.3 **Flexible Service Delivery.** Reduce barriers to City services by creating non-traditional delivery locations and methods.

Program EJ-7.3-A *Pilot a pop-up service model to deliver mobile City services (such as health screenings, rental housing safety assistance, citation payment, recreation sign-ups, job recruitment and permitting assistance) to Environmental Justice Communities.*

Program EJ-7.3-B *Work with community and community-based organizations to explore feasibility of "one-stop" service facilities that co-locate childcare, food access, health care, and housing-related services in Environmental Justice Areas.*

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Determine steps the City needs to take to facilitate or incentivize "one-stop" service hubs.

Policy EJ-7.4 **Collaborative Environmental Health.** Strengthen public and private partnerships with agencies and organizations to expand community resilience to environmental health risks.

Program EJ-7.4-A *Establish formal partnerships with health care providers, clinics, and community-based organizations to create a coordinated referral system that connects residents to appropriate health, housing, and social services and provides outreach to Environmental Justice Communities, leveraging the outcome of Policy EJ-2.3 (Strengthen Community Networks and Improve Service Access).*

Program EJ-7.4-B *Support AC Transit and BART efforts to improve and expand transit operations and transit access in Berkeley, consistent with MTC's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy. Work with transit providers to improve and expand service and access in Environmental Justice Areas as part of ongoing service planning and transit operations coordination meetings and as an integral goal of the City's transportation capital projects and routine roadway operations activities related to development projects and routine streets maintenance.*

Policy EJ-7.5 **Design Safe and Healthy Streets.** Support right of way improvements in areas with high traffic volume and poor air quality, following Berkeley's adopted Complete Streets Policy.

Program EJ-7.5-A *Evaluate bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure in the public right of way to ensure active transportation modes and transit attract people of all ages and abilities, per the City's adopted Vision Zero Plan, the Berkeley Bicycle Plan and the Pedestrian Plan.*

3.5 PARKS, GREEN SPACE, AND CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal EJ-8 Berkeley has equitable, welcoming parks and green infrastructure that promote health, shade, and physical activity in every neighborhood.

Policy EJ-8.1 **Green Space.** Expand access to green space with a focus on Environmental Justice Communities.

Program 8.1-A *Assess City-owned vacant or underutilized parcels for potential use as parks and green spaces for public enjoyment, prioritizing resources in areas of Berkeley that lack open and green space, as directed in Policy EJ-1.3 (Investments in Environmental Justice).*

Program 8.1-B *Consider joint-use agreements with Berkeley Unified School District and other public institutions to allow for community use of fields, playgrounds, and*

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outdoor learning areas during evenings, weekends and other unprogrammed hours.

Policy EJ-8.2 **Sustainable Green Infrastructure.** Strengthen regulations that require green infrastructure for new construction projects and right-of-way improvements.

Program 8.2-A *Update the City's 2019 Green Infrastructure Plan to include a "Green and Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Checklist" that ensures green infrastructure is used as a buffering strategy along transit corridors to reduce air, water, and noise pollution.*

Program 8.2-B *Implement community-led greening and public amenity projects in Environmental Justice Areas.*

Policy EJ-8.3 **Increase Park Usage.** Increase usage and enjoyment of existing parks by improving programming, accessibility, and amenities.

Program 8.3-A *Conduct a survey on community needs to develop strategies that may increase community use of existing parks, especially in Environmental Justice Areas where facilities are underutilized.*

Program 8.3-B *Partner with cultural organizations, schools, and community-based organizations to host events, performances, and festivals in parks to increase usage and build belonging, consistent with Policy EJ-2.5 (Celebrate Berkeley's Diversity and Culture).*

Policy EJ-8.4 **Improve Park Safety and Facilities.** Ensure existing park facilities are well-maintained, safe, and welcoming for all residents through physical improvements and maintenance.

Program 8.4-A *Conduct an audit of existing park facilities to identify gaps in necessary park infrastructure. Consider Policy EJ-1.2 when prioritizing findings.*

3.6 HOUSING EQUITY AND RESILIENCE

Goal EJ-9 Berkeley has stable, safe, and dignified housing for all and guards against gentrification and displacement of residents made vulnerable by broader social and economic systems.

Policy EJ-9.1 **Safe and Healthy Housing Conditions.** Promote healthy housing by focusing on existing housing stock.

Program EJ-9.1-A *Provide broader education on healthy housing to Environmental Justice Communities by leveraging the Rental Housing Safety Program and ensuring the protocols developed in the programs listed under Policy EJ-2.1 (Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation) are followed. Update printed and online materials and consider additional avenues for outreach, including "office hours" in the Permit Service Center and public workshops.*

Program EJ-9.1-B *Identify funding to upgrade Berkeley's aging/existing affordable housing stock with necessary infrastructure maintenance and upgrades, including focus on*

energy efficiency and electrification. Focus on housing in Environmental Justice Areas.

Policy EJ-9.2 **Berkeley Rent Board Services.** Explore opportunities to increase partnership with Berkeley Rent Board and promote their programs to new and existing property owners and renters.

Policy EJ-9.3 **Address Gentrification and Displacement.** Address gentrification by preventing and mitigating displacement pressures and using local histories and cultural legacies to inform land use, housing, and public investment decisions.

Program 9.3-A *Work with community-based organizations, cultural leaders, and historians to formally designate cultural districts and community landmarks that honor Environmental Justice Communities and to (re)name public spaces and streets to reflect cultural heritage.*

Program 9.3-B *Strengthen the City's policies to promote community stability and mitigate displacement, including supporting opportunities for residents to remain in or return to their communities. Pair these efforts with proactive outreach and equitable access to housing programs for households in Environmental Justice Areas and neighborhoods experiencing market pressure.*

Policy EJ-9.4 **Housing with Wraparound Services.** Facilitate the development of housing projects that provide mental health, employment, and supportive services to residents.

Program 9.4-A *Evaluate the successes and challenges of the Insight Housing Hope Center to inform development of a community-centered Safe Housing and Services Hub that co-locates services to support residents. Work with County partners to align funding, contracting, and service delivery frameworks with this model, consistent with Federal Coordinated Entry requirements, and pursue state and federal funding sources (e.g., No Place Like Home, CalAIM).*

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4 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Table 1 identifies implementation measures for the Environmental Justice Element. Each program identifies the City department(s) or agency primarily responsible for implementation, recognizing that many programs will require coordination across multiple departments and with external partners. Timeframes provide a general expectation for implementation and are defined as follows: Near-Term (1–3 years), Mid-Term (3–5 years), Long-Term (6+ years), and Ongoing for recurring activities such as maintenance, monitoring, outreach, partnerships, and program administration. Where applicable, the table also identifies legislative requirements associated with individual implementation programs. These references identify California Government Code sections and other applicable State laws that the program is intended to address or help implement; however, the absence of a legislative citation does not imply that a program is optional or of lesser importance, as all programs contribute to achieving the City's Environmental Justice goals and advancing implementation of the General Plan. Note that the top priority programs for CAC members are denoted with a (*).

Table 1 Environmental Justice Element Goals, Policies, and Programs

Goals/Policies/Programs	Program Leads	Timeframe	Legislative Requirements
Goal EJ-1 Berkeley is committed to advancing environmental justice.			
Policy EJ-1.1 Comprehensive Approach to Environmental Justice. Integrate Environmental Justice into all City goals, policies, programs and practices by implementing the programs outlined in Table 1 and reporting on progress to show actions taken.			
Program EJ-1.1-A Develop an Environmental Justice performance tracking mechanism that provides transparent monitoring and evaluation on implementation of Environmental Justice Element goals, policies, and programs.	City Manager's Office	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)
Policy EJ-1.2 Investments in Environmental Justice. Allocate public resources that advance the City's Environmental Justice goals, policies, and programs.			
Program EJ-1.2-A Develop equity-focused investment guide that ensures the City's Environmental Justice goals, policies and programs are considered when City expends public resources.	City Manager's Office	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(C)
Policy EJ-1.3 Environmental Justice-Focused Staff. Ensure City staff are trained and committed to serve all members of the Berkeley community equitably, and are well-coordinated to collaborate on implementation of Environmental Justice policies and programs.			
Program EJ-1.3-A Establish a new Office of Community Engagement and Collaboration that sets Citywide engagement standards, provides staff training, fosters inter-departmental collaboration, convenes an interdepartmental working group and partners with community to build trusted relationships.	City Manager's Office	Mid-term	
Goal EJ-2 Berkeley empowers residents to fully participate in government by fostering a sense of belonging and equity.			

Goals/Policies/Programs	Program Leads	Timeframe	Legislative Requirements
Policy EJ-2.1 Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation. Ensure civic engagement processes reflect Berkeley's diversity and are community-centered by removing participation barriers.			
Program EJ-2.1-A Develop and adopt citywide community engagement protocols that require early and ongoing partnership with Environmental Justice Communities. Include participant supports (see Programs EJ-2.1-B and EJ-2.1-C) to ensure that engagement is accessible and that community is a partner in decision-making.	City Manager's Office	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(B)
Program EJ-2.1-B Explore funding opportunities to support equitable community engagement that minimizes barriers to participation. Supports could include stipends, on-site childcare, meals, transportation vouchers, translation and interpretation services, and accessible meeting materials and formats.	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	
Program EJ-2.1-C Develop and maintain a dedicated community engagement webpage on the City's website that provides consolidated information about engagement opportunities and helps coordinate outreach to effectively engage with community.	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	
Policy EJ-2.2 Partner with Community. Establish partnerships with community-based organizations and members of Environmental Justice Communities to expand the City's capacity to deliver information and conduct engagement in Environmental Justice Areas.			
Policy EJ-2.3 Strengthen Community Networks. Strengthen coordination among community-based service providers to expand service reach, build capacity, and leverage support to address shared challenges.			
Program EJ-2.3-A Consider establishing a Community Partner Network to facilitate collaboration among food, health, housing, and social service providers that support Berkeley residents. Maintain a shared contact directory, host convenings, and encourage partnerships, while minimizing duplication of existing collaborative efforts	City Manager's Office; Health, Housing, and Community Services Department	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(B), (C)
Policy EJ-2.4 Empower Youth. Provide opportunities for youth to participate in public service and discover leadership opportunities.			
Program EJ-2.4-A Expand representation of youth commissioners on Berkeley commissions to provide opportunities for youth to meaningfully participate in civic engagement processes.	Berkeley City Council	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(B)
Policy EJ-2.5 Celebrate Berkeley's Diversity and Culture. Celebrate Berkeley's cultural and social fabric to strengthen neighborhood pride and connection and to honor Berkeley's unique history.			
Program EJ-2.5-A Expand opportunities for neighborhood gatherings with outreach and financial support (e.g. grant opportunities) in Environmental Justice Areas. Use these events to build connections, provide safety and resiliency trainings, and share information on the City's Environmental Justice initiatives.	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	
Program EJ-2.5-B Support local artists in activating public spaces through music, visual art, and performance, leveraging the City's existing Civic Arts Grants program and partnerships with youth, artists, and nonprofits to reflect Berkeley's diverse communities and strengthen the creative economy.	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	

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Goal EJ-3 Berkeley prioritizes resources and investments to reduce cumulative pollution burdens in Environmental Justice Areas.			
Policy EJ-3.1 Equity-Driven Pollution Reduction. Apply an equity-focused approach to pollution reduction that prioritizes Environmental Justice Areas, directing clean air investments that reduce pollution exposure to sensitive receptors (such as schools, childcare centers, senior facilities), and ensuring that Environmental Justice Communities meaningfully contribute to decision-making.			
Policy EJ-3.2 Clean Energy. Encourage clean industry in Berkeley's manufacturing districts through the Zoning and Building Codes that minimize pollution exposure and technical assistance focused on transitioning legacy businesses to clean energy.			
Program EJ-3.2-A Update the Manufacturing and Mixed-Manufacturing Zoning Districts to encourage the establishment of low- or zero-emission and green economy uses.	Planning and Development Department	Near-term	
Program EJ-3.2-B Research and evaluate updates to the local Building Code, consistent with State law, that reduce pollution exposure from manufacturing uses and support the transition of existing businesses to clean energy and low-emission operations. This may include stricter performance-based building standards, electric-ready design measures, requirements for living walls and roofs, and additional indoor air quality, ventilation and filtration standards.	Planning and Development Department	Near-term	
Policy EJ-3.3 Regional Air Quality Coordination. Coordinate with Bay Area Air District (BAAD) and other regional agencies to reduce air pollution and related health risks in communities with the highest cumulative pollution burdens, using data-driven strategies and meaningful Environmental Justice Community input.			
Program EJ-3.3-A Partner with regional, state, and other stakeholders to expand localized air quality and heat monitoring networks in Environmental Justice Areas.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Environmental Health Division	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-3.3-B Research options to improve reporting of air monitoring data. Consider disaggregating data by neighborhood, publishing data on a public-facing dashboard, increasing frequency of updates, and crowd-sourcing data.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Environmental Health Division; Fire Department Office of Emergency Services	Near-term	
Policy EJ-3.4 Air Pollution Mitigation in Homes. Support home improvements that reduce indoor exposure to outdoor air pollution, such as air filtration systems, window upgrades, and weatherization, particularly in Environmental Justice Communities near major transportation infrastructure.			
Program EJ-3.4-A Enhance outreach to renters and homeowners in Environmental Justice Areas, following the programs in Policy EJ-2.1 (Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation) to increase education about indoor air quality risks and strategies to	Planning and Development Department	Ongoing	

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reduce exposure, including filtration, weatherization, and building upgrades.	(Renters), Rental Housing Safety Program (Renters); Health, Housing, and Community Services Department (Homeowners)		
Program EJ-3.4-B Coordinate with agencies and organizations that provide housing and weatherization programs, such as Rebuilding Together and Center for Independent Living, to expand access to income-qualified financial assistance to low-income households in Environmental Justice Areas.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Aging Services Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-3.4-C Continue to partner with local contractors and community-based organizations through projects like Rebuilding Together's "Just Transition Pilot" to deliver retrofits mentioned in Program EJ-3.4-B to low-income households living in Environmental Justice Areas.	Planning and Development Department; Office of Energy and Sustainable Development	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-3.5 Lower Vehicle Miles Traveled. Reduce vehicle miles traveled by focusing on public transit and safe active transportation infrastructure improvements in the City's right of way and zero-emission travel modes, consistent with MTC's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy.			
Program EJ-3.5-A Expand first- and last-mile mobility options and innovative delivery services through bike, scooter, and e-bike lending programs and affordable car-share services that serve Environmental Justice Communities or are identified as one of MTC's Equity Priority Communities or subject to the MTC Transit-Oriented Communities Policy.	Public Works Department, Transportation Division	Mid-term	
Program EJ-3.5-B Update Berkeley's Transportation Demand Management regulations (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23.334) to reduce transportation-related pollution and health disparities through measurable, equity-focused performance targets.	Public Works Department, Transportation Division; Planning and Development Department, Land Use Planning Division	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A); Berkeley Municipal Code Ch. 23.334
Policy EJ-3.6 Transportation Pollution Mitigation. Reduce transportation-related air pollution impacts in Environmental Justice Areas and in neighborhoods adjacent to high-traffic corridors and freeways.			
Program EJ-3.6-A Advocate to the state legislature that Caltrans implement pollution-exposure-	Public Works	Ongoing	Gov. Code

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reduction strategies along major corridors throughout Berkeley, focusing on locations where sensitive receptors are present. Consider vegetative buffers consistent with Policy EJ-8.2.	Department, Transportation and Engineering Divisions		§65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-4: Berkeley has reliable sanitation services that keep neighborhoods clean, safe and healthy.			
Policy EJ-4.1 Reduce Illegal Dumping. Address structural barriers to proper waste disposal, prioritizing overburdened streets and neighborhoods in Environmental Justice Areas			
Program EJ-4.1-A Host community clean-up events in Environmental Justice Areas that provide education on disposal options for bulky items and hazardous materials. Consider pairing these with "pop-up" drop-off locations or reduced-cost vouchers for use at the Berkeley Transfer Station.	Public Works Department, Zero Waste Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-4.1-B Continue to partner with regional agencies, shelters, and community-based (health) organizations to safely collect sharps in areas occupied by people experiencing homelessness. Positively frame services such as harm-reduction interventions, utilizing a trauma-informed approach.	Health, Housing, and Community Services, Environmental Health Division; Public Works Department, Zero Waste Division; City Manager's Office, Neighborhood Services Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-4.2 Waste Reduction. Partner with StopWaste and other community-based organizations focused on waste reduction and recycling to ensure outreach campaigns that promote zero-waste behaviors reach Environmental Justice Communities.			
Program EJ-4.2-A Evaluate existing outreach and education to Berkeley restaurants about reusable food-ware and food-litter reduction methods. Identify additional education, technical assistance, and compliance-focused approaches that will advance the City's efforts to reduce food-related waste.	Public Works Department, Zero Waste Division	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A); SB 1383
Program EJ-4.2-B Use data collected through 311's reporting of illegal dumping and litter hot spots to guide targeted outreach, clean-up actions, and service adjustments developed in coordination with community-based organizations and neighborhood stakeholders	Public Works Department, Zero Waste Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-5: Berkeley has clean, affordable, and safety water for all residents.			
Policy EJ-5.1 Water Quality Reporting. Require periodic testing of water quality in rental properties, including checks for lead, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and other contaminants where feasible and authorized, and ensure results are provided directly to renters.			

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Program EJ-5.1-A Evaluate inclusion of water quality testing into the Rental Housing Safety Program inspections. This would include identifying chemicals of concern, fee increases to cover expenses, and reporting mechanisms for property owners and tenants.	Planning and Development Department, Building and Safety Division	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-5.2 Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation. Prioritize funding to support upgrades and maintenance of public right of way connections to residential water systems to ensure long-term water safety and resilience by prioritizing older housing stock in Environmental Justice Areas.			
Policy EJ-5.3 Home Water Safety Assistance. Provide funding or subsidies for plumbing and water system upgrades in rental and owner-occupied housing, prioritizing low-income renters in older buildings, multifamily properties, and historically disinvested Environmental Justice Areas, ensure clear eligibility and a simple application process, and deliver outreach and navigation support through trusted community-based organizations and tenant organizations to protect affordability and facilitate access to repairs.			
Policy EJ-5.4 Water Affordability and Access. Ensure all households have affordable access to clean and safe water through improved education and outreach to low-income households that may be eligible for assistance programs offered by public agencies and non-profits.			
Program EJ-5.4-A Evaluate existing outreach and education to Berkeley restaurants about reusable food-ware and food-litter reduction methods. Identify additional education, technical assistance, and compliance-focused approaches that will advance the City's efforts to reduce food-related waste.	City Manager's Office	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-6: Berkeley has a resilient, equitable, and culturally appropriate food system.			
Policy EJ-6.1 Equitable Access to Food. Expand equitable access to fresh, locally based and culturally appropriate food.			
Program EJ-6.1-A Encourage farmers markets in Environmental Justice Areas to promote access to healthy, regionally grown and culturally appropriate foods.	City Manager's Office	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-6.2 Increased Education and Outreach. Ensure residents know how to access healthy, affordable food. Promote awareness of and access to local, State and federal food assistance and food distribution programs.			
Program EJ-6.2-A Integrate food access and recovery education into the City's existing outreach programs. Highlight programs such as Market Match, SNAP, WIC, local pantry networks, and soup kitchens. Map available food resources and incorporate community input when developing outreach strategies.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Environmental Health Division; City Manager's Office	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-6.2-B Integrate dignity-centered, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed practices into the design, communication, and delivery of City-supported food assistance programs to reduce stigma and increase enrollment in programs.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Environmental Health Division; City Manager's	Ongoing	

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	Office		
Program EJ-6.2-C Partner with schools, non-profits, and community-based organizations to identify inclusive food-education opportunities, such as food gardens, food-recovery initiatives, and culturally responsive nutrition programs. Create opportunities for participants and volunteers to share feedback to address food access needs and program effectiveness.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department	Ongoing	
Policy EJ-6.3 Resilient Food Systems. Promote resilient food systems that ensure equitable food access during emergencies.			
Program EJ-6.3-A Improve food recovery coordination with Alameda County, community-based partners to reduce waste and support food security. Identify guidance and training for waste recovery workers or funding to support food recovery organizations to aid with surplus food donation and redistribution consistent with SB 1383 requirements.	Department, Zero Waste Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A); SB 1383
Program EJ-6.3-B Collaborate with community-based organizations to ensure timely, equitable food access, including culturally appropriate food distribution and clear communication pathways.	Fire Department Office of Emergency Services; Health, Housing, and Community Services Department	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-6.4 Community-Based Food Production and Kitchens. Expand neighborhood-based food production such as community gardens and community-based food preparation such as community kitchens by removing financial and administrative barriers and incentivizing the creation and operation of these spaces.			
Program EJ-6.4-A Identify vacant or underutilized parcels for community gardens and establish City–community-based organization agreements for the long-term stewardship and maintenance of these spaces.	Public Works Department	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-6.4-B Partner with community-based organizations and senior housing facilities to adapt underused kitchen spaces for shared community use.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Environmental Health Division	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-7: Berkeley provides safe and accessible public facilities that welcome Environmental Justice Communities in a humanizing and welcoming manner.			
Policy EJ-7.1 Community-Centered Public Facilities. Ensure public facilities are designed and maintained to foster safety, belonging, and accessibility for all by integrating community-led planning and engagement into operations and programming.			
Program EJ-7.1-A Conduct participatory workshops and/or focus groups, informed by facility-use surveys, to identify community priorities and gaps related to personal safety, cultural representation, and accessibility in public facilities. Ensure accountability through transparent documentation and reporting and by implementing the policies and programs under Goal EJ-2 (Belonging, Equity and Civic Empowerment	Public Works Department, Facilities Management Division; Parks, Recreation, and	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A), (B)

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	Waterfront, Capital Projects Division		
Program EJ-7.1-B Conduct a funding gap analysis to determine the capital investment required to meet City facility and program needs identified Program EJ-7.1-A, including an assessment of capital costs and existing funding sources. Partner with community-based organizations to pursue federal, state, and philanthropic funding.	Public Works Department, Facilities Management Division; Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department, Capital Division	Mid-term	
Policy EJ-7.2 Land Use for Public Facilities. Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance allows for the establishment of public facilities in the areas they are needed.			
Program EJ-7.2-A Update the Zoning Ordinance to expand public and quasi-public uses in residential and mixed-use districts. Reduce permitting thresholds for public facilities serving Environmental Justice Areas and disseminate information following the direction in Policy EJ-2.2 (Partner with Community).	Planning and Development Department	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-7.3 Flexible Service Delivery. Reduce barriers to City services by creating non-traditional delivery locations and methods.			
Program EJ-7.3-A Pilot a pop-up service model to deliver mobile City services (such as health screenings, rental housing safety assistance, citation payment, recreation sign-ups, job recruitment and permitting assistance) to Environmental Justice Communities.	Planning and Development Department; Health, Housing, and Community Services Department; Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department; Finance Department	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-7.3-B Work with community and community-based organizations to explore feasibility of "one-stop" service facilities that co-locate childcare, food access, health care, and housing-related services in Environmental Justice Areas. Determine steps the City needs to take to facilitate or incentivize "one-stop" service hubs.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-7.4 Collaborative Environmental Health. Strengthen public and private partnerships with agencies and organizations to expand community resilience to environmental health risks.			
Program EJ-7.4-A Establish formal partnerships with health care providers, clinics, and	Health, Housing,	Mid-term	Gov. Code

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community-based organizations to create a coordinated referral system that connects residents to appropriate health, housing, and social services and provides outreach to Environmental Justice Communities, leveraging the outcome of Policy EJ-2.3 (Strengthen Community Networks and Improve Service Access).	and Community Services Department		§65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-7.4-B Support AC Transit and BART efforts to improve and expand transit operations and transit access in Berkeley, consistent with MTC's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy. Work with transit providers to improve and expand service and access in Environmental Justice Areas as part of ongoing service planning and transit operations coordination meetings and as an integral goal of the City's transportation capital projects and routine roadway operations activities related to development projects and routine streets maintenance.	Public Works Department, Transportation Division	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-7.5 Design Safe and Healthy Streets. Support right of way improvements in areas with high traffic volume and poor air quality, following Berkeley's adopted Complete Streets Policy.			
Program EJ-7.5-A Evaluate bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure in the public right of way to ensure active transportation modes and transit attract people of all ages and abilities, per the City's adopted Vision Zero Plan, the Berkeley Bicycle Plan and the Pedestrian Plan	Public Works Department, Transportation Division	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-8: Berkeley has equitable, welcoming parks and green infrastructure that promote health, shade, and physical activity in every neighborhood.			
Policy EJ-8.1 Green Space. Expand access to green space with a focus on Environmental Justice Communities.			
Program EJ-8.1-A Assess City-owned vacant or underutilized parcels for potential use as parks and green spaces for public enjoyment, prioritizing resources in areas of Berkeley that lack open and green space, as directed in Policy EJ-1.2 (Investments in Environmental Justice).	Public Works Department, Facilities Management Division; Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department, Capital Division; City Manager's Office	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A), (C)
Program EJ-8.1-B Consider joint-use agreements with Berkeley Unified School District and other public institutions to allow for community use of fields, playgrounds, and outdoor learning areas during evenings, weekends and other unprogrammed hours.	Public Works Department, Facilities Management Division; Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department, Capital Division; City Manager's Office	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A), (C)

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Policy EJ-8.2 Sustainable Green Infrastructure. Strengthen regulations that require green infrastructure for new construction projects and right of way improvements.			
Program EJ-8.2-A Update the City's 2019 Green Infrastructure Plan to include a "Green and Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Checklist" that ensures green infrastructure is used as a buffering strategy along transit corridors to reduce air, water, and noise pollution.	Public Works Department, Engineering Division	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-8.2-B Implement community-led greening and public amenity projects in Environmental Justice Areas.	Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department; Urban Forestry	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-8.3 Increase Park Usage. Increase usage and enjoyment of existing parks by improving programming, accessibility, and amenities.			
Program EJ-8.3-A Conduct a survey on community needs to develop strategies that may increase community use of existing parks, especially in Environmental Justice Areas where facilities are underutilized.	Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department, Recreation Division	Near-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Program EJ-8.3-B Partner with cultural organizations, schools, and community-based organizations to host events, performances, and festivals in parks to increase usage and build belonging, consistent with Policy EJ-2.5 (Celebrate Berkeley's Diversity and Culture).	Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department, Recreation Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-8.4 Improve Park Safety and Facilities. Ensure existing park facilities are well-maintained, safe, and welcoming for all residents through physical improvements and maintenance.			
Program EJ-8.4-A Conduct an audit of existing park facilities to identify gaps in necessary park infrastructure. Use audit results to prioritize upgrades in parks within Environmental Justice Areas.	Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department	Mid-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Goal EJ-9: Berkeley has stable, safe, and dignified housing for all and guards against gentrification and displacement of residents made vulnerable by broader social and economic systems.			
Policy EJ-9.1 Safe and Healthy Housing Conditions. Promote healthy housing by focusing on existing housing stock.			
Program EJ-9.1-A Provide broader education on healthy housing to Environmental Justice Communities by leveraging the Rental Housing Safety Program and ensuring the protocols developed in the programs listed under Policy EJ-2.1 (Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation) are followed. Update printed and online materials and consider additional avenues for outreach, including "office hours" in the Permit Service Center and public	Planning, Building & Safety Division	Ongoing	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)

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workshops.			
Program EJ-9.1-B Identify funding to upgrade Berkeley's aging/existing affordable housing stock with necessary infrastructure maintenance and upgrades, including focus on energy efficiency and electrification. Focus on housing in Environmental Justice Areas.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department; Office of Energy and Sustainable Development	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)
Policy EJ-9.2 Berkeley Rent Board Services. Explore opportunities to increase partnership with Berkeley Rent Board and promote their programs to new and existing property owners and renters.			
Policy EJ-9.3 Address Gentrification and Displacement. Address gentrification by preventing and mitigating displacement pressures and using local histories and cultural legacies to inform land use, housing, and public investment decisions.			
Program EJ-9.3-A Work with community-based organizations, cultural leaders, and historians to formally designate cultural districts and community landmarks that honor Environmental Justice Communities and to (re)name public spaces and streets to reflect cultural heritage.	Planning and Development Department, Land Use Planning Division	Long-term	
Program EJ-9.3-B Strengthen the City's policies to promote community stability and mitigate displacement, including supporting opportunities for residents to remain in or return to their communities. Pair these efforts with proactive outreach and equitable access to housing programs for households in Environmental Justice Areas and neighborhoods experiencing market pressure.	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Housing & Community Services Division	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(C)
Policy EJ-9.4 Housing with Wraparound Services. Facilitate the development of housing projects that provide mental health, employment, and supportive services to residents.			
Program EJ-9.4-A Evaluate the successes and challenges of the Insight Housing Hope Center to inform development of a community-centered Safe Housing and Services Hub that co-locates services to support residents. Work with County partners to align funding, contracting, and service delivery frameworks with this model, consistent with Federal Coordinated Entry requirements, and pursue state and federal funding sources (e.g., No Place Like Home, CalAIM).	Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, Housing & Community Services Division	Long-term	Gov. Code §65302(h)(1)(A)

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City Council Study Session

Emeryville Medical Center

July 21, 2026

Sutter Health

Agenda

- **Project Overview**
- **Community & City meetings Attended**
- **Design Studies**



Project Overview

Building on Sutter Health's 120-year legacy of caring for Northern Californians, we are proposing a **more than $1 billion investment** to expand access to **comprehensive, high-quality care** across the greater East Bay.

The project will replace the aging hospital at the Alta Bates Ashby campus, which does not meet California's 2030 seismic safety requirements, with a **modern, seismically safe hospital** and regional outpatient care complex in Emeryville.

Located along the I-880 corridor, the campus will bring essential healthcare services closer to communities throughout the East Bay, including Emeryville, Oakland and Berkeley.

The investment is also expected to create nearly **3,000** permanent jobs and approximately **500** construction jobs annually, reaching up to **700** jobs during peak construction.

A Modern Hospital Designed for the East Bay

The proposed hospital is currently planned as a 15-story, approximately 785,000-square-foot facility, plus mechanical space and a rooftop helipad. Plans currently include:

- Capacity for up to 325 beds
- Labor and delivery suites and a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Medical-surgical, postpartum and intensive care rooms
- A comprehensive emergency department
- Modern operating rooms and advanced procedural spaces
- A rooftop helipad supporting timely access to emergency care
- Cutting-edge medical technology and coordinated systems that support seamless patient care
- An all-electric, environmentally responsible design with calm and welcoming healing spaces

The project remains in the early planning stages. Sutter will continue working through the City of Emeryville's public process and listen to residents, community organizations and neighboring communities as the plans develop.

Community & City Meetings Attended

1. **Community Meeting** – May 18, 2026
2. **Bicycle / Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)** – Jun 01, 2026
3. **Commission on Aging** – Jun 10, 2026
4. **Parks and Recreation** – Jun 17, 2026
5. **Planning Commission Study Session** – Jun 25, 2026

Design Studies

1. Open Space and Public Amenities

- Seek more opportunities to enhance public experience

2. Traffic Diverter

- Traffic concerns and public safety

The team has received a broad range of feedback and is still reviewing them.

Please note that this is not a comprehensive summary, but our first step in addressing the top key concerns raised by the community.

Open Space & Public Amenities

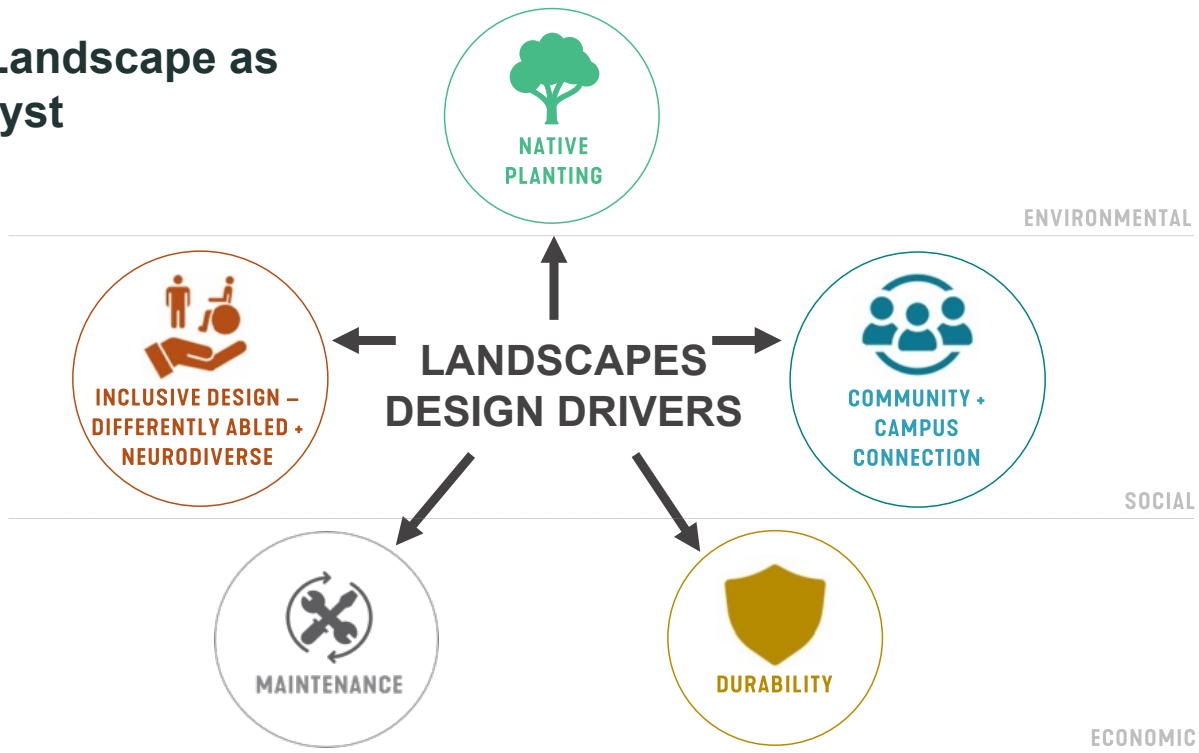
Design Studies

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Open Space and Public Amenities

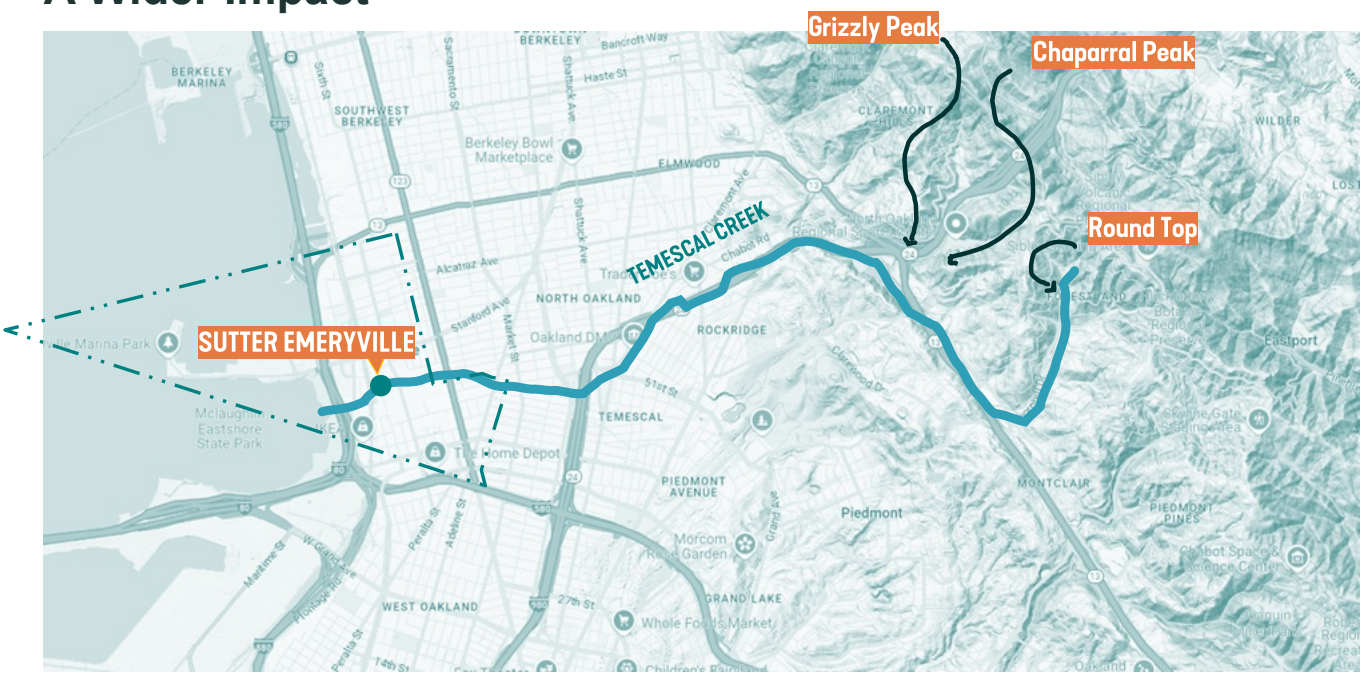
- Seek more opportunities to enhance public experience
- Create a new park and bike plaza at the PDU building site
- Integrate the shuttle stop location at Hollis Green Park
- Explore opportunities for saving or relocating existing trees

The Landscape as Catalyst

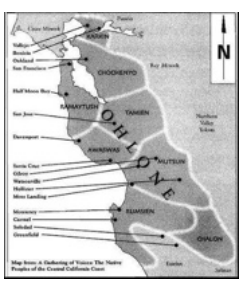


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A Wider Impact



The City Of Emeryville – A Place of Confluence & Discovery









The Healing Landscape of Emeryville

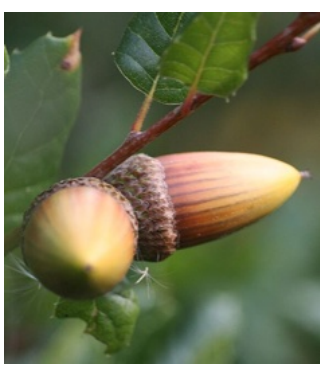


For more than 10,000 years people have gathered, traveled, worked, learned, and **healed on this land**.

From Ohlone stewardship of the Bay shoreline and marshes, to Rancho San Antonio, to Emeryville's emergence as a center of innovation and healthcare, **this landscape has continually supported life, resilience, and community.**

The Sutter Health Campus embraces these layers of history and ecology to create a **contemporary healing environment rooted in place.**

History Becomes Landscape



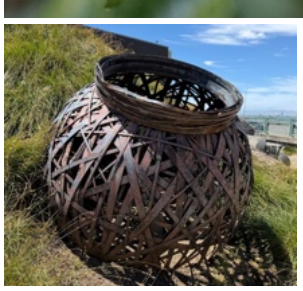


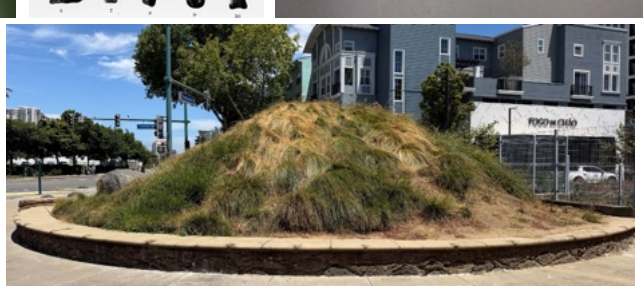


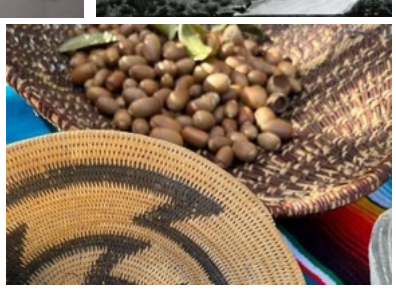




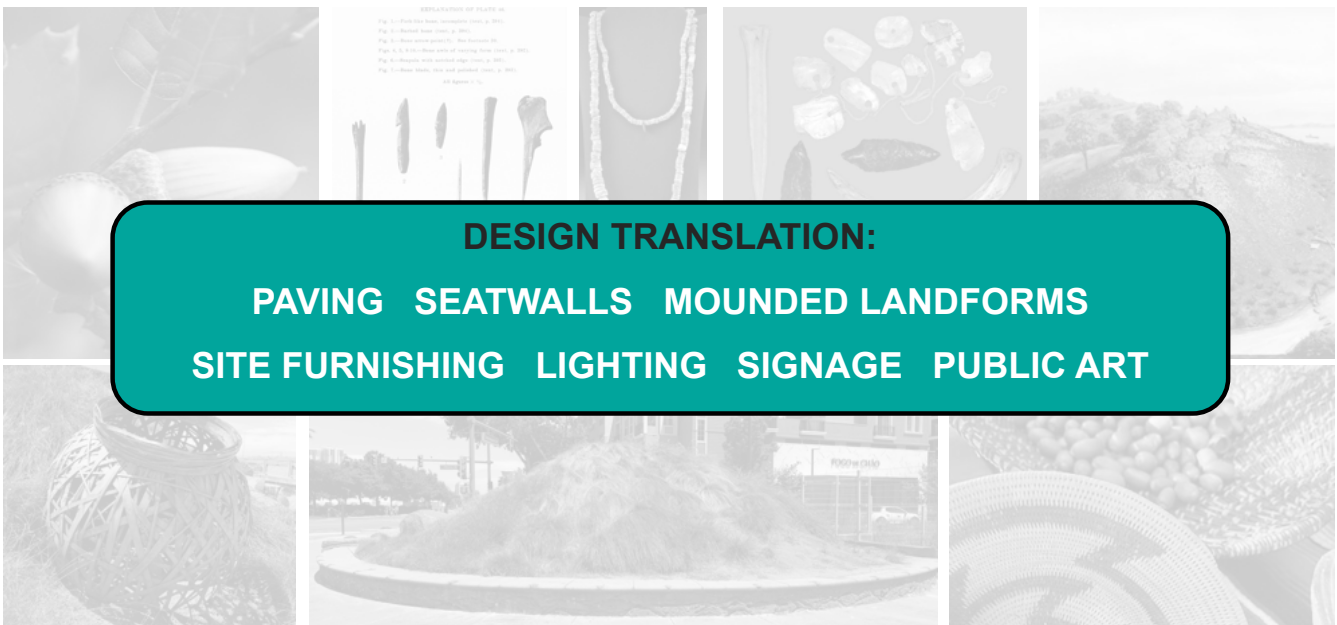








History Becomes Landscape



DESIGN TRANSLATION:

PAVING SEATWALLS MOUNDED LANDFORMS

SITE FURNISHING LIGHTING SIGNAGE PUBLIC ART

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The Healing Landscape Toolkit

Oak Groves



Shade
Gathering
Community

Marsh Gardens



Water
Habitat
Pollinators

Healing Meadows



Reflection
Wellness
Restoration

Cultural Commons



Art
Story Telling
Discovery

Sutter Health

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Confluence: Where Place, People, and Healing Meet



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Confluence: Where Place, People, and Healing Meet





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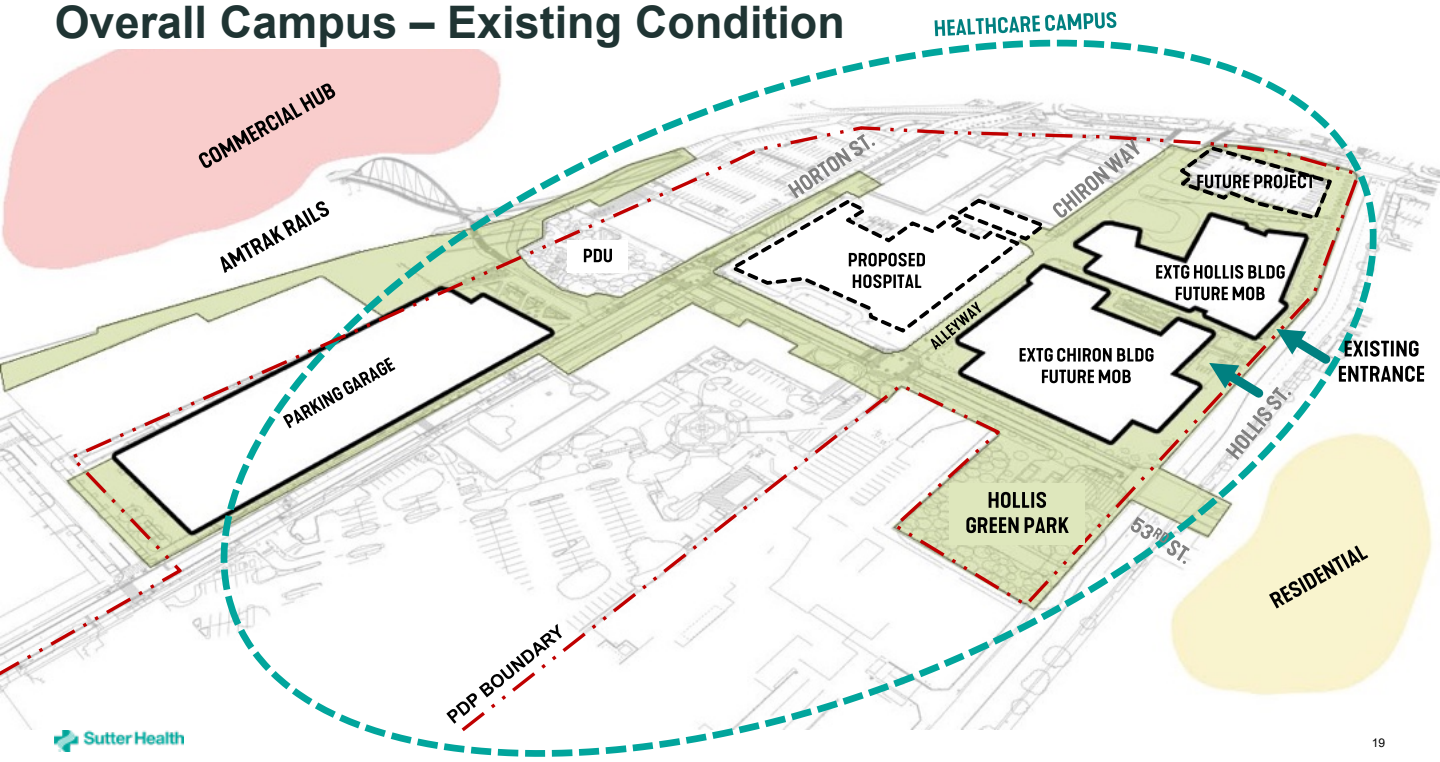
Confluence: Where Place, People, and Healing Meet



Site Context



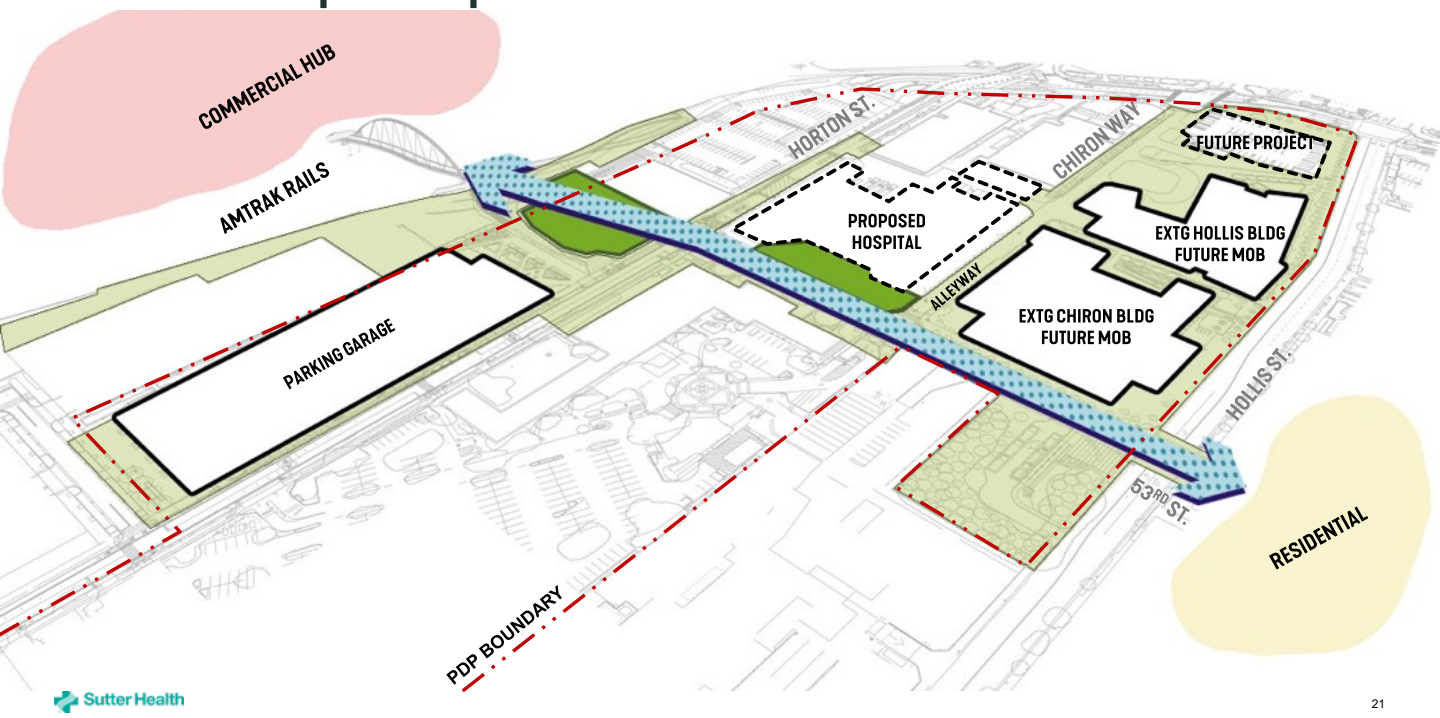
Overall Campus – Existing Condition



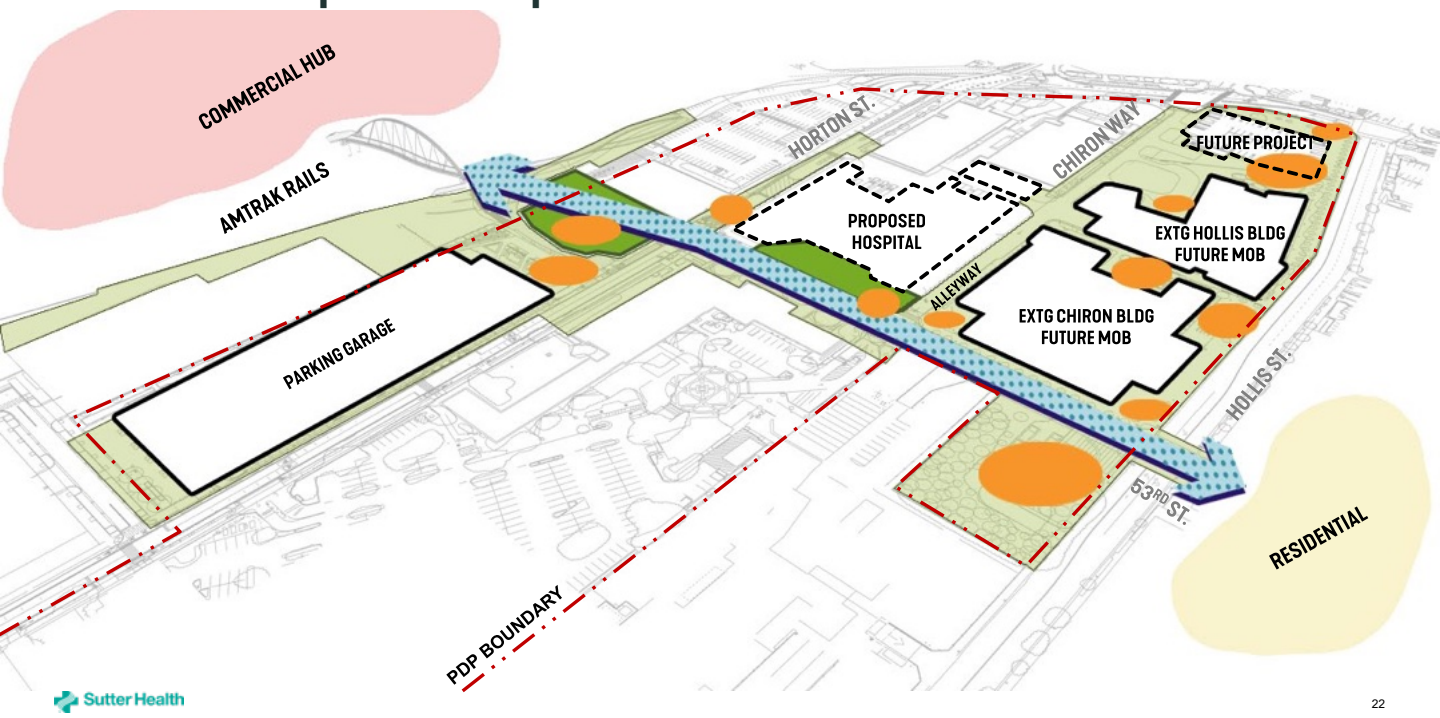
Overall Campus – New Open Space



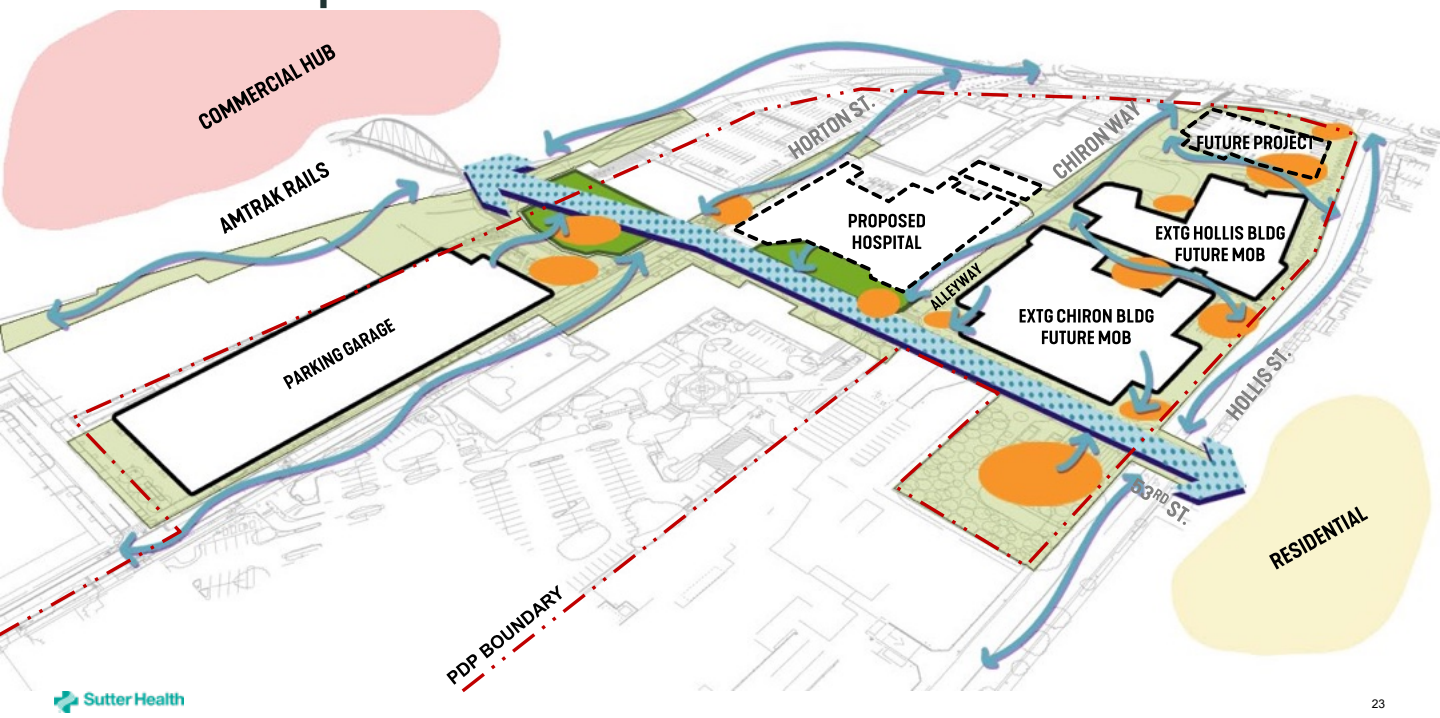
Overall Campus - Spine



Overall Campus – People Places

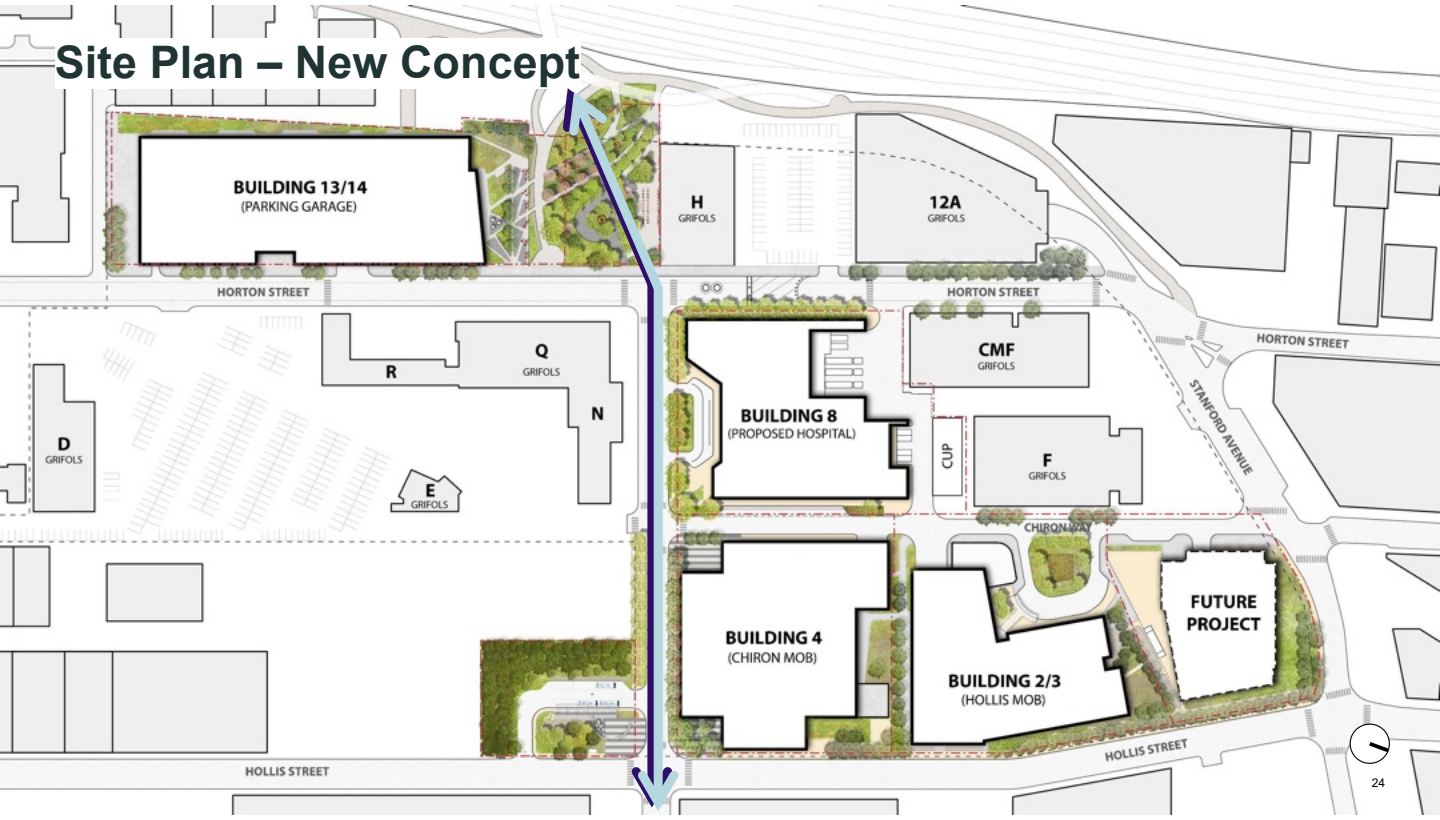


Overall Campus – Tributaries

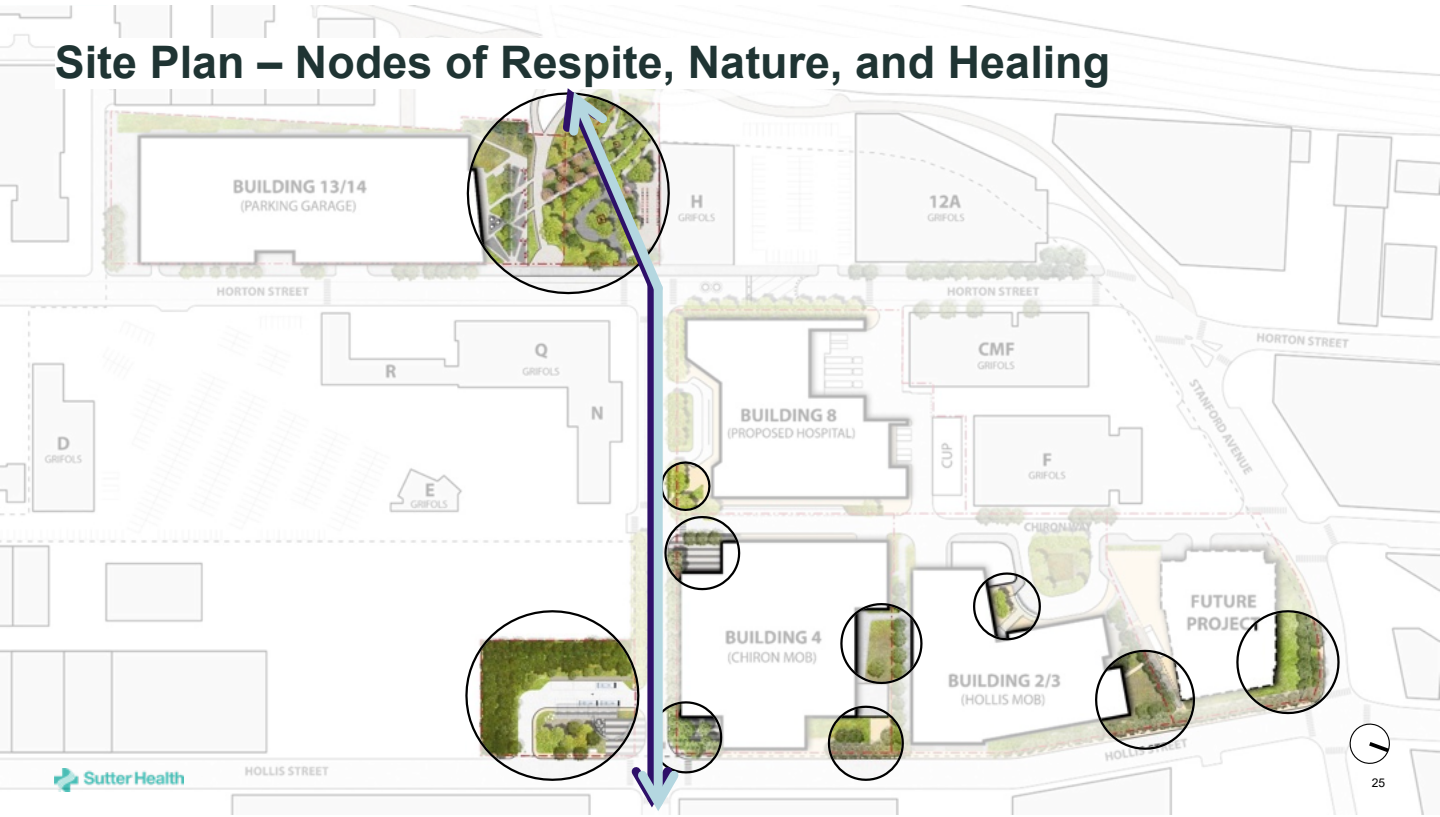


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Site Plan – New Concept



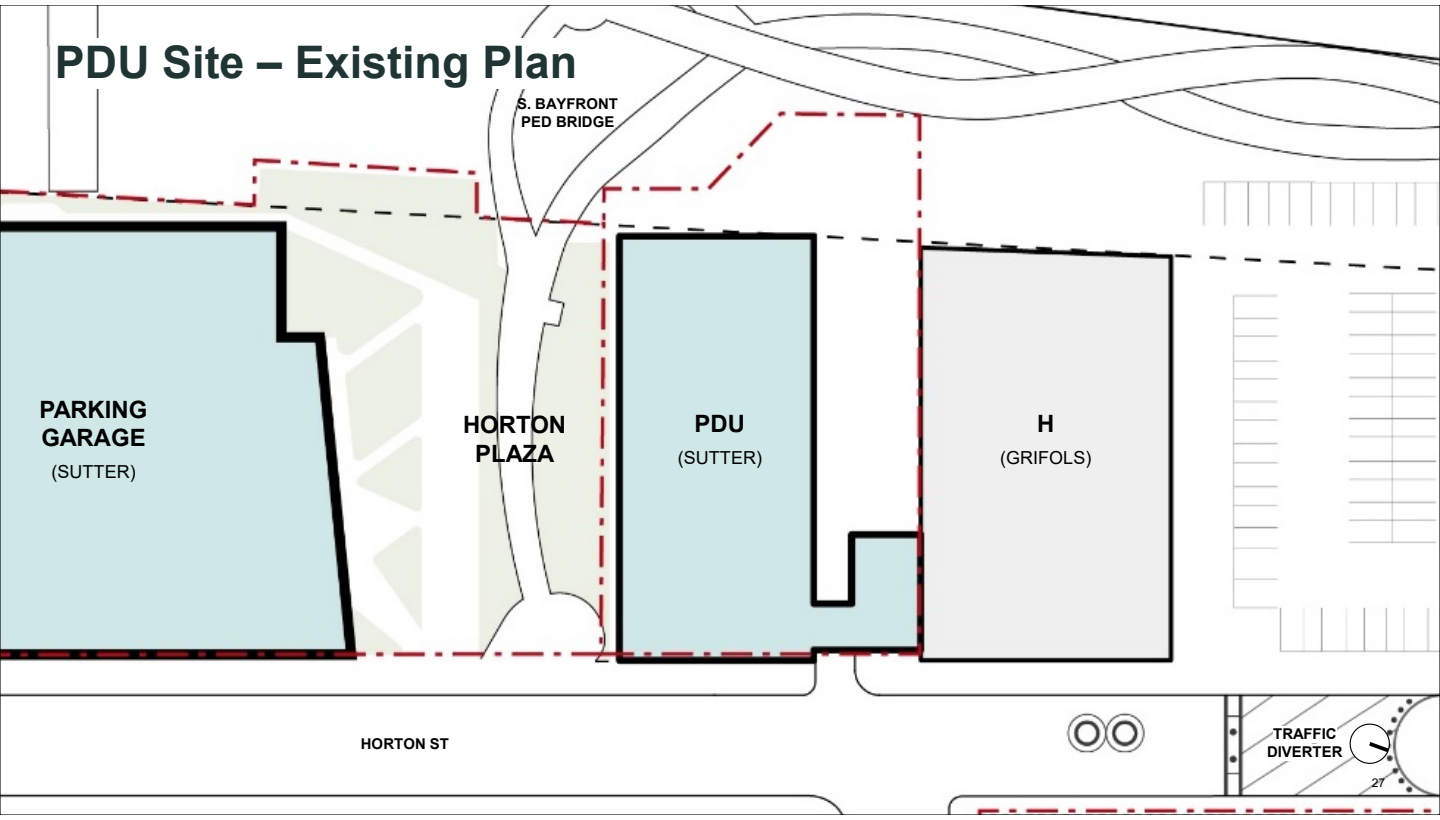
Site Plan – Nodes of Respite, Nature, and Healing



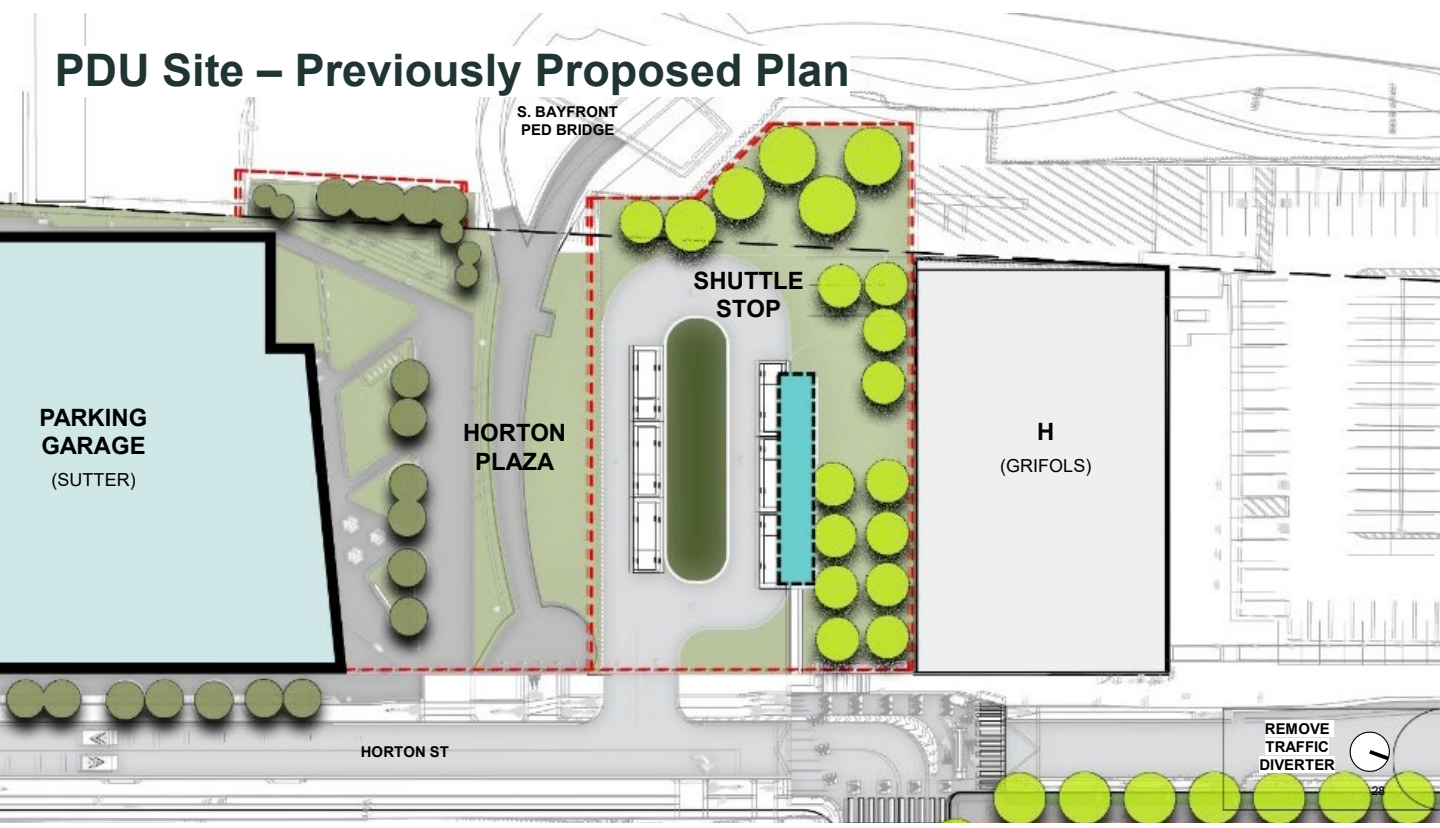
PDU Site

Demolish the existing PDU building and enhance Horton Plaza by providing more open space, respite, and bicycle plaza

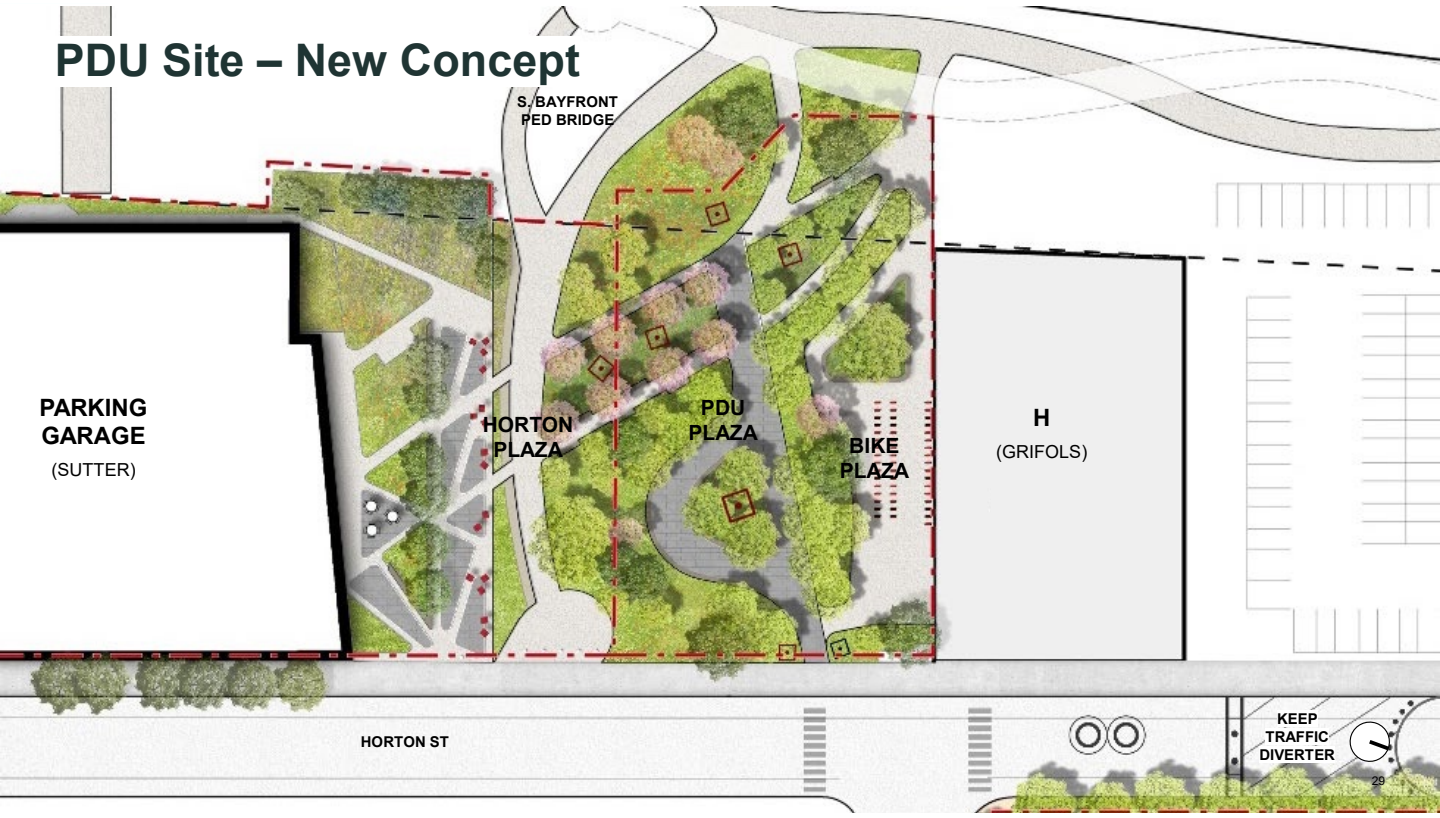
PDU Site – Existing Plan



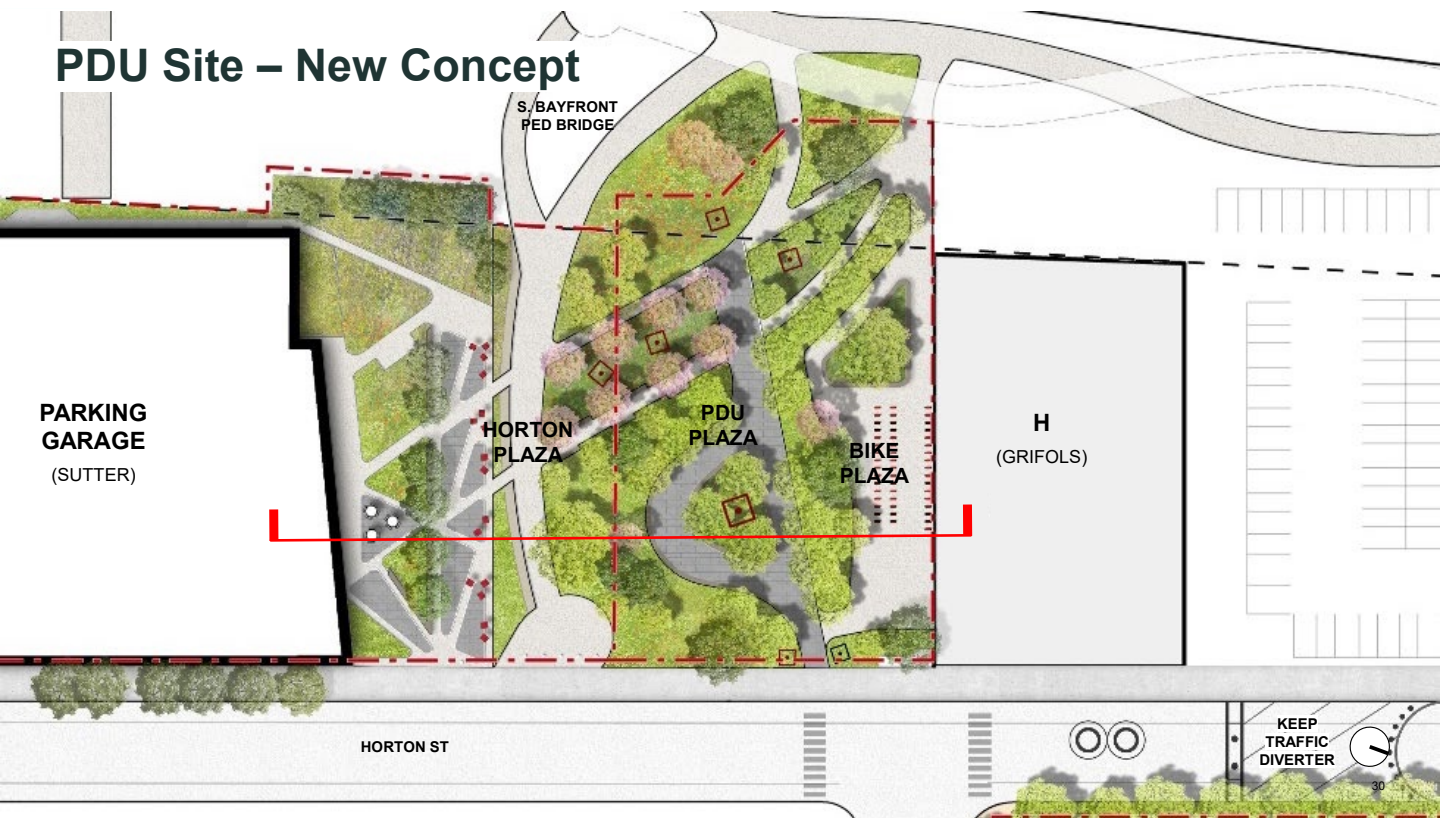
PDU Site – Previously Proposed Plan



PDU Site – New Concept

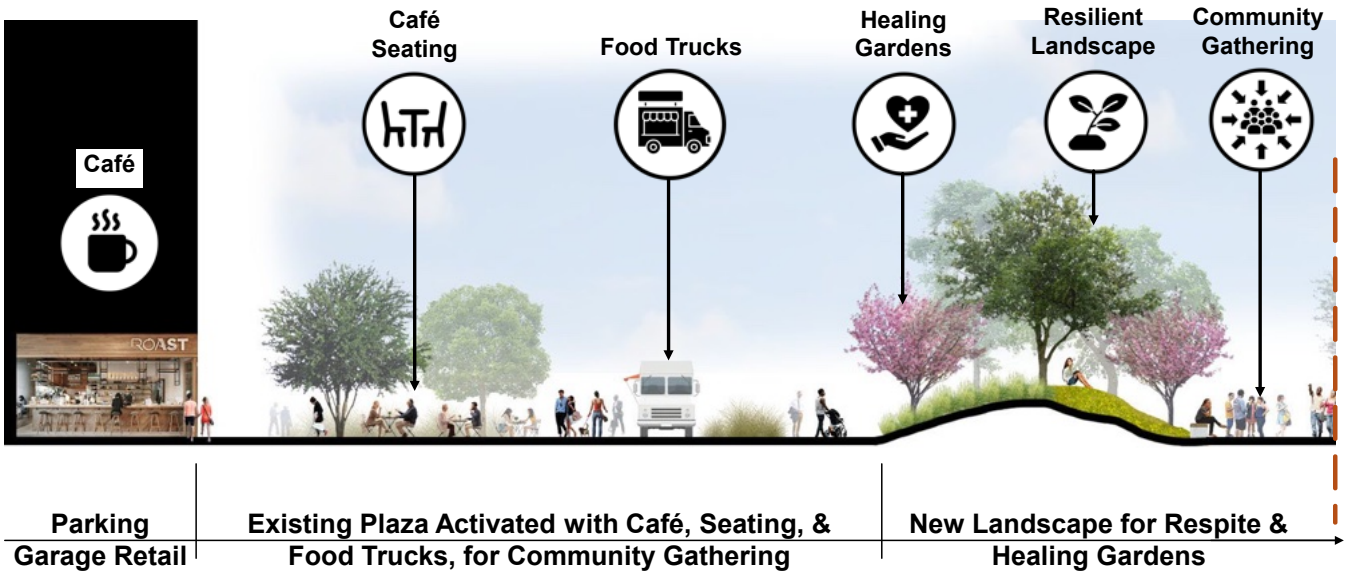


PDU Site – New Concept



PDU Site – Section (Retail – PDU Plaza)

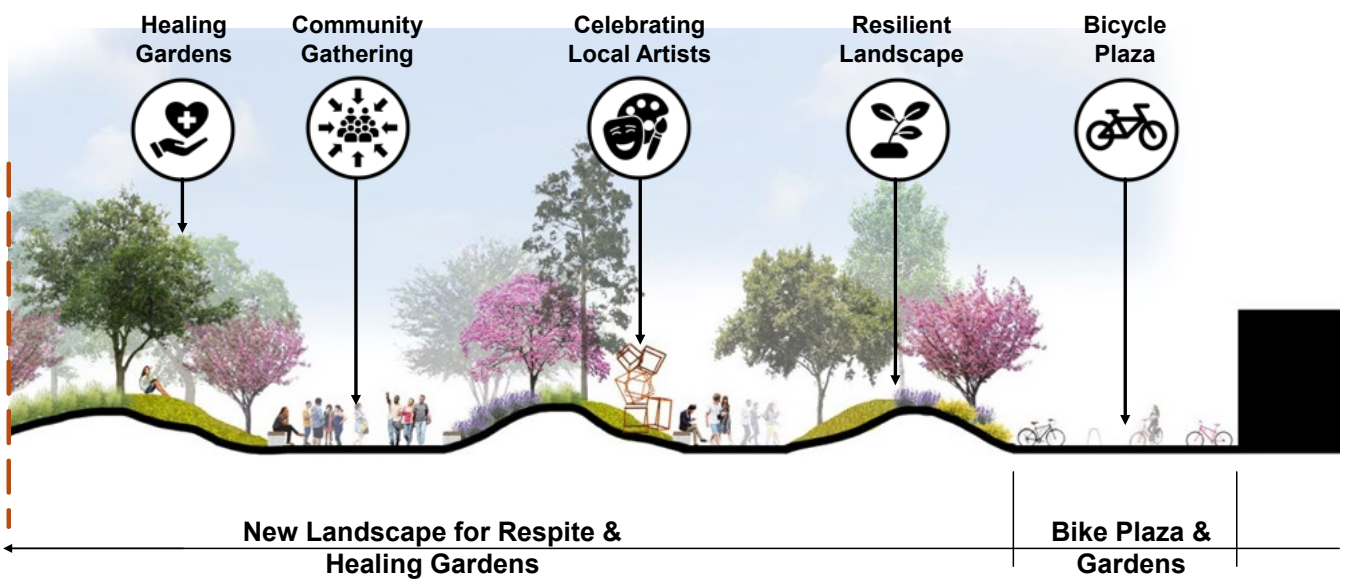




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PDU Site – Section (Retail – PDU Plaza)





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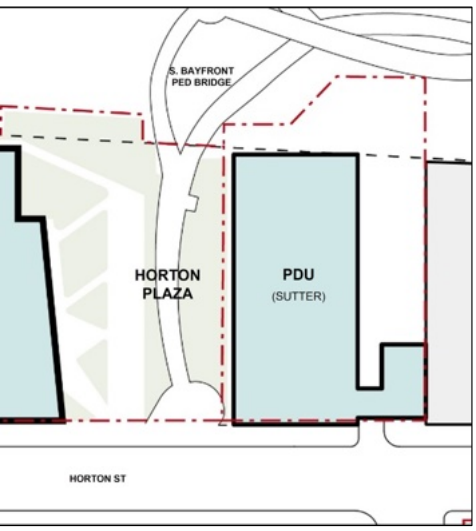


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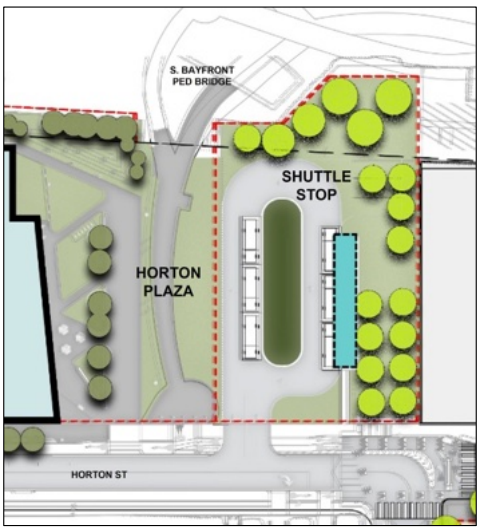


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PDU Site - Comparison



Existing Plan



Previously Proposed Plan



New Concept

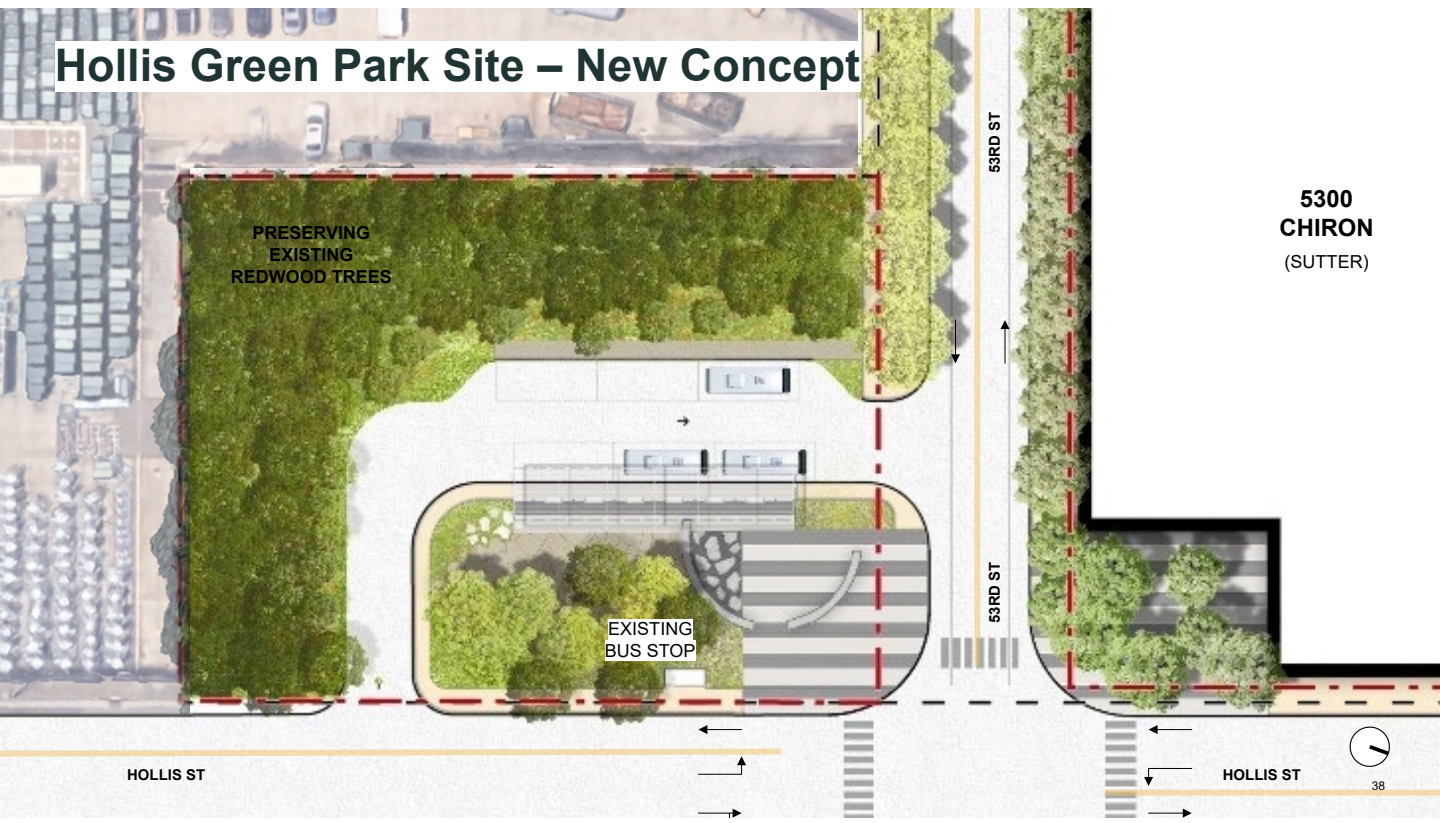
Hollis Green Park Site

Integrating the shuttle stop at the site while preserving the existing redwood trees

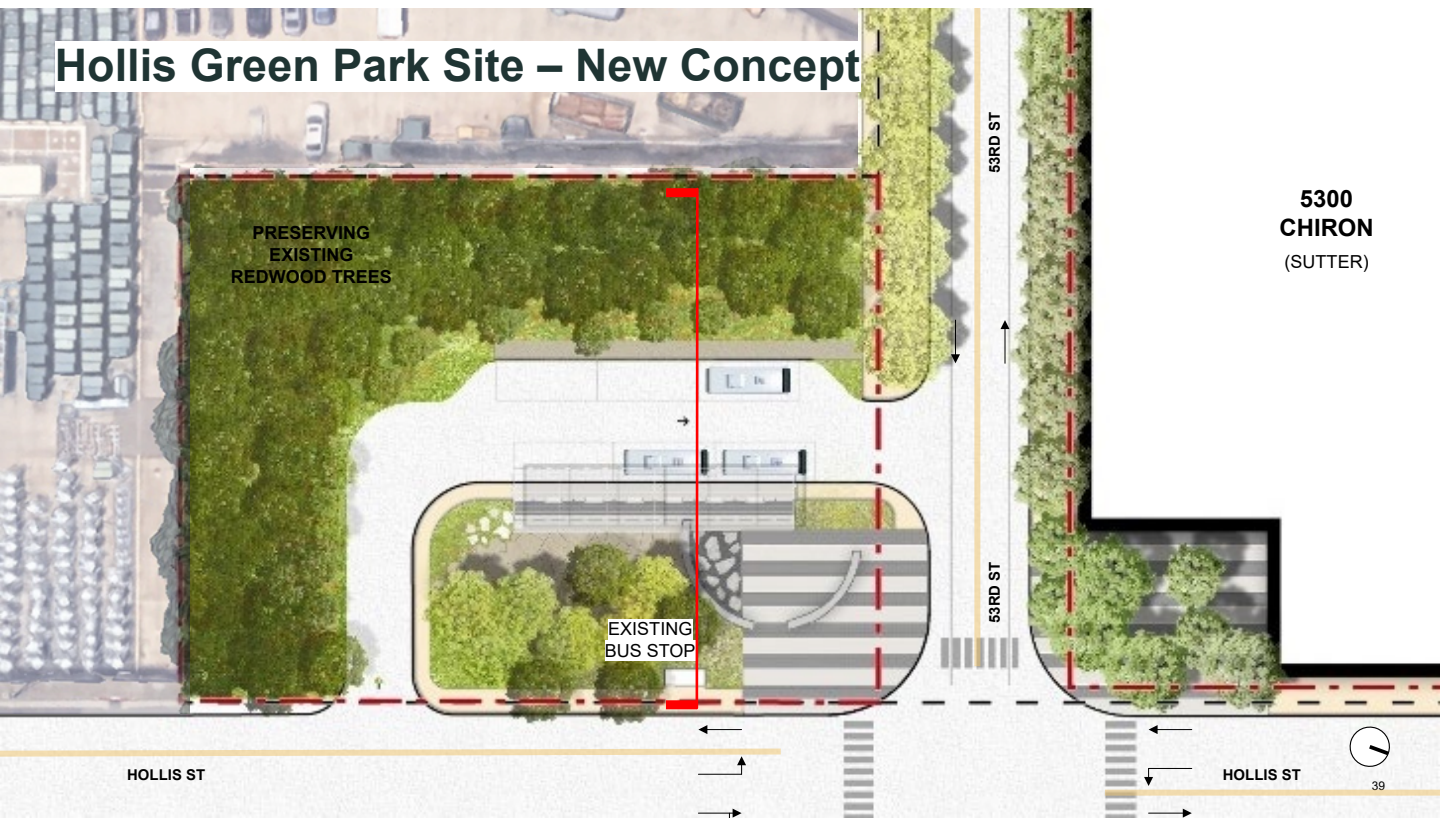
Hollis Green Park Site – Existing Plan



Hollis Green Park Site – New Concept

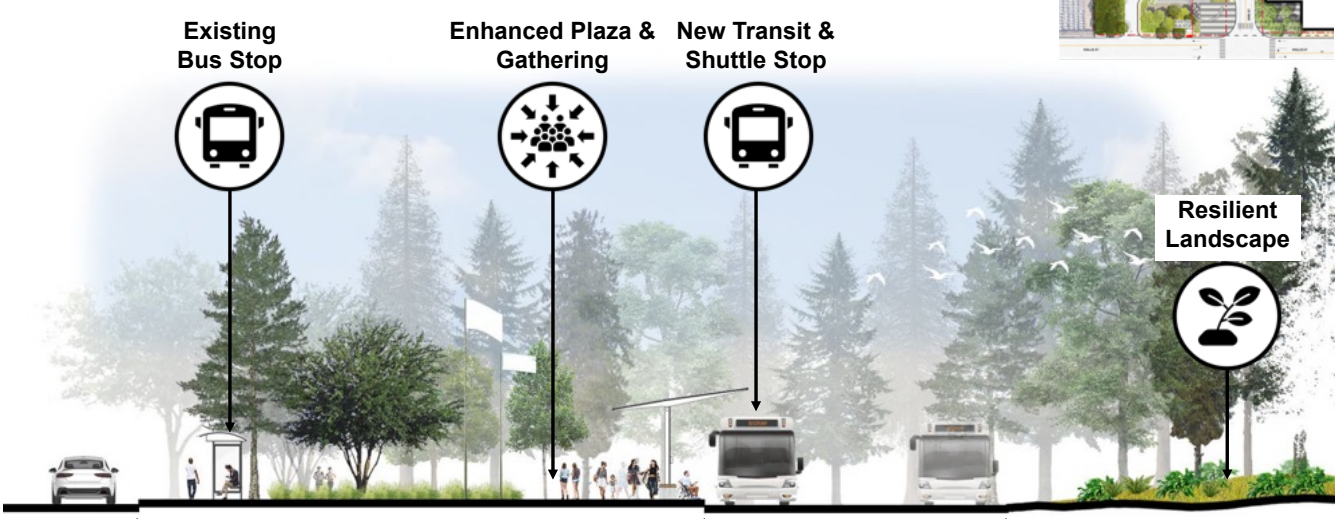


Hollis Green Park Site – New Concept



Hollis Green Park Site – Section





Hollis Street	Existing Streetscape, Enhanced Plaza, & Community Gathering	New Transit Plaza and Shuttle Stop	Preserve Existing Landscape

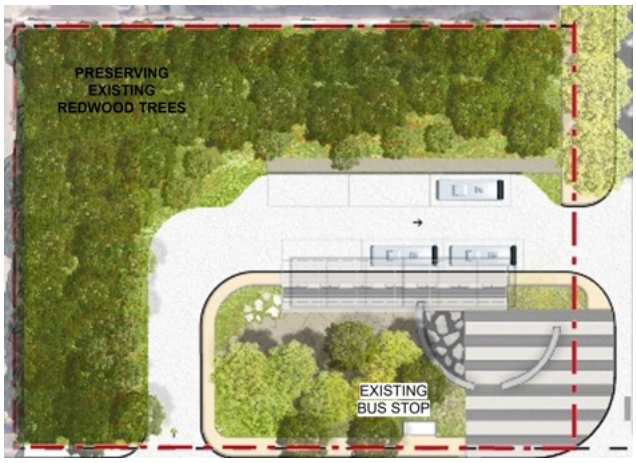
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Hollis Green Park Site - Comparison



Existing Plan



New Concept

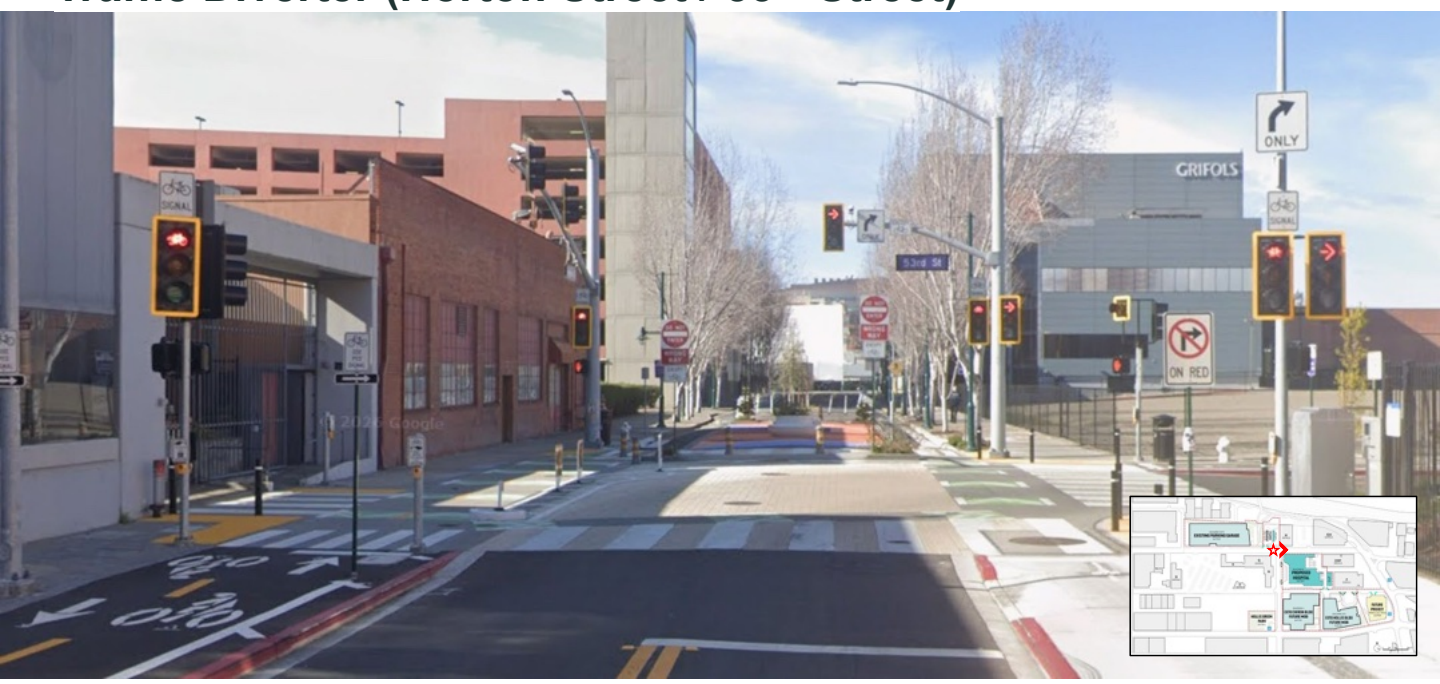
Traffic Diverter

Design Studies

Reviewing the possibility of keeping the traffic diverter

- How it will impact traffic conditions
- Explore potential alternatives such as relocating the diverter

Traffic Diverter (Horton Street / 53rd Street)



Thank You

Send your questions to
emeryvilleinfo@sutterhealth.org

Sutter Health

Att-09

CHC Agenda Item: BEAR 2.0 Further Discussion and Public Health Action Agenda

To	City of Berkeley Community Health Commission
Meeting date	October 22, 2026
Submitted by	Vice Chair Taj Herzer-Baptiste
Subject	BEAR 2.0: Request for Further Discussion and Commission Action on a Public Health Action Agenda for a Successor Program
Item type	Discussion and possible action
Related actions	CHC BEAR 2.0 discussion item (April 23, 2026; no action taken); DFSC BEAR Ad Hoc Committee (established March 25, 2026; report due December 2, 2026)

Recommended Action

That the Commission continue its April 23, 2026 discussion of BEAR 2.0 and take action on it: (1) request that HHCS and the Berkeley Fire Department report to the Commission at the December 3, 2026 meeting on the current state of BEAR planning, funding and data; (2) adopt a conditions-for-viability framework as the Commission's lens for evaluating any successor program; and (3) discuss the public health action items in this report and select those it wishes to advance as formal recommendations to Council.

The Commission heard BEAR 2.0 as a discussion item on April 23, 2026. No action was taken and no recommendation went to Council. This item asks the Commission to move from discussion to action. It does not authorize expenditures and requests no new General Fund positions.

Background and Status

BEAR (Berkeley Emergency Alternative Response) began as a Fire Department pilot in September 2024. Deputy Fire Chief Keith May has reported verbally that it started as a six-month pilot and was extended another six months through a reorganization of internal funds; the exact term and funding source are to be confirmed with staff (item 3). It is a low-acuity medical alternative response unit, non-transport, staffed by a Senior Paramedic and Physician Associate. BEAR is not a behavioral health program, and it is currently paused due to funding, not discontinued.

Pilot data compiled for City stakeholders (Attachment 2) show that Medicare and Medi-Cal covered most BEAR patients, and that the unit linked residents to primary care, benefits and social services they were not otherwise reaching.

Date	Action
December 2, 2026	DFSC BEAR Ad Hoc Committee report and Council recommendation due
July 23, 2026	CHC moderated discussion with Amy Barden, Chief of Seattle's CARE Department, on alternative response and dispatch
June 24, 2026	DFSC continued the BEAR Ad Hoc Committee with a report due December 2
April 23, 2026	CHC heard BEAR 2.0 as a discussion item; no action taken
March 25, 2026	DFSC formed an ad hoc committee to evaluate reviving BEAR
March 2025	Initial six-month term ends; extended six months with reorganized internal funds, per Deputy Chief May (dates to confirm)
September 2024	BEAR pilot launched

The system context has tightened since April. The FY 2027–28 Budget Balancing Plan eliminated the remaining General Fund Mobile Crisis Team positions. Specialized Care Unit functions moved to Alameda County. The planned relocation of Alta Bates inpatient

services to Emeryville will lengthen ambulance transport and out-of-service times. Medical calls remain the majority of Fire Department volume: the August 5 DFSC packet reported 725 medical incidents in June 2026, 58.5% of calls.

Why This Belongs at the Community Health Commission

A successor to BEAR is a population health program as much as an emergency response one. The DFSC ad hoc is evaluating BEAR's operational and fiscal fit within the Fire Department; the CHC's distinct role is to ask who the program should serve, what health outcomes it should move, and how it connects to the City's public health system.

Three features make that role concrete:

- **The Berkeley Wellness Blueprint CHIP.** The adopted Community Health Improvement Plan documents a life-expectancy gap of up to 13 years across Berkeley neighborhoods. A field-based unit that reaches older, Medi-Cal and Medicare residents at home is one of the few tools that can act on that gap directly.
- **Public Health Officer oversight.** The City's Public Health Officer-Director also serves as a medical director, which creates a natural pathway for clinical governance housed in public health rather than only in emergency operations.
- **Prevention, not only diversion.** A non-transport unit spending time in a resident's home can screen, follow up, and refer in ways a load-and-go ambulance cannot. That value holds even where 911 diversion numbers are modest.

The items below stay within CHC's lane: they concern Berkeley-operated services and request reports, data and design choices, not County eligibility administration or Fire Department operations.

Actionable Items for Discussion and Recommendation

Thirty items in nine groups, each written so the Commission can adopt it as a recommendation, refer it for a staff report, or set it aside. Items marked ★ are suggested for action on October 22; the rest are offered for discussion and future agendas.

A. Accountability and Status

1. ★ **Status report.** Request a written report from HHCS and BFD by December 3 on which of six core plan components already exist (service model, staffing and clinical governance, data and privacy plan, funding scenarios, evaluation design, community

engagement plan) and what completing the rest would require.

2. ★ **Named owner.** Request that the City Manager identify one accountable staff lead for BEAR 2.0 planning, so any Commission recommendation has a clear point of accountability.
3. ★ **Pilot term and funding history.** Deputy Fire Chief Keith May has reported verbally that BEAR began as a six-month pilot and was extended another six months through a reorganization of internal funds. Request that staff report back on the pilot's actual start, extension and pause dates; the source and amount of funds for each term; who approved the extension; and the status of the CARESTAR / California EMS Authority application. This history shapes how any future funding is approved or apportioned.
4. **Standing tracker.** Add BEAR 2.0 as a standing line in the Commission's Recommendation and Action Tracker, reviewed each quarter until a plan is delivered.

B. Population Health and Needs Assessment

5. ★ **Target population.** Request that HHCS and Public Health define BEAR 2.0's priority population using CHIP data: high 911 and ED utilizers, older adults living alone, and residents in neighborhoods with the widest life-expectancy gap.
6. **Disaggregated pilot data.** Request de-identified pilot outcomes broken out by age, payer, neighborhood and, where lawful, race and ethnicity, to test whether BEAR reached the residents the CHIP prioritizes.
7. **Focused needs assessment.** Recommend a short community needs assessment that extends the Wellness Blueprint with cohort-level data on repeat callers before any program design is finalized.
8. **CHIP indicator alignment.** Recommend that every BEAR 2.0 metric map to an existing CHIP objective, so the program reports into the City's adopted health framework.

C. Financing and Reimbursement

9. ★ **CalAIM Enhanced Care Management.** Request an assessment of whether a BEAR successor could qualify as, or partner with, an ECM provider under Medi-Cal managed care contracts with Alameda Alliance for Health and Anthem Blue Cross.
10. **Community Paramedicine / TAD pathway.** Request a summary of what the state CP and Triage to Alternate Destination authorization would require of Berkeley and the Alameda County EMS Agency.

11. **Hospital community benefit.** Recommend outreach to Sutter, Kaiser and UCSF community benefit offices, given the Alta Bates relocation's effect on Berkeley residents' access to care.
12. **Funding braid scenarios.** Request a budget showing pilot costs against non-General Fund sources only: grants, reimbursement, philanthropy and hospital partnerships.
13. **Cost-avoidance estimate.** Request a conservative estimate of avoided transports and ED visits, with measured outcomes and assumptions clearly separated.

D. Clinical Model and Governance

14. **Staffing model.** Discuss whether BEAR 2.0 should keep the pilot's Senior Paramedic and Physician Associate model, or adopt a hybrid with remote clinician consult, and request staff's view of each.
15. **Clinical governance in Public Health.** Recommend that protocols, QA and medical oversight be developed jointly with the Public Health Officer, not only within emergency operations.
16. **Scope with the LEMSA.** Request a summary of which interventions require Alameda County EMS Agency approval and the expected timeline.

E. Access and Intake Pathways

17. **Multiple on-ramps.** Recommend that BEAR 2.0 accept referrals from HHCS case managers, hospital discharge planners and community clinics, not only 911, so its reach does not depend on dispatch capacity.
18. **Non-emergency line.** Discuss a phone-triage line for low-acuity concerns that routes to BEAR without entering the 911 system.
19. **Dispatch readiness.** Request an update on Emergency Communications Center triage capability and staffing as it affects any 911 referral pathway.
20. **Southside pilot.** Refer the DFSC EMS Workgroup's Southside low-acuity / intoxication concept (Attachment 6) for CHC comment on its harm-reduction and student-health elements, in partnership with UC Berkeley's PartySafe@Cal and GASA.

F. Prevention Functions a Home-Based Unit Can Carry

21. **Post-discharge follow-up.** Recommend home visits within 72 hours of discharge for high-risk residents, with medication reconciliation.
22. **Falls prevention.** Recommend home-safety and fall-risk screening for older adults after a lift-assist or fall call.

23. **Elder mistreatment screening.** Request that staff review validated field screening tools such as DETECT, piloted in a Texas mobile integrated health program with Adult Protective Services.
24. **Overdose follow-up.** Recommend post-overdose outreach with naloxone distribution and warm handoff to treatment.
25. **Extreme heat and air quality.** Recommend that BEAR 2.0 be written into heat and smoke event plans for wellness checks on medically vulnerable residents.
26. **Coverage transitions.** Recommend that field staff carry referral pathways for residents at risk of losing Medi-Cal coverage when work requirements take effect December 31, 2026.

G. Equity and Community Accountability

27. **Service-user voice.** Recommend a standing feedback mechanism with former BEAR patients and community-based partners serving unhoused, disabled and limited-English residents.
28. **Language access.** Recommend Spanish-language capacity and interpretation as a design requirement, not an add-on.

H. Data, Privacy and Evaluation

29. **Data-sharing and consent.** Request a HIPAA-compliant data-sharing framework between BFD, HHCS and partner providers, with defined consent workflows and minimum necessary data elements.
30. **Public reporting.** Recommend aggregated quarterly public reports on calls served, dispositions, referrals completed and repeat-use trends.

I. Coordination

- ★ **DFSC liaison.** Designate a CHC liaison to the DFSC BEAR Ad Hoc Committee ahead of its December 2 report, so both commissions' recommendations reach Council aligned.
- **Council liaison.** Request that the Chair and Commission Secretary invite Councilmember Humbert, the Council liaison to CHC, to the December 3 discussion of the staff report.
- **Cross-commission referral.** Share the action list with the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission and the Homeless Services Panel of Experts for comment on items 17, 24 and 27.

Conditions for Viability

The Commission proposes to evaluate any successor program against six conditions, asking "under what conditions is this viable" rather than "why not." Conditions are things the Commission and partners can help satisfy; a standing no gives them nothing to work on.

Condition	What it means for BEAR 2.0
Durable non-General Fund funding	Reimbursement, grants or partnerships cover operations, avoiding the soft-money pause of 2025
Workload-neutral staffing	No net new burden on front-line crews already past Citygate workload limits
Named administrative ownership	One department and one staff lead accountable for delivery
Mapped regulatory pathway	Alameda County EMS Agency and state CP/TAD requirements identified up front
Pilot with sunset	Time-limited pilot with defined evaluation and a decision point
Regional leverage	Partnerships with hospitals, County Health and UC Berkeley share cost and capacity

Proposed Motion and Timeline

Proposed motion: Move that the Community Health Commission:

1. Request that HHCS and the Berkeley Fire Department present a written report on the current state of BEAR planning, funding and data at the December 3, 2026 meeting, addressing items 1–3 and 5 of this report;
2. Request that the City Manager identify an accountable staff lead for BEAR 2.0 planning;
3. Request that HHCS assess a CalAIM Enhanced Care Management pathway for a successor program (item 9);
4. Adopt the six conditions for viability as the Commission's framework for evaluating any successor program;
5. Designate a Commission liaison to the DFSC BEAR Ad Hoc Committee; and

6. Calendar the remaining action items for discussion at future meetings, beginning December 3.

Date	Milestone
October 22, 2026	CHC adopts motion; liaison designated
December 2, 2026	DFSC BEAR Ad Hoc report to Commission
December 3, 2026	HHCS / BFD report to CHC; Council liaison invited
Early 2027	CHC selects action items to forward to Council, timed to FY 2028 budget development

Attachments

Core attachments

1. CHC Discussion Item: BEAR 2.0 Joint HHCS–BFD Project (April 23, 2026)
2. Understanding the BEAR Unit's Impact: A Data-Driven Analysis
3. Addendum: Comparative Model Evidence — Seattle Fire Department Health One
4. BFD Demand-Reduction Options Addendum
5. BEAR Dispatch Implementation: Integrated Public Safety Response System Narrative
6. DFSC EMS Workgroup Item: Southside Low-Acuity / ETOH Tiered Response Pilot
7. DFSC Agenda Item: Standing EMS Workgroup
8. Grant Application to CA EMSA and CARESTAR: Berkeley MIH-CP

Core attachments from prior drafting sessions (Word files)

9. Draft CHC to Council Memo: BEAR 2.0, Enhanced Care Management and Community Needs Assessment (April 2026)
10. DFSC to Council Memo: BEAR Program Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee, revised with BFD data requests (April 2026)
11. Conditions for Viability Framework: one-pager with agenda and conversation variants (June 2026)

Supplemental: earlier concept drafts (2025)

12. Proposal for Increased Funding for the BFD BEAR Unit (DFSC, August 2025)
13. Proposal: Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) Pilot

14. Fire–Public Health MIH Memo
15. Strategic Coordination Between BLS Units and BEAR Units
16. Draft Proposal for EMS and BEAR Co-Deployment
17. DFSC Memo: BFD Co-Deployment Model
18. Big Picture MIH Tasks Overview

Note: the 2025 drafts describe a Nurse Practitioner staffing model; the pilot was staffed by a Senior Paramedic and Physician Associate.