



**BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, May 16, 2022  
10:30 AM**

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Rashi Kesarwani, Ben Bartlett, and Susan Wengraf  
Alternate: Councilmember Terry Taplin

**PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e) and the state declared emergency, this meeting of the City Council Public Safety Committee will be conducted exclusively through teleconference and Zoom videoconference. The COVID-19 state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and presents imminent risks to the health of attendees. Therefore, no physical meeting location will be available.

To access the meeting remotely using the internet: Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device: Use URL - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85780967900>. If you do not wish for your name to appear on the screen, then use the drop down menu and click on "rename" to rename yourself to be anonymous. To request to speak, use the "raise hand" icon on the screen.

To join by phone: Dial **1-669-900-9128** or **1-877-853-5257 (Toll Free)** and Enter Meeting ID: **857 8096 7900**. If you wish to comment during the public comment portion of the agenda, press \*9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair.

Written communications submitted by mail or e-mail to the Public Safety Policy Committee by 5:00 p.m. the Friday before the Committee meeting will be distributed to the members of the Committee in advance of the meeting and retained as part of the official record.

# AGENDA

## Roll Call

## Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

## Minutes for Approval

*Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.*

### 1. Minutes - April 18, 2022

## Committee Action Items

*The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. The Chair will determine the number of persons interested in speaking on each item. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak for two minutes. If there are more than ten persons interested in speaking, the Chair may limit the public comment for all speakers to one minute per speaker. Speakers are permitted to yield their time to one other speaker, however no one speaker shall have more than four minutes.*

*Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Committee may continue an item to a future committee meeting, or refer the item to the City Council.*

### 2. Parking Enforcement of Existing Parking Code in Fire Zones 2 & 3

**From: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission**

**Referred: February 22, 2022**

**Due: July 12, 2022**

**Recommendation:** The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) recommends that Council direct the Berkeley Police Department to enforce existing Berkeley Municipal Code in all Fire Zones.

**Financial Implications:** See report

Contact: Keith May, Commission Secretary, (510) 981-3473

## Unscheduled Items

*These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Committee may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Committee meeting.*

3. **Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement**  
**From: Councilmember Harrison (Author), Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor)**  
**Referred: June 14, 2021**  
**Due: September 30, 2022**  
**Recommendation:** 1. Adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement.  
2. Refer to the City Manager to report to Council within six months with anonymized data and information regarding discriminatory reports to law enforcement.  
**Financial Implications:** Staff time  
Contact: Kate Harrison, Councilmember, District 4, (510) 981-7140

## Items for Future Agendas

- Discussion of items to be added to future agendas

## Adjournment

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*Written communications addressed to the Public Safety Committee and submitted to the City Clerk Department will be distributed to the Committee prior to the meeting.*

*This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Members of the City Council who are not members of the standing committee may attend a standing committee meeting even if it results in a quorum being present, provided that the non-members only act as observers and do not participate in the meeting. If only one member of the Council who is not a member of the committee is present for the meeting, the member may participate in the meeting because less than a quorum of the full Council is present. Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Mark Numainville, City Clerk, (510) 981-6900.*



### COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION:

To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at (510) 981-6418 (V) or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date.

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I hereby certify that the agenda for this meeting of the Standing Committee of the Berkeley City Council 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 May 12, 2022.



Mark Numainville, City Clerk

## Communications

*Communications submitted to City Council Policy Committees are on file in the City Clerk Department at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley, CA, and are available upon request by contacting the City Clerk Department at (510) 981-6908 or [policycommittee@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:policycommittee@cityofberkeley.info).*



**BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, April 18, 2022  
10:30 AM**

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Terry Taplin, Susan Wengraf, and Rashi Kesarwani  
Alternate: Councilmember Sophie Hahn

**PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e) and the state declared emergency, this meeting of the City Council Public Safety Committee will be conducted exclusively through teleconference and Zoom videoconference. The COVID-19 state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and presents imminent risks to the health of attendees. Therefore, no physical meeting location will be available.

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Written communications submitted by mail or e-mail to the Public Safety Policy Committee by 5:00 p.m. the Friday before the Committee meeting will be distributed to the members of the Committee in advance of the meeting and retained as part of the official record.

## MINUTES

**Roll Call:** 10:32 a.m.

**Present:** Taplin, Wengraf, Kesarwani

### **Committee Meeting Schedule**

**Action:** M/S/C (Wengraf/Kesarwani) to move the regular scheduled meetings to the third Monday of each month.

**Vote:** All Ayes

**Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters:** 3 Speakers

### **Minutes for Approval**

*Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.*

1. **Minutes - March 7, 2022**

**Action:** M/S/C (Wengraf/Taplin) to approve the March 7, 2022 minutes as presented.

**Vote:** All Ayes

### **Committee Action Items**

*The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. The Chair will determine the number of persons interested in speaking on each item. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak for two minutes. If there are more than ten persons interested in speaking, the Chair may limit the public comment for all speakers to one minute per speaker. Speakers are permitted to yield their time to one other speaker, however no one speaker shall have more than four minutes.*

*Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Committee may continue an item to a future committee meeting, or refer the item to the City Council.*

## Committee Action Items

- 2. Revisions to Section 311.6 Warrantless Searches of Individuals on Supervised Release Search Conditions of the Berkeley Police Department Law Enforcement Services Manual**  
**From: Councilmember Droste (Author), Councilmember Taplin (Co-Sponsor)**  
**Referred: March 7, 2022**  
**Due: September 12, 2022**  
**Recommendation:** Revise Section 311.6 Warrantless Searches of Individuals on Supervised Release Search Conditions of the Berkeley Police Department (BPD) Law Enforcement Services Manual to enable officers of the Berkeley Police Department to conduct detentions and warrantless searches individuals on parole/probation consistent with and supportive of the provisions in the probationer's/parolee's release conditions.  
**Financial Implications:** None  
Contact: Lori Droste, Councilmember, District 8, (510) 981-7180  
**Action:** 5 speakers. Discussion held. M/S/C (Taplin/Wengraf) to send the item with a qualified positive recommendation, as revised by the committee and subject to legal review. Section 311.6 was revised to read:  
In accordance with California law, individuals on probation, parole, Post Release Community Supervision, or other supervised release status may be subject to warrantless search as a condition of their probation. Officers shall only conduct probation or parole searches to further a legitimate law enforcement or rehabilitative purpose. Searches shall not be conducted in an arbitrary, capricious, or harassing fashion. In the conduct of all such detentions and searches, officers shall consciously avoid the application of bias, shall not use such detentions or searches as a means to harass or annoy, and shall not conduct such detentions and searches in a manner that targets or is discriminatory toward any protected class.  
**Vote:** All Ayes
- 3. Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement**  
**From: Councilmember Harrison (Author), Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor)**  
**Referred: June 14, 2021**  
**Due: September 30, 2022**  
**Recommendation:** 1. Adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement.  
2. Refer to the City Manager to report to Council within six months with anonymized data and information regarding discriminatory reports to law enforcement.  
**Financial Implications:** Staff time  
Contact: Kate Harrison, Councilmember, District 4, (510) 981-7140  
**Action:** The item was continued to the next meeting.

## Committee Action Items

### 4. Parking Enforcement of Existing Parking Code in Fire Zones 2 & 3

**From:** Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

**Referred:** February 22, 2022

**Due:** July 12, 2022

**Recommendation:** The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) recommends that Council direct the Berkeley Police Department to enforce existing Berkeley Municipal Code in all Fire Zones.

**Financial Implications:** See report

Contact: Keith May, Commission Secretary, (510) 981-3473

Action: 3 speakers. Discussion held. The item was continued to the next meeting.

## Unscheduled Items

*These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Committee may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Committee meeting.*

- None

## Items for Future Agendas

- None

## Adjournment

Adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

## Communications

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Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

ACTION CALENDAR  
March 8, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
 Submitted by: José Luis Bedolla, Chairperson, Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
 Subject: Parking Enforcement of Existing Parking Code in Fire Zones 2 & 3

RECOMMENDATION

The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) recommends that Council direct the Berkeley Police Department to enforce existing Berkeley Municipal Code in all Fire Zones.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Fully enforcing the existing parking code may require increased staff time from the Police Department - Parking Enforcement (or, in the future, the proposed Department of Transportation, "BerkDOT"). Exact costs and staff time are unknown.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

As another fire season rages, we are again seeing record-setting, deadly wildfires in California. The largest current fire is the Caldor Fire, which has burned 219,267 acres<sup>1</sup> and even threatened Berkeley Echo Lake. There is a continued concern about the level of preparedness for egress from Berkeley's Fire Zones 2 and 3.

The Berkeley Fire Department continues to educate the public on the importance of making and practicing an evacuation plan; for many residents of Fire Zones 2 and 3, a safe evacuation will depend on the ability to drive a vehicle away from the threat before being overtaken by a moving fire.

Many streets in these neighborhoods are narrow and winding, which limits both access – the ability for emergency vehicles to go into these areas, and egress – the ability for residents to escape a fire (see, Exhibit 1) These limitations are exacerbated by constant and flagrant violations of existing parking restrictions by Berkeley residents, visitors, and delivery vehicles, which cause additional pinch points and compress the available space for vehicles to drive on the roads. Additionally, illegally parked vehicles block sidewalks, creating a hazard for pedestrians and persons using wheelchairs. There seems to be a culture of illegal parking that continues due to a lack of consequence (see, Exhibit 2)

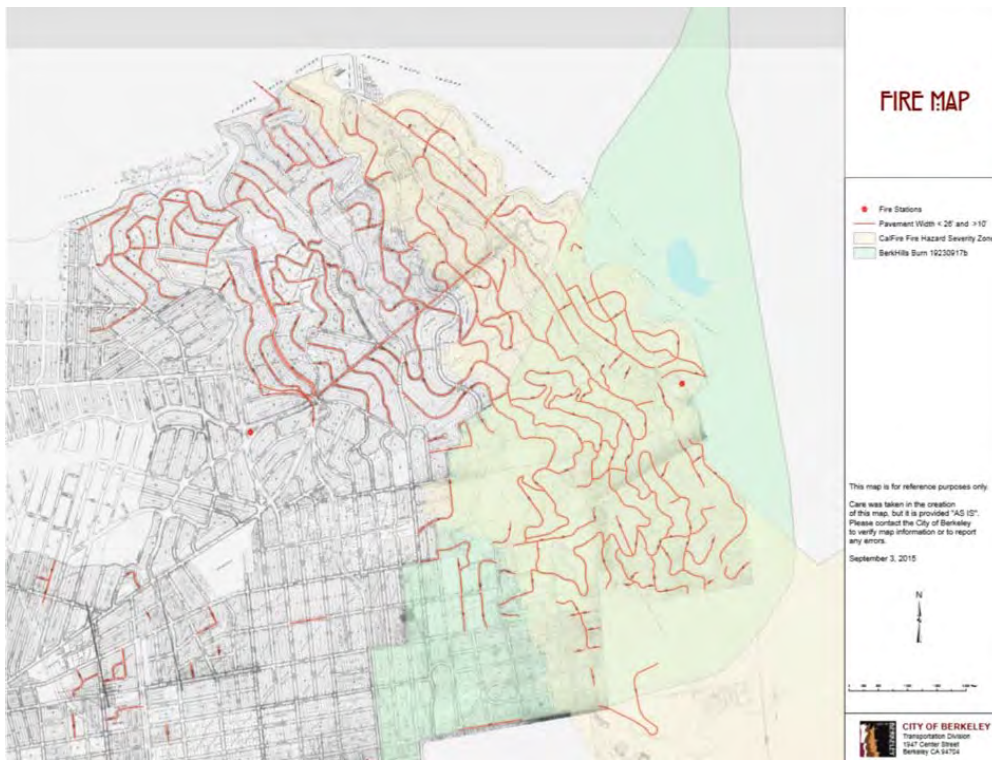
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fireweatheravalanche.org/fire/state/california>

The continual violations of existing parking restrictions create a life-safety hazard in the hills in all emergency situations, and especially in a wildfire scenario, when rapid evacuation of residents will be necessary.

The City is planning to impose further parking restrictions under its “Safe Passages” program as needed to ensure sufficient access and egress during a wildfire on these narrow streets. If existing parking restrictions are not enforced, there is little reason to expect additional restrictions to have any positive impact on the situation.

**Exhibit 1:** Street widths of >10 and <26 feet



**Exhibit 2,** (select pictures taken on 7/28/2021 ~12:30 PM)



Los Angeles St

Quail St

Keefer St

Thousand Oaks St

### BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley has been repeatedly notified of access and egress concerns due to a lack of parking restrictions and a lack of parking enforcement in the Hills Fire Zones, including but not limited to two prior recommendations by the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission:

In February 2016, Council approved a January 12, 2016 recommendation from DFSC requesting that it:

*“refer to staff the Design of a parking restriction program in the Hills Fire Zone to ensure access for emergency vehicles and to allow for safe evacuations in an emergency and to hold public meetings to get community input in the design of such a program*

That recommendation stated:

*“Today we are 24 years after the devastating Oakland Hills Fire and 50 years after concern was first expressed for the safety of residents given the conditions that will save lives in the Berkeley Hills”*

In December 2019, the DFSC submitted a recommendation to Council, “Recommendation to Immediately Fund and Implement the Safe Passages Program and Additional Actions to Ensure Emergency Equipment Access to All Parts of the City” which included a number of recommended actions to prioritize parking restrictions in Berkeley’s Fire Zones as part of a Safe Passages program.

Parking issues have been discussed in other recommendations over many years, including recommendations to implement new parking restrictions in Fire Zones 2 and 3 to ensure safe access and egress for emergency vehicles.

### **Safe Passages - Project in Progress:**

At this time, the Berkeley Fire Department has allocated staff time and funding towards Safe Passages work in the next few years. In the Safe Passages project, staff will evaluate and document the problem of emergency access and egress in the City’s Fire Zones and lead an interdepartmental program in addressing this problem through parking restrictions, increased enforcement, signage, and public education. The Safe Passages project is likely to result in an expansion of “No Parking” areas on dangerously narrow and/or winding streets in the Hills Fire Zones.

As Safe Passages is a multi-year project that is still just getting off the ground, the DFSC is now providing this urgent recommendation to enforce existing parking restrictions in the meantime.

This recommendation does not preclude or replace the need for new parking restrictions and other improvements that are expected to be an outcome of the Safe Passages project.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identified environmental effects or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

As seen in the years of background and the multiple times that parking restrictions have been recommended by the DFSC and by Council, we believe there is a consensus that narrow streets that impede emergency vehicle access are a threat to life safety in Berkeley.

A consistent lack of enforcement sends the message that parking restrictions in the Hills are not important, but in truth these restrictions are crucial for life-safety in these neighborhoods. Illegally parked vehicles exacerbate already insufficient space on many narrow streets, potentially limiting access for emergency vehicles as well as hindering a wildfire evacuation.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Alternatives could be considered as part of the City's Safe Passages program and could include changing streets to one way only rather than two way, adding additional red curbing, especially on the smallest width streets in Zones 2 and 3, and adding to the Fire District Parking Restrictions. Each of these has the possibility of cost and additional community involvement and consultation before implementation. We recommend that enforcement of existing laws be increased while simultaneously planning and developing these other improvements.

#### CITY MANAGER

The City Manager refers this recommendation to the budget process.

Staff concurs that the narrow and winding streets in the Berkeley Hills, makes traveling under normal conditions challenging. Illegal parking can exacerbate ingress and egress of vehicles during an emergency event.

Currently, Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) are deployed across the City using a "beat" structure with their primary focus being to provide enforcement to metered and residential parking permit (RPP) areas. They respond to other locations within their beat by complaint only. Due to staffing challenges, PEOs are frequently tasked with providing coverage to larger geographical areas. At this time, current resources and staffing models do not allow the robust analysis, project management, and enforcement that is being recommended.

Many of these issues are being discussed within the Fire Department's Safe Passage Program. The scope of this recommendation will take time, staffing, and the funding of new positions to fully address all aspects of the Safe Passage Program. Until a comprehensive program can be developed, the Police Department will offer voluntary overtime to offer extra patrols to provide enforcement of restricted parking zones throughout the City during Red Flag events.

CONTACT PERSON

Keith May, Secretary, Disaster and Fire Safety Commission, 510-981-5508

Jennifer Tate, Berkeley Police Department Traffic Bureau, 510-981-5983





Kate Harrison  
Councilmember District 4

ACTION CALENDAR

June 29, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Harrison (Author) and Councilmember Hahn (Co-sponsor)  
Subject: Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement.
2. Refer to the City Manager to report to Council within six months with anonymized data and information regarding discriminatory reports to law enforcement.

CURRENT SITUATION, EFFECTS, AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

As the City of Berkeley addresses disparate policing outcomes, it is critical to consider potential bias stemming from community-initiated calls for service. Over the past year, there have been numerous high-profile instances, including in the Bay Area, of people allegedly calling law enforcement on innocent people on purely discriminatory grounds. It is likely that numerous additional instances go unreported each year. Such incidents cause serious harm to the person falsely accused of a crime, contribute to defamation, cause anxiety and distrust among people of color and other people, and put an unnecessary strain on law enforcement officers responding to frivolous and false calls. Berkeley is not immune to such discriminatory calls and therefore it is the public interest to explicitly expand existing laws regarding false police reports such that it is explicitly unlawful to engage in such behavior and that any aggrieved person may seek restitution through civil means.

BACKGROUND

This Ordinance is modelled upon the City and County of San Francisco's recently unanimously adopted 2020 Caution Against Racially and Exploitative Non-Emergencies (CAREN) Act. A similar bill also passed in the State of Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ebrahimji, Alisha, and Amanda Jackson, "San Francisco's 'CAREN Act,' Making Racially Biased 911 Calls Illegal, Is One Step Closer to Becoming a Law," *CNN*, October 21, 2020, [www.cnn.com/2020/10/20/us/caren-act-911-san-francisco-board-passes-first-read-trnd/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2020/10/20/us/caren-act-911-san-francisco-board-passes-first-read-trnd/index.html).  
2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 • Tel: (510) 981-7140 • TDD: (510) 981-6903 • Fax: (510) 981-6903 E-Mail: KHarrison@cityofberkeley.info

Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement

These laws were passed in the wake of the global protest movement in response to the murder of George Floyd, which highlighted discriminatory calls to law enforcement, including notable incidents in New York City's Central Park and Oakland's Lake Merritt.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to causing serious harm to the person(s) falsely accused of a crime, anxiety and distrust among people of color and other groups, such incidents put an unnecessary strain on law enforcement officers responding to frivolous and false calls. However, this ordinance is not intended to discourage individuals from contacting law enforcement when they are facing real danger or desire to report a crime.

The Berkeley Police Review Commission's 2017 "To Achieve Fairness and Impartiality: Report and Recommendations" cited a number of anecdotal reports from community members alleging discriminatory calls for law enforcement service, including:

- A racially-mixed family was having pizza at Bobby G's on University. Another diner called police saying that the mixed couple were "abusing their child by drinking beer and wine in front of their child." Two police cars arrived with lights flashing. The owner attested that the family were regulars, and were minding their own business watching a football game. Police interrogated the African American father for one hour in a hallway at the restaurant.
- An African American man, a security guard in uniform with a licensed gun, was talking with a Caucasian female on the corner of Bonar and Allston Way after a ceremony at the Berkeley Youth Association. A Caucasian man drove by, parked the car, got out and started videotaping the couple. The African American man asked the driver to stop videotaping. The man answered that it was his right to do so and started making statements such as "don't bring a gun into my neighborhood." After a heated back-and-forth, the driver called the police. Eight cars arrived. The lead officer reviewed the credentials of the African-American man, was satisfied and departed. One of the remaining officers stayed and continue to ask the same questions for another 15 minutes. The African American security guard registered that he felt he was "unduly questioned" and was being "badgered."
- The owners of "44 Restaurant and Lounge" lodged a complaint with NAACP and police. During happy hour to 8p.m.the guests that frequent the bar are a racially mixed crowd. After 8p.m.the guests are predominantly African American. After a minor complaint to police from a resident, the police parked a car with lights off across the street from the establishment for a period of four months. "44" has no history of rowdiness or spillover from bar patrons onto the sidewalk or the street. The bar down the street, Nick's Lounge, has spillover into the street almost every night. The owners of "44" and the NAACP observed there is no police presence at Nick's.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Nir, Sarah Maslin, "How 2 Lives Collided in Central Park, Rattling the Nation," *The New York Times*, June 14, 2020, [www.nytimes.com/2020/06/14/nyregion/central-park-amy-cooper-christian-racism.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/14/nyregion/central-park-amy-cooper-christian-racism.html); Fearnow, Benjamin, "A Black Family's Sunday Barbecue Was Interrupted after a Woman Called out Their Charcoal Grill and Phoned the Cops," *Newsweek*, May 10, 2018, [www.newsweek.com/lake-merritt-bbq-barbecue-video-oakland-racist-charcoal-east-bay-black-family-919355](http://www.newsweek.com/lake-merritt-bbq-barbecue-video-oakland-racist-charcoal-east-bay-black-family-919355).

<sup>3</sup> Berkeley Police Review Commission, "To Achieve Fairness and Impartiality: Report and Recommendations from the Berkeley Police Review Commission," November 15, 2017, [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Police\\_Review\\_Commission/Level\\_3\\_-\\_General/FAIR%20%20IMPARTIAL%20POLICING%20REPORT%20final.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Police_Review_Commission/Level_3_-_General/FAIR%20%20IMPARTIAL%20POLICING%20REPORT%20final.pdf)



Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement

The Berkeley Police Review Commission's 2017 report was not exhaustive and it is likely that there were numerous additional unreported incidents involving individuals contacting law enforcement to report innocuous behavior as suspicious, or to falsely report alleged criminal behavior, for what appear to be solely discriminatory reasons. Berkeley Police Department staff also cited biased calls for service as a potential factor in racially disparate policing outcomes during the Mayor's Fair and Impartial Working Group meetings. The intent of this ordinance and referral is to prohibit and daylight these incidents, and to provide an avenue for restitution through the court system.

The misuse of law enforcement by members of the public to discriminate against others is intolerable. Creating a civil cause of action for damages will also discourage this type of behavior and provide a tangible compensation for victims.

Berkeley Municipal Code 13.08 already prohibits persons from knowingly reporting or causing to be reported:

"any false or fictitious request for protection or assistance, or any false or fictitious information indicating that a crime has been or is about to be committed, or to knowingly cause the Police Department to respond to any such false or fictitious report, or to request any assistance or investigation in connection with or as a result of any such false or fictitious report or false or fictitious information."

This ordinance expands the scope of this existing law to explicitly prohibit false or frivolous reports involving individuals who contact law enforcement to report innocuous behavior as suspicious, or to falsely report alleged criminal behavior, for what appear to be solely discriminatory reasons. Discriminatory calls are defined as those that are made on the basis of a person's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, age, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, weight, or height, and with the intent to do any of the following:

- (1) Infringe upon the person's rights under either the California Constitution or the United States Constitution;
- (2) Discriminate against the person;
- (3) Cause the person to feel harassed, humiliated, or embarrassed;
- (4) Cause the person to be expelled from a place in which the person is lawfully located;
- (5) Damage the person's reputation or standing within the community; or
- (6) Damage the person's financial, economic, consumer, or business prospects or interests.

In addition, any aggrieved person may enforce the provisions of this ordinance by means of a civil action, including special, general and punitive damages.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time will be necessary to implement and enforce this ordinance. However, this ordinance already in part tracks existing law and practices regarding false police reports.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No immediately identifiable environmental impact.

Adopt an Ordinance Adding Chapter 13.09 to the Berkeley Municipal Code Prohibiting Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement

CONTACT

Councilmember Kate Harrison  
kharrison@cityofberkeley.info | 510-981-7140

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ordinance

ORDINANCE NO. -N.S.

ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 13.09 TO THE BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE  
PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATORY REPORTS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

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

Section 1. The Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 13.09 is added to read as follows:

**Chapter 13.09**  
**Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement**

**Sections:**

**13.09.010 Findings and Purpose.**

**13.09.020 Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement Prohibited.**

**13.09.030 Civil Cause of Action.**

**13.09.040 Undertaking for the General Welfare.**

**13.09.050 Severability.**

**13.09.010 Findings and Purpose.**

The Council finds and expressly declares as follows:

- A. There have been numerous incidents across the country involving individuals contacting law enforcement to report innocuous behavior as suspicious, or to falsely report alleged criminal behavior, for what appear to be solely discriminatory reasons. Discriminatory law enforcement reports against people of color for racially motivated reasons are common enough that many people of color have experienced one or more incident of being contacted by law enforcement when engaging in normal day-to-day activities. These incidents cause serious harm to the person falsely accused of a crime, cause anxiety and distrust among people of color, and put an unnecessary strain on law enforcement officers responding to frivolous and false calls.
- B. The misuse of law enforcement by members of the public to discriminate against others should not be tolerated and the City should take action to stop such behavior in every way possible. Creating a means for people who suffer this kind of discrimination to seek redress from those who have targeted them through a civil cause of action for damages will discourage this type of behavior and provide a tangible way for these victims to be compensated for this wrong.
- C. This ordinance is not intended to discourage individuals from contacting law enforcement when they are facing real danger or desire to report a crime. It will allow individuals who have been reported to law enforcement for unfair and unnecessary reasons to seek justice and restitution, and will motivate people who contact law enforcement to consider the reasons they are making the report.

**13.09.020 Discriminatory Reports to Law Enforcement Prohibited.**

(a) It shall be unlawful to knowingly make a false or frivolous call to police to cause a peace officer to arrive at a location to contact a person, with the specific intent to do any of the following on the basis of the person's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, age, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, weight, or height:

- (1) Infringe upon the person's rights under either the California Constitution or the United States Constitution;
- (2) Discriminate against the person;
- (3) Cause the person to feel harassed, humiliated, or embarrassed;
- (4) Cause the person to be expelled from a place in which the person is lawfully located;
- (5) Damage the person's reputation or standing within the community; or
- (6) Damage the person's financial, economic, consumer, or business prospects or interests.

**13.09.030 Civil Cause of Action.**

(a) Any aggrieved person may enforce the provisions of this Section by means of a civil action.

- (1) A person found to have violated Section 13.09.020 (a) in a cause of action under subsection (a) shall be liable to the aggrieved person for special and general damages, but in no case less than \$1,000 plus attorneys' fees and the costs of the action. In addition, punitive damages may be awarded in a proper case.
- (2) Nothing in this Section shall preclude any person from seeking any other remedies, penalties, or procedures provided by law.

**13.09.040 Undertaking for the General Welfare.**

In enacting and implementing this ordinance, the City is assuming an undertaking only to promote the general welfare. It is not assuming, nor is it imposing on its officers and employees, an obligation for breach of which it is liable in money damages to any person who claims that such breach proximately caused injury.

**13.09.050 Severability.**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Chapter, or any application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Chapter. The Council of the City of Berkeley hereby declares that it would have passed this Chapter and each and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, and word not declared invalid or unconstitutional without regard to whether any other portion of this Chapter or application thereof would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 2. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within 15 days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

