



Planning Commission

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

This meeting is held in a wheelchair accessible location.

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

6:00 PM

North Berkeley Senior Center

1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley

See “*MEETING PROCEDURES*” below.

All written materials identified on this agenda are available on the Planning Commission webpage: <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/planning-commission>

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

- 1. Roll Call:** **Merker, Blaine**, appointed by Councilmember Kesarwani, District 1
Vincent, Jeff, Chair, appointed by Councilmember Taplin, District 2
Owens, Darrell, appointed by Councilmember Bartlett, District 3
Oatfield, Christina, appointed by Councilmember Harrison, District 4
Kahn, Charles, appointed by Councilmember O’Keefe, District 5
Marthinsen, Emily, appointed by Councilmember Wengraf, District 6
Twu, Alfred, appointed by Councilmember Robinson, District 7
Hauser, Savlan, appointed by Councilmember Droste, District 8
Vacant, Mayoral appointee
- 2. Land Acknowledgement:** 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. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

- 3. **Order of Agenda:** The Commission may rearrange the agenda or place items on the Consent Calendar.
- 4. **Public Comment:** Comments on subjects not included on the agenda. Speakers may comment on agenda items when the Commission hears those items. (See “Public Testimony Guidelines” below):
- 5. **Planning Staff Report:** In addition to the items below, additional matters may be reported at the meeting. **Next Commission meeting: March 5, 2025**
- 6. **Chairperson’s Report:** Report by Planning Commission Chair.
- 7. **Committee Reports:** Reports by Commission committees or liaisons. In addition to the items below, additional matters may be reported at the meeting.
- 8. **Approval of Minutes:** Approval of Draft Minutes from the regular meeting on December 4, 2024.
- 9. **Future Agenda Items and Other Planning-Related Events:** None.

AGENDA ITEMS: All agenda items are for discussion and possible action. Public Hearing items require hearing prior to Commission action.

- 10. **Action:** **Public Hearing: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)**
Recommendation: Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion recommend to the City Council to adopt a resolution adopting the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and amending the General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element to incorporate the updated LHMP adoption year by reference.
Written Materials: Attached.
Presentation: N/A
- 11. **Action:** **2025 Nominations for March Election**
Recommendation: Nominate Commissioners for Chair and Vice Chair.
Written Materials: N/A
Presentation: N/A.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS: In compliance with Brown Act regulations, no action may be taken on these items. However, discussion may occur at this meeting upon Commissioner request.

Information Items:

- Upcoming: 2/1 Safety and Environmental Justice Element Workshop #1 – Join us at the South Berkeley Senior Center to share ideas on how the City can create policies that better prepare Berkeley for natural disasters, climate change, and reduced exposure to pollution. [Prepared, Safe, and Healthy Berkeley For All Workshop #1 Sat, Feb 1, 2025 at 10:00 AM | Optional Eventbrite RSVP](#)
- Upcoming: 2/10 Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards Open House – Join us to learn more about the ODS for the Ashby BART West Lot and provide feedback. [Ashby BART West Lot Preliminary ODS Open House – Mon. Feb 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM | South Berkeley Senior Center](#)

Communications: General.

Late Communications: (Received after the packet deadline):

Late Communications: (Received and distributed at the meeting):

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Procedures**Public Testimony Guidelines:**

Speakers are customarily allotted up to two minutes each and may not cede their time to another speaker. The Commission Chair may limit the number of speakers and the length of time allowed to each speaker to ensure adequate time for all items on the Agenda. **To speak during Public Comment or during a Public Hearing, please line up behind the microphone.** Customarily, speakers are asked to address agenda items when the items are before the Commission rather than during the general public comment period. Speakers are encouraged to submit comments in writing. See “Procedures for Correspondence to the Commissioners” below.

Consent Calendar Guidelines:

The Consent Calendar allows the Commission to take action with no discussion on projects to which no one objects. The Commission may place items on the Consent Calendar if no one present wishes to testify on an item. Anyone present who wishes to speak on an item should submit a speaker card prior to the start of the meeting, or raise his or her hand and advise the Chairperson, and the item will be pulled from the Consent Calendar for public comment and discussion prior to action.

Procedures for Correspondence to the Commissioners:

To distribute correspondence to Commissioners prior to the meeting date, submit comments by 12:00 p.m. (noon), eight days before the meeting day (Tuesday) (email preferred):

- If correspondence is more than 20 pages, requires printing of color pages, or includes pages larger than 8.5x11 inches, please provide 15 copies.
- Any correspondence received after this deadline will be given to Commissioners on the day just prior to the meeting.

- Staff will not deliver to Commissioners any additional written (or emailed) materials received after 12:00 p.m. (noon) on the day of the meeting.
- Members of the public may submit written comments themselves early in the meeting. To distribute correspondence at the meeting, please provide 15 copies and submit to the Planning Commission Secretary just before, or at the beginning of, the meeting.
- Written comments should be directed to the Planning Commission Secretary, at the Land Use Planning Division (Attn: Planning Commission Secretary).

Communications are Public Records: Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions, or committees are public records 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 to the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.

Written material may be viewed in advance of the meeting at the Department of Planning & Development, Permit Service Center, **1947 Center Street, 3rd Floor**, during regular business hours.

Note: ***If you object to a project or to any City action*** or procedure relating to a project application, any lawsuit which you may later file may be limited to those issues raised by you or someone else in the public hearing on the project, or in written communication delivered at or prior to the public hearing. The time limit within which to commence any lawsuit or legal challenge related to these applications is governed by Section 1094.6, of the Code of Civil Procedure, unless a shorter limitations period is specified by any other provision. Under Section 1094.6, any lawsuit or legal challenge to any quasi-adjudicative decision made by the City must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which such decision becomes final. Any lawsuit or legal challenge, which is not filed within that 90-day period, will be barred.

Meeting Access: 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 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD), at least three business days before the meeting date.

Please refrain from wearing scented products to public meetings.



Planning Commission

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**
2 **December 4, 2024**

3 The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

4 **Location:** North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

5 • **ROLL CALL:**

6 **Commissioners Present:** Jeff Vincent, Christina Oatfield, Emily Marthinsen, Elisa Mikiten,
7 Alfred Twu, Savlan Hauser and Blaine Merker (arrived at 6:13 pm).

8
9 **Commissioners Absent:** Barnali Ghosh (excused) and Chip Moore.

10
11 **Staff Present:** Secretary Alisa Shen, Clerk Zoe Covello, Branka Tatarevic, Faye Messner,
12 Justin Horner, and Robert Rivera.

13 **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.**

14 The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of
15 xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-
16 chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the
17 sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great
18 importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin
19 our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the
20 documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound,
21 and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's
22 residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen
23 land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating
24 the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also
25 recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay
26 communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan
27 Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land
28 acknowledgement.

29 • **ORDER OF AGENDA:**

30 • Reorder to move the **Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8717** before the **Discussion:**
31 **San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update.**

32 • **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: 0.**

33 • **PLANNING STAFF REPORT:**

- 34 • January 2025 Meeting Cancelled
- 35 • The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is tentatively now scheduled for February 5, 2025
- 36 • Staff reported on the San Pablo Avenue Walking Tour held on November 16, 2024
- 37 • City Council adopted the first reading of Keep Innovation in Berkeley
- 38 • Second reading to approve the Ashby BART TOD contractual Agreement
- 39 • Second Reading of Changes to Development Procedures
- 40 • The RFP for Ashby BART was issued online

41 **Information Items:**

- 42 • None.

43 **Communications:**

- 44 • General.

45 **Late Communications:**

- 46 • Supplemental 1.
- 47 • Supplemental 2.

49 • **CHAIR REPORT:**

- 50 • Chair Vincent thanked the commissioners and public for hearing his comments on
51 democratic processes from last meeting. The Chair acknowledged changes in council
52 seats and possibly commissioner's seats and thanked commissioners for their service
53 this year.

- 54 • **COMMITTEE REPORT:** Reports by Commission committees or liaisons. In addition to the
55 items below, additional matters may be reported at the meeting.

- 56 • None.

58 **8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

59 Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Mikiten) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting
60 Minutes from November 6, 2024.

61 Ayes: Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
62 Absent: Ghosh, Merker, and Moore. (6-0-0-3)
63

64

65 **9. OTHER PLANNING RELATED EVENTS:**

- 66 • None.

67

68 **AGENDA ITEMS**

69 **10. Public Hearing: Affordable Housing Fee**

70 Principal Planner Alisa Shen and consultants presented on proposed amendments to the
71 affordable housing fee. The Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made
72 comments including, but not limited to: the proposed 5,000 square-foot exemption, how the
73 consultants determined the 5,000 square foot threshold for the proposed exemption, whether
74 there were any natural breaks in the fee structure should market changes allow for greater
75 feasibility of projects, and clarification of enabling policy in the zoning ordinance versus a
76 resolution. There were three public commenters.

77

Motions/Second/Carried (Vincent/Marthinsen) to close the public hearing at 7:19 pm.

78

79 Ayes: Vincent, Mikiten, Merker, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain:
80 None. Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (7-0-0-2)

81

82

Motions/Second (Vincent/Hauser) to recommend staff's proposal to City Council, without the
83 Housing Advisory Committee recommendation to exclude detached homes from the
84 exemption of the first 5,000 square feet of Residential Unit Floor Area for projects that pay the
85 full In-Lieu fee instead of providing any on-site affordable units at 7:49 pm.

86

87 Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: Oatfield.
88 Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (6-0-1-2)

89

90 **Public Comments: 3**

91 **11. Public Hearing: Tentative Tract Map #8717**

92 Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented on Tentative Tract Map #8717. There was one
93 public commenter.

94

Motions/Second/Carried (Vincent/Twu) to close the public hearing at 8:01 pm.

95

96 Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain: None.
97 Absent: Ghosh, Moore and Mikiten. (6-0-0-3)

98

99

Motions/Second (Twu/Huaser) to approve Tentative Tract Map #8717 at 8:02 pm.

100

101 Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Moore, Oatfield, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain:
102 None. Absent: Ghosh, Moore and Mikiten. (6-0-0-3)

103

104 **Public Comments: 1**

105 **12. Discussion: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update**

106 Senior Planner Robert Rivera presented on the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. The
107 Commissioners took public comment, discussed and made comments including, but not limited
108 to: urban design elements of the plan including building height, sidewalks and public open
109 space. They also discussed balancing the desire for ground floor commercial with market
110 realities, articulation requirements in the objective design standards and preserving the
111 character of small maker spaces that exist along San Pablo Avenue. There were three public
112 commenters.

113 **Public Comments: 3**

114 Motion/Second/Carried (Vincent/Merker) to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.
115
116 Ayes: Merker, Vincent, Oatfield, Mikiten, Marthinsen, Twu, and Hauser. Noes: None. Abstain:
117 None. Absent: Ghosh and Moore. (7-0-0-2)

118
119 **Members in the public in attendance: 10**

120 **Public Speakers: 7**

121 **Length of the meeting: 2 hr 56 min**



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 5, 2025
TO: Members of the Planning Commission
FROM: Alisa Shen, Principal Planner
SUBJECT: 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion recommend to the City Council to adopt a resolution adopting the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and amending the General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element to incorporate the updated LHMP adoption year by reference (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

In 2004, the City of Berkeley adopted a Disaster Mitigation Plan (DMP) that was considered part of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element of the General Plan ("Safety Element"). In 2014, the DMP was updated and renamed as the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), and the Safety Element was amended to incorporate the 2014 LHMP by reference. In 2019, the 2014 LHMP was updated on the required 5-year cycle, along with an associated technical amendment to the Safety Element. The 2019 LHMP expired on December 20, 2024. Currently, the City is out of compliance and not eligible for certain mitigation grant funding. At the June 5, 2024 Planning Commission meeting, staff from the Office of Emergency Services presented a preliminary draft of the 2024 LHMP. At that meeting, the Commission and public were informed that the Draft LHMP was available for review on the City's website and at libraries. Planning staff also presented about the initiation of the multi-year process to comprehensively update the Safety Element and to create a new Environmental Justice Element.

DISCUSSION

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) identifies natural hazards in Berkeley and outlines a five-year strategy to further protect Berkeley's people, buildings, infrastructure and environment from those hazards. The document follows a standardized outline and process mandated by the State and Federal government. The LHMP update process is managed through the Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services, which focuses on disaster readiness. A detailed description of the LHMP requirements and public process

to prepare the 2024 LHMP update is provided in the staff report prepared by OES (Attachment 2) which also includes the 2024 LHMP Executive Summary.

Adoption of the updated LHMP is required for the City to be eligible for federal and state mitigation funding and post-disaster recovery funding. In order to comply with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (Cal OES) requirements, the City's General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element ("Safety Element") must be amended to explicitly reference the adoption year of the current LHMP update. Attachment 1 provides the proposed General Plan amendment text and findings being considered by Planning Commission on February 5, 2025.

As noted above, the City has also initiated a process to comprehensively and substantively update the General Plan Safety Element and create a new Environmental Justice Element. Staff and the consultant team are currently analyzing existing conditions and kicking off public engagement: the first community workshop will be held on February 1, 2025.¹

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed change would be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Guideline Sections 15183(d), 15262, 15306 and 15061(b)(3) because a) the Plan is consistent with the General Plan; b) the Plan involves feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions; c) the Plan involves basic data collection, research, experimental management and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource; and d) it can be seen with certainty that the proposed amendment would not have a significant effect on the environment.

Pursuant to Senate Bill 18, staff initiated tribal consultation relating to the effort to update the Safety Element and create a new Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan in May 2024. In June 2024, staff contacted relevant tribes (based on a list provided by the Native American Heritage Commission) and notified them of the opportunity to consult. As part of this process, staff will send out notification and request for comment 45 days prior to the anticipated Council hearing on March 18, 2025 when the City Council will consider adoption of the 2024 LHMP and the associated technical edit to the Safety Element to reference the adoption year of the 2024 LHMP update.

NEXT STEPS

Staff intends to bring the Final Draft of the 2024 LHMP and associated technical edit to the General Plan Safety Element to City Council for adoption at its March 18, 2025 meeting.

Attachments:

1. Planning Commission Resolution No. 2025-01
2. Staff report from Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services
3. Public Hearing Notice

¹ Additional project information is available at: <https://berkeleyca.gov/prepared-safe-healthy>.

**PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE PROPOSED 2024 LOCAL HAZARD
MITIGATION PLAN.**

WHEREAS, City Council adopted the Disaster Mitigation Plan on June 22, 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Plan was updated in 2014 and in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Plan has expired; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley ("City"), in accordance with the provisions of California Government Code Section 65300 et seq., is required to adopt a General Plan for its long-range development, and further to periodically update that plan to reflect current conditions; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of a current Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and an associated amendment to the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element of the City's General Plan to explicitly reference the adoption year of the LHMP will maintain the City's compliance with 44 CFR Part 201, Section 201.6, and Government Code 65302.6 requirements, and associated eligibility for mitigation grant funding; and

WHEREAS, City staff has collaborated with numerous partner representatives, scientists and hazard experts to develop the LHMP; and

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2024, the Planning Commission heard a presentation by City staff, took public comment, and discussed the draft LHMP; and

WHEREAS, from May 24, 2024 through August 8, 2024, the community and all City commissions and boards were invited to provide feedback on the Draft LHMP, and these comments were reviewed and incorporated into the Final Draft 2024 LHMP; and

WHEREAS, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency reviewed and determined the Final Draft LHMP to be eligible for final approval on January 13, 2025 (pending its adoption by the Berkeley City Council); and

WHEREAS, a public hearing notice was published in the Berkeley Voice and posted in three public places pursuant to California Government Code Section 65090 on January 24, 2025 for the public hearing held on February 5, 2025; and

WHEREAS, all documents constituting the record of this proceeding are and shall be retained by the City of Berkeley Planning and Development Department, Land Use Planning Division, at 1947 Center Street, Berkeley, California; and

WHEREAS, the LHMP project can be considered "exempt" from CEQA pursuant to Guideline Sections 15183(d), 15262, 15306 and 15061(b)(3);

NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED that the Planning Commission does hereby recommend

to the City Council of the City of Berkeley to adopt the 2024 LHMP, make the General Plan findings, and recommend amending the General Plan to reference the updated LHMP.

I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Berkeley, at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 5th day of February 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Justin Horner, Principal Planner
SECRETARY TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

EXHIBIT A
DRAFT
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The proposed changes to the fifth paragraph on page S-3 of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element are as follows (in ~~strikethrough~~ and underlined text):

In 2004, the City adopted its first Hazard Mitigation Plan. It is part of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element of the General Plan. The City updated the Disaster Mitigation Plan in 2014 and renamed it the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). On 12/16/14, the City Council adopted the LHMP (by reference) into the General Plan. (Reso. 66,897-NS (Exh. A), 2014). The LHMP has since been updated ~~again~~ in 2019 (Reso. 69,237-NS (Exh. A), 2019) and in 2024 [City Council Resolution # to be inserted at later date], ~~superseding previously adopted plans, and has replaced the 2014 plan.~~ The LHMP will continue to be updated periodically, as required by State and Federal regulations. (~~Reso. 69,237-NS (Exh. A), 2019~~)

Pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65353 and 65853, the Planning Commission makes the following findings to support its recommendation for the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan amendment to the General Plan:

1. The proposed amendment is in the public interest. The 2024 LHMP and associated General Plan amendment enable the City to better protect itself from hazards and disasters and makes the City eligible to receive state and federal funding.
2. The proposed amendment is consistent and compatible with the rest of the General Plan. Four of the six Objectives of the General Plan's Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element refer to the need to mitigate and reduce potential for damage from disasters:
 - Improve and develop City mitigation programs to reduce risks to people and property from natural and man-made hazards to socially and economically acceptable levels.
 - Reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, and economic damage resulting from earthquakes and associated hazards.
 - Reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, and economic damage resulting from urban and wild land fire.
 - Reduce the potential for loss of life and property damage in areas subject to flooding.

The LHMP responds to these General Plan objectives and focuses attention on resolving them.

3. The potential effects of the proposed amendment have been evaluated and have been determined not to be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare. The potential effects of the LHMP and General Plan amendment are all positive with respect to public health, safety or welfare. The LHMP suggests preemptive programs and activities (some with other agencies) to make Berkeley less susceptible to hazards and disasters.
4. The proposed amendment has been processed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Government Code and the California Environmental Quality Act. The General Plan amendment is processed in accordance with Chapter 22.04.020 of the Berkeley Municipal Code. The proposed amendment was considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing on February 5, 2025 with at least 10 days' notice given; and a notice was published in a newspaper of record (*The Berkeley Voice*) on January 24, 2025 according to the applicable procedures.



City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services

Date: January 21, 2025

To: Members of the Planning Commission

From: Jamie Albrecht, Emergency Services Coordinator

Subject: Final Draft 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO DFSC

Recommend to the City Council that the Final Draft 2024 LHMP be adopted at its March 18 meeting.

SUMMARY

Staff has developed the Final Draft 2024 LHMP to update the 2019 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The LHMP identifies natural hazards and their possible impacts on the Berkeley community and outlines a five-year strategic plan to protect the Berkeley community from future disasters. The Final Draft 2024 LHMP will come before Council at its March 18, 2025 meeting.

Adoption of the LHMP is required for the City to receive mitigation grant funding, and maximizes the City's post-disaster recovery funding. The Final Draft 2024 LHMP has undergone a thorough review process by the Berkeley community and reflects community concerns, as well as technical review by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which has approved the document pending its adoption by City Council.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City of Berkeley's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is an Appendix to the General Plan's Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element. The Plan was originally adopted by the City Council on June 22, 2004, and Council adopted an update in 2014 and in 2019. The plan must be updated once every five years, and the 2019 LHMP expired on December 10, 2024. Currently, the City of Berkeley is out of compliance and not eligible for certain mitigation grant funding described below in *Fiscal Impacts of Recommendation*.

The LHMP is written in accordance with federal requirements so that Berkeley can maintain eligibility for federal mitigation grant funding. On January 13, 2025 FEMA determined the Final Draft LHMP to be eligible for final approval pending its adoption by the Berkeley City Council.

At this time, staff is requesting the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) and Planning Commission to each recommend to the City Council that Council adopt the Final Draft 2024 LHMP. The DFSC meets on January 22, 2025 and the Planning Commission is meeting on February 5, 2025, which will also serve as a public hearing



City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services

for the Final Draft 2024 LHMP and the associated technical edit to the General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element to reference the adoption date of the latest LHMP. Staff will bring the Final Draft 2024 LHMP and associated General Plan amendment to the City Council for adoption at its March 18, 2025 meeting. If adopted by the City Council, the City will continue its compliance and will retain eligibility for mitigation grant funding described below in *Fiscal Impacts of Recommendation*.

To update the Plan, staff followed a multi-phased and broadly-inclusive process using the latest hazard information. The 2024 Final Draft Plan reflects input from community members, institutional partners, and technical experts.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Council adoption of the 2024 LHMP will ensure that the City of Berkeley is eligible for:

1. FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant disbursements that currently help fund the City's Retrofit Grants program. These grants help Berkeley building owners increase safety and mitigate the risk of damage caused by earthquakes;
2. Additional FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant funding for future projects, including many described in the 2024 LHMP;
3. Receipt of additional post-disaster recovery funding from the State of California. Following a disaster, recovery costs are generally borne as: 75% federal, 18.75% State, 6.25% City. If the City has a current, adopted LHMP, the Governor and State Legislature can vote to authorize the State to cover the 6.25% City share. In a catastrophic disaster with public infrastructure losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars, this 6.25% cost share would be very significant.

BACKGROUND

Description of Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City writes this plan based on federal requirements and to meet federal requirements as outlined in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. By fulfilling these requirements with an LHMP that is updated on a five-year cycle, the City of Berkeley is eligible for federal Hazard Mitigation grant funding.

The LHMP has two functions. First, it identifies natural hazards in Berkeley and their possible impacts on Berkeley's people, buildings, infrastructure, and environment. Because of their potential to catastrophically impact Berkeley, earthquake and wildland-urban interface fire are considered to be Berkeley's hazards of greatest concern. Other hazards of concern include landslide, flooding, tsunamis, extreme heat, high wind, poor air quality, infectious disease, utility interruption, sea level rise, and hazardous materials release.

Second, the Plan outlines a five-year strategy to reduce Berkeley's vulnerabilities to these potential impacts. The multi-faceted strategy builds on collaboration among City



City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services

government, external partners, and community members to implement mitigation programs. Proposed Actions include strengthening Berkeley's building stock and other infrastructure, reducing fire risk through code enforcement and vegetation management, improving responder access in Fire Zones 2 and 3, and continuing research to better understand all hazards.

First Draft Plan Development Process

The first draft plan was developed using a collaborative process with partners and technical experts. The First Draft LHMP was circulated for public review for 76 days (May 24, 2024 through August 8, 2024).

Plan Development

In June 2023, the City convened an interdepartmental planning team to develop the First Draft 2024 LHMP. Over months, this Core Planning Team collaborated with numerous scientists and hazard experts to update information in the 2019 Hazard Analysis. The 2024 LHMP accounts for new scientific research on hazards that could affect Berkeley, their areas of exposure, and their potential impacts.

City and partner representatives worked with the project manager to identify Berkeley's progress on mitigation actions identified in 2019. Next, the project manager, City representatives, and partner representatives combined information on the success of 2019 actions, updates to the hazard analysis, and guidance from the City's General Plan to identify "pre-draft" actions for the 2024 Mitigation Strategy.

These pre-draft actions were initially vetted by the City's Core Planning Team in August 2023. The Core Planning Team revised actions to reflect feedback received from community partners and the public, then incorporated the actions into a complete 2024 First Draft Plan.

Public Outreach Process

In May 2024, the City posted the First Draft Plan on the City website for review and comment by the Berkeley community. All City commissions were invited to provide feedback on the Plan. The Project Manager presented the First Draft Plan to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission and the Planning Commission and received feedback from Commissioners and community members. Staff also presented to the City Council's Safety Committee in July 2024.

To support and encourage community members to provide feedback at their convenience, staff created and posted short, accessible videos introducing hazards in the plan, along with associated Actions in the Mitigation Strategy. These videos were accompanied by an email address where community members could share their ideas.

The City also held two in-person workshops for the First Draft Plan, offering the public an opportunity to engage with staff on the Plan's content. One workshop was at the



City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services

Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library on July 20, 2024 and the other was at the Central Library on June 3, 2024. The Workshops included a short presentation introducing the Plan, followed by a community feedback session where participants could review individual poster boards describing each hazard in the First Draft Plan, ask staff questions, and provide written and spoken feedback on their ideas.

Final Draft Plan Development Process

Development of the Final Draft 2025 LHMP involved incorporation of community feedback, followed by technical review by State and federal authorities. These activities are detailed below.

Incorporating Community Feedback

Following the conclusion of the public comment period on August 24, 2024, City staff reviewed feedback from commissions and community members.

Five topics emerged repeatedly in community responses to the First Draft 2024 LHMP:

1. Scope and Detail of the Mitigation Plan

Community comments included a number of questions and suggestions regarding hazards, topics, and programs to consider for inclusion in the LHMP. Many of those suggestions related to disaster readiness, but were not within the scope of the LHMP.

Mitigation describes pre-disaster activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the chance of an emergency happening, or reduce the damaging effects of emergencies. Typical mitigation measures include retrofitting buildings against earthquake damage and managing vegetation to reduce wildfire risk. Activities that increase a community's ability to respond when a disaster occurs, such as emergency notifications and conducting trainings, are considered preparedness and not in the scope of the LHMP.

2. Hard to read maps: Digital LHMP

Many community members mentioned that the maps in the plan were hard to read. In PDF format with 8.5" x 11" pages, it was hard to engage with the maps and to see the data completely. To address this gap and make the plan more user-friendly for community members, the Office of Emergency Services created an online version of the maps, available at www.BerkeleyCa.gov/Mitigation. This web-based tool highlights key hazard information and interactive maps in a much more user-friendly interface than can be provided in the PDF document required by FEMA. Staff hopes that this structure helps to better educate the community about the key information contained in the plan.



City of Berkeley

Office of Emergency Services

3. Hazardous Vegetation

Many responses included concerns about hazardous vegetation that was not adequately described in the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire section of the Risk Assessment. A new section called “Hazardous Vegetation” is now included in the Risk Assessment, outlining what characteristics are the most concerning and contribute to wildfire risk. This new section also describes the importance of maintenance and placement of vegetation.

To protect life and property, the Berkeley Fire Department inspects all properties in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone for Defensible Space, which is the buffer created between a structure on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation that surrounds it. This may include the removal of certain vegetation within 100 feet from any structure. These mitigation measures, along with home hardening, are the scientifically validated actions that have the most impact on reducing the ignition potential of homes. Failure to comply with recommendations results in citations and fines. Programs to support residents with home hardening and defensible space are included in Element C: Mitigation Strategy.

The City, often in collaboration with regional partners, works to remove and/or clean up the understory of hazardous trees that are likely to burn and potentially impact people and infrastructure. For more information on these programs such as the Eucalyptus Understory Clean Up Program, review Element C: Mitigation Strategy.

4. Evacuation in the Berkeley Hills

Many responses included concerns about Wildland-Urban Interface Fire risk in the Berkeley Hills and how people will evacuate. The City is finalizing its Evacuation and Response Time Study with KLD Engineering, which will meet unfunded State evacuation planning mandates outlined in SB99, AB747, and AB1409.

The results of the Evacuation and Response Time Study will be used to identify necessary roadway safety improvements, along with prioritized roadways, to facilitate safe evacuations during emergency scenarios.

5. Land Use Controls’ Impacts on Emergency Services

Some responses expressed concern about development in the Berkeley hills and throughout the city and how that impacts emergency services. A new Action was included in the 2025 Mitigation Strategy to reflect the ongoing collaborative work between the Fire Department and the Land Use Planning Division of the



City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services

Planning Department. The Action is as follows, “Ensure that Fire Department staff have the opportunity to review any proposed revisions to land use controls that would increase allowed densities, evaluate how the revised land use controls could impact the provision of emergency services, and convey that information to City Council prior to final action.”

Further, the Evacuation and Response Time Study is modeling various development scenarios that can inform future proposed revisions to land use controls.

Based on feedback, staff incorporated appropriate changes into the Final Draft Plan, as documented in *Summary of Changes to the City of Berkeley’s First Draft 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*. Both of these documents are available at www.BerkeleyCa.gov/Mitigation.

State and Federal Review

The LHMP is written in accordance with federal requirements so that Berkeley can maintain eligibility for federal mitigation grant funding. First, the LHMP was reviewed by the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). After some edits, CalOES sent the Final Draft Plan for assessment by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in November 2024. On January 13, 2025, FEMA determined the Final Draft LHMP to be eligible for final approval pending its adoption by the Berkeley City Council.

CONCLUSION

Development of the 2024 LHMP update involved collaborative process with hazard experts, scientists, key Berkeley institutions, City Commissions, and individual community members. This inclusive effort has resulted in a cutting-edge document that describes the risks our community faces, as well as a path forward to protect our people, buildings, infrastructure, and environment in the next disaster.

Adopting the 2024 LHMP allows the City to continue its work to make the community safer. It will also enable the City to use external resources for the effort. The Final Draft 2024 LHMP meets the technical needs of City government and reflects the will of the community.

Attachments:

- 1) Review Guide: 2024 Final Draft LHMP
- 2) Executive Summary of 2024 Final Draft LHMP



City of Berkeley

Office of Emergency Services

Attachment 1: Review Guide: 2024 Final Draft LHMP

The complete Final Draft 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is over 300 pages long. For this reason, it has not been printed and appended to this letter. The digital version is available for review at <https://berkeleyca.gov/mitigation>.

In addition to the complete Final Draft Plan, the Mitigation webpage also provides:

- 1) Summary of Changes to the City of Berkeley's First Draft 2019 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan**
This document outlines the revisions made to the First Draft LHMP that are present in the 2025 Final Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- 2) Hazard Videos**
For every hazard in the 2025 LHMP, there is an accompanying video to introduce the content in an accessible and short format. Each video discusses the hazard and the associated mitigation actions.
- 3) Link to the Digital Mitigation Plan**
This web-based tool highlights the Final Draft 2025 LHMP's key hazard information and interactive maps.

Attachment 2: Executive Summary of the 2024 Final Draft LHMP

Executive Summary

Berkeley is a vibrant and unique community. But every aspect of the city – its economic prosperity, social and cultural diversity, and historic character – could be dramatically altered by a disaster. While we cannot prevent natural hazards, we can anticipate their many impacts and take steps to reduce those harms to our infrastructure, environment, and community. We can make sure that the Berkeley that emerges after a disaster continues to reflect our current values.

The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) calls for all communities to prepare mitigation plans every five years. City government and community members have been working together for years to address certain aspects of disaster risk – such as strengthening structures and managing vegetation to reduce fire risk. The 2004 Disaster Mitigation Plan formalized this process for the first time, ensuring that these activities continued to be explored and improved over time. The 2014 and 2019 Local Hazard Mitigation Plans continued this ongoing process to evaluate the risks that different hazards pose to Berkeley, and to engage the community in dialogue to identify the most important steps that the City, its partners, and residents should pursue to reduce these risks. Over many years, this constant focus on disasters has made the Berkeley community much safer.

The City adopted a plan that met the requirements of DMA 2000 on June 22, 2004, and an update in December 2014 and 2019. This is the first draft of the 2024 update to that plan, called the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2024 LHMP).

Plan Purpose

The 2024 LHMP serves four functions:

1. The 2024 LHMP documents our current understanding of the hazards present in Berkeley, along with our vulnerabilities to each hazard – the ways that the hazard could impact our buildings, infrastructure, community, and environment.
2. The document presents Berkeley City government’s Mitigation Strategy for the coming five years. The Mitigation Strategy reflects a wide variety of both funded and unfunded actions, each of which could reduce the Berkeley’s hazard vulnerabilities.
3. In addition to presenting a City-level mitigation strategy, the document outlines Actions that Berkeley community members can and do take at the household level to reduce their own vulnerabilities to hazards in Berkeley. While these household-level actions are not a requirement of the DMA 2000, including these details makes the plan’s risk assessment more immediately relevant to community members, also acknowledging the work they do to reduce our collective risk.
4. By fulfilling requirements of the DMA 2000, the 2024 LHMP ensures that Berkeley will remain eligible to apply for mitigation grant funding before disasters, and to receive federal mitigation funding and additional State recovery funding after disasters.

Plan Organization

The 2024 LHMP has been structured to specifically address DMA 2000 requirements as well as recent updates to these requirements from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The 2024 LHMP is organized as follows:

Element A: Planning Process

This section of the 2024 LHMP describes the process used to develop the document, including how partners, stakeholders, and the community were engaged. It also addresses the City's approach to monitoring the 2024 LHMP over the five-year planning cycle.

Element B: Risk Assessment

This section of the 2024 LHMP outlines the different hazards present in Berkeley. Analysis of each hazard includes a description, the locations in Berkeley with exposure to the hazard, previous occurrences, probability of the hazard occurring in the future, Berkeley's vulnerabilities, and the potential impacts. This section also now includes actions that individual community members and households can take to reduce their risks.

Element C: Mitigation Strategy

The Mitigation Strategy section first documents the authorities, policies, programs, and resources that the City brings to bear in implementing mitigation actions. Second, this section outlines a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects designed to reduce Berkeley's hazard vulnerabilities. This section also describes how the 2024 LHMP is integrated with other City plans.

Element D: Plan Maintenance

This section describes how public participation in the plan maintenance process will continue as well as the methods and schedule for keeping the plan current. It also provides a detailed description of how the 2024 LHMP will be integrated into other planning mechanisms.

Element E: Plan Update

This section describes how changes in development and priorities have influenced updates to the 2024 LHMP. It also provides a detailed description of Berkeley's progress on the Mitigation Strategy adopted in the 2019 LHMP.

Element F: Plan Adoption

This section will be used to document formal adoption of the Final Draft 2024 LHMP by the Berkeley City Council.

Element G: Community Education

This section is new in the 2024 LHMP and is not a FEMA requirement. It includes information on what the City has done to make the risk assessment and mitigation strategy more applicable and accessible to community members. This section includes links to educational resources.

In the pages that follow, this Executive Summary describes highlights from Element B: *Risk Assessment* and Element C: *Mitigation Strategy*, as well as key updates that were made to the section since the 2019 version.

Element B: Risk Assessment

Berkeley is exposed to a number of hazards that vary in their intensity and potential impacts. This mitigation plan addresses the following hazards: earthquake, wildland-urban interface (WUI) fire, extreme heat, poor air quality, high wind, rainfall-triggered landslide, tsunami, flood, sea level rise, utility interruption, hazardous materials release, and infectious disease. Each of these hazards can occur independently or in combination, and can also trigger secondary hazards.

Climate change was included as a separate hazard of concern in the previous versions of this plan. However, in this update, climate change has been integrated throughout the plan and into every hazard of concern. Climate change will continue to increase the likelihood and the severity of the hazards outlined in this place.

Table 1. Summary of Hazard Analysis

Hazard	Likelihood	Severity of Impact
Earthquake	Likely	Catastrophic
Wildland-Urban Interface Fire	Likely	Catastrophic
Extreme Heat	Likely	Moderate to Catastrophic
Poor Air Quality	Likely	Minor
High Wind	Likely	Minor
Rainfall-Triggered Landslide	Likely	Minor to Catastrophic
Tsunami	Possible	Minor to Catastrophic
Floods	Likely	Minor
Sea Level Rise	Likely	Minor to Major
Utility Interruption	Likely	Minor to Major
Hazardous Materials Release	Likely	Minor to Catastrophic
Infectious Disease	Likely	Minor to Catastrophic

Earthquake

The United States Geological Survey states that there is a 72% probability of one or more M 6.7 or greater earthquakes from 2014 to 2043 in the San Francisco Bay Region. There is a 33% chance that a 6.7 or greater will occur on the Hayward fault system between 2014 and 2043.¹ This means that many Berkeley residents are likely to experience a severe earthquake in their lifetime.

A catastrophic earthquake on the Hayward Fault would cause severe and violent shaking and three types of ground failure in Berkeley. Surface fault rupture could occur in the Berkeley hills along the fault, damaging infrastructure and utilities that cross the fault. Landslides are expected in the Berkeley hills during the next major earthquake, particularly if the earthquake occurs during the rainy winter months. Landslide movement could range from a few inches to tens of feet. Ground surface displacements as small as a few inches are enough to break typical foundations. Liquefaction is very likely in the westernmost parts of the city and could occur in much of the Berkeley flats. Liquefaction can destroy pavement, dislodge foundations, and damage underground and aboveground infrastructure.

Shaking and ground failure are likely to create impacts that ignite post-earthquake fires. Firefighting efforts will be simultaneously challenged due to broken water mains and damage to electrical, transportation, and communication infrastructure.

In a 6.9 magnitude earthquake on the Hayward Fault, the City estimates that over 600 buildings in Berkeley will be completely destroyed and over 20,000 more will be damaged. One thousand to 4,000 families may need temporary shelter. Depending on the disaster scenario, one hundred people could be killed in Berkeley alone, and many more would be injured. Commercial buildings, utilities, and public roads will be disabled or destroyed. This plan estimates that building damage in Berkeley alone could exceed \$2 billion, out of a multi-billion-dollar regional loss, with losses to business activities and infrastructure adding to this figure.

Low-income housing units are expected to be damaged at a higher rate than other residences. Other types of housing, such as condominiums, may replace them when land owners rebuild. This could lead to profound demographic shifts in Berkeley.

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire

Fire has always been a natural part of the California and East Bay wildland ecosystem. Fire has historically been a way to maintain forest health, to control invasive species, and to provide a rich habitat for wildlife. In Berkeley, densely-built homes and vegetation have been introduced to hillside areas that otherwise required burning to maintain ecological balance. For many years people have tried to prevent fire in forests and developed areas, disrupting this balance. As a result, catastrophic fires are now occurring throughout the Bay Area and the world.

Climate change is resulting in longer and drier summer conditions leading to wildfires of greater frequency and duration. Increased drought conditions cause fuels to become extremely dry and

more fire prone. Additionally, climate change causes more frequent bouts of extreme weather, including low humidity and high winds associated with fire weather.

There are two primary types of wildfire: “wildland” fire and “wildland-urban interface” (WUI) fire. WUI fires, the primary concern in Berkeley, occur where the natural landscape and urban-built environment meet or intermix. It is especially difficult to control a fire in the wildland-urban interface, where homes and other infrastructure are close to and within wildland areas.

Increased structure density exacerbates wildland-urban interface fire risk. The rate of structure-to-structure ignitions increases when there are more structures per acre. More than two structures per acre is considered high density in the WUI; most areas of the Berkeley hills have at least 2 structures per acre.² Areas of the north Berkeley hills and around Panoramic Hill more than four structures per acre. The density of Berkeley’s hills areas will be a critical factor in fire spread.

Minimal separation between structures also increase fire risk. Structures that are less than 25 feet apart are at extreme risk of directly spreading fire to one another, in a process called “structure-to-structure ignition.” Fires in denser areas will have high rates of structure-to-structure ignition and high risk of losses. In Berkeley many structures are less than 25 feet apart, which places the community in the highest risk category.

Berkeley is vulnerable to a wind-driven fire starting along the city’s eastern border. The fire risk facing the people and properties in the eastern hills is compounded by the area’s mountainous topography, hazardous vegetation, minimal access and egress routes, and location, overlaid upon the Hayward Fault. Berkeley’s flatlands are also exposed to a fire that spreads west from the hills.

The extent and intensity of a WUI fire is closely tied to weather conditions and fuel moisture. Fires that ignite under periodic conditions of “Red Flag Warning” or “Extreme Fire Weather” may result in uncontrollable firestorms. During Extreme Fire Weather, when a fire builds to this magnitude and travels with such extreme speed and force, firefighters’ primary focus often shifts from firefighting to supporting evacuations. This is because during this type of weather, some normally-available firefighting tools can be ineffective or even unusable – like planes and helicopters, which need to be grounded during high winds.

The Berkeley Hills have narrow, windy roads that make evacuation difficult, which is why the Berkeley Fire Department recommends that people leave the hills during Extreme Fire Weather. While the ignition risk is highest in the Berkeley Hills, a wind-driven fire under Extreme Fire Weather can blow through the Berkeley flats, all the way to the Bay.

Extreme Heat

In Berkeley, an extreme heat day is a day above 88.3 degrees Fahrenheit (F). Climate models from the Cal-Adapt tool³ from the California Energy Commission predict the average number of extreme heat days (above 88.3 degrees F) in Berkeley to continually increase by the end of the century. The specific number of extreme heat days expected in Berkeley depends on the level of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted from human activities into the atmosphere.

Extreme heat is a major public health concern with most impacts being on human health, especially on marginalized populations. Public health impacts associated with extreme heat events include premature death, cardiovascular stress and failure, and heat-related illnesses such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, and kidney stones.⁴ Studies have also found links between rising temperatures and a range of mental health issues including mental fatigue, aggression, and even higher rates of suicide.⁵

Berkeley has regularly experienced extreme heat events since 2017, which have included impacts such as heat-related deaths, power outages, and poor air quality.

Poor Air Quality

Poor air quality is a growing concern in Berkeley and in California. According to the California Air Resources Board, 90% of Californians breathe unhealthy levels of outdoor air during some parts of the year. Poor air quality can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat, cause shortness of breath, aggravate asthma and other respiratory conditions, and affect the heart and cardiovascular system.

Poor air quality can last for a few hours or a few weeks, depending on its source. It can also be a chronic issue, for example in places near industry or highways. Southerland et al., published a study in 2021⁶ on the harmful impacts of pollution in the Bay Area. According to these estimates, more than 2,500 people die and 5,200 children develop asthma every year due to traffic-related air pollution exposure in the Bay Area.

Everyone in Berkeley can be impacted by poor air quality – some neighborhoods experience moderate or unhealthy air quality on a regular basis due to proximity to various sources of pollutants like highways and industry, and there have also been several extreme examples of poor air quality that impacted the entire City due to nearby wildfires. The air quality can also change quickly due to weather conditions, such as rain or wind.

High Wind

The National Weather Service (NWS) defines “high winds” as: sustained wind speeds of 40 miles per hour (mph) or greater lasting for one hour or longer, or wind gusts of 58 mph or greater for any duration.

In Berkeley, high wind events are typically associated with the seasons. In the winter, high winds come with weather systems and cold fronts, generally between November through March. In the summer, temperature and pressure differences between the Pacific Ocean and the interior valleys to Berkeley’s east create stronger afternoon and evening winds coming from the west.

Primarily in the fall, dry offshore foehn winds, known as the “Diablo Winds,” occur. Diablo Winds are associated with fire weather. Using data collected by observational instruments placed at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, we identified several days with sustained winds exceeding 25 miles per hour in Berkeley.

As temperatures increase worldwide due to climate change, changes in rising sea levels, humidity, and storminess are unavoidable as the physical processes are all interlinked. Given the prevalence of previous high-wind events, it is expected that each year will bring more.

High winds are dangerous to people, structures, and systems.

Rainfall-Triggered Landslide

Berkeley has a number of deep-seated landslides in the hills that continuously move, with the rate of movement affected by rainfall and groundwater conditions. Significant localized areas of the Berkeley hills face risk from landslide, and a major slide could endanger lives and impact scores of properties, utilities and infrastructure.

Tsunami

Tsunamis, though rare inside the San Francisco Bay, can occur from large offshore subduction style earthquakes around the Pacific Rim. Small, local tsunamis can also result from offshore strike-slip faults such as parts of the San Andreas Fault of the Peninsula and the Hayward Fault through San Pablo Bay. The March 2011 Japan earthquake generated a devastating tsunami, which reached the Bay Area and caused minor damage to docks and floats in the Berkeley Marina. A larger tsunami could impact much more of Berkeley's western shores. Berkeley's maritime community, which would be greatly impacted, includes low income individuals and households. Buildings, infrastructure, and roadways could be damaged, and debris and hazardous materials could cause post-tsunami fires. Deaths are possible if individuals choose not to evacuate hazardous areas, do not understand tsunami warnings, or are unable to evacuate.

Floods

In Berkeley, three types of flooding typically occur: coastal flooding, creek flooding, and storm drain overflow. Creek flooding in Berkeley has the potential to affect an estimated 675 structures, mainly in the western, industrial area of the city. It is unlikely that floodwaters will reach higher than three feet, but damages to homes, businesses, and their contents could total over \$201 million. Storm drain overflow creates localized flooding in many known intersections in Berkeley. With few properties covered by flood insurance, these costs would be borne primarily by Berkeley residents and businesses.

Sea Level Rise

Warmer temperatures associated with climate change are causing global sea levels to rise. Recent scientific studies have begun to evaluate the impact of the shallow groundwater rising in low-lying coastal areas (like Berkeley) combined with sea level rise. According to the San Francisco Estuary Institute and the Pathways Climate Institute⁷, as sea levels rise in San Francisco Bay, shallow groundwater underneath low-lying coastal communities will also rise. Sea level rise and rising groundwater can damage buildings, transportation infrastructure, sewer and water systems, natural resources and ecosystems. Sea level rise will have disproportionate impacts on

disadvantaged communities in Berkeley. The areas most likely to experience flooding with increased sea level rise are in West Berkeley, which has a higher percentage of communities of color and low-income communities.

Utility Interruption

Utility interruption is any loss of a public service including electrical service, telecommunications, wastewater and potable water, and natural gas.

Berkeley residents, visitors, businesses, institutions, and other partners rely on utilities for day-to-day life. Loss of utilities for prolonged period is particularly devastating for people with disabilities, people with access and functional needs, and people with low incomes that may not be able to purchase supplies and or relocate.

Utility interruption can be planned and include a warning, such as with PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs that proactively turn off electricity to mitigate wildfire risk, or come a secondary impact of the other natural hazards included in this plan. Utility interruption can also occur without a preceding natural hazard, for example maintenance and repair or accidental damage. The extent and severity of utility interruption depends on many factors, including cause, location, duration, and time of year. The probability of utility interruption is high, given the number of systems, aging infrastructure, and the variety of possible natural hazards.

Hazardous Materials Release

The City has identified fifteen facilities in Berkeley with sufficiently large quantities of toxic chemicals to pose a high risk to the community. Hazardous materials also travel through Berkeley by truck and rail. Natural hazards identified in the plan could trigger the release of hazardous materials. Over the last 25 years, Berkeley has seen a more than 90 percent reduction in the number of facilities with extremely hazardous materials. The City carefully tracks hazardous materials within its borders, and works closely with companies using large amounts of potentially dangerous materials.

Infectious Disease

Infectious diseases are illnesses caused by germs, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi. They enter the body, multiply and cause an infection. Some infectious diseases are contagious, meaning they can spread from one person to another. The State of California has a list of over 95 communicable diseases that must be reported by healthcare providers or laboratories to local public health officials. All people in Berkeley are susceptible to infectious diseases. The populations at the highest risk for infectious diseases are the very young, the elderly, or individuals who are immunocompromised. Additionally, higher-poverty neighborhoods of color are at greater risk due to the effects of health and social inequalities.

Infectious diseases vary in their impact and severity. Recent outbreaks since 2019 include the COVID-19 pandemic and clusters of monkeypox virus. In most infectious disease outbreaks, the

impact is limited, with the majority of illnesses treatable and the likelihood of fatalities low. Large-scale outbreaks like COVID-19 kill millions of people, completely alter daily life and social activities, threaten businesses and the global economy, and strain existing health care facilities.

Access and Functional Needs

This plan recognizes that many individuals that are still disproportionately vulnerable during disasters. People with access and functional needs are defined as community members who may have additional needs before, during and after an incident in functional areas, including but not limited to: maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision, and medical care. Individuals in need of additional response assistance may include those who have disabilities, live in institutionalized settings, are elderly, are children, are from diverse cultures, have limited English proficiency, or are non-English speaking, or are transportation disadvantaged. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who had a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.

Underserved Communities and Marginalized Populations

Disasters also disproportionately impact underserved communities and marginalized populations. For example, people of color and people with low incomes have been historically denied access to housing and resources, increasing their vulnerability to these shocks. The Mitigation Strategy in the 2024 LHMP identifies if or how each Action benefits underserved communities and socially vulnerable populations. The strategy prioritizes those actions that provide benefits to underserved communities and marginalized populations. Further, the 2024 LHMP includes a list of mitigation actions for individuals and households that are designed to be approachable and accessible to people in varying circumstances and with varying resources to draw from.

Summary of Changes to the Risk Assessment

The 2024 LHMP contains numerous updates to facts, figures, and descriptions. The City has incorporated the newest-available hazard data and incorporated new hazards into the Plan. The City and its partners have provided additional descriptions, details, and definitions to explain the science of these hazards and their potential impacts.

Within the previous events section for each hazard, the City has added information about any instances of the hazard affecting Berkeley since 2019. Throughout the plan, the City has updated financial loss estimates for inflation.

In some hazard sections, Risk and Loss Estimates include analysis from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). GFOA is a nonprofit association of more than 23,000 state and local government finance professionals and elected officials from across North America. The City of Berkeley has been assessing the potential impacts of extreme events, like natural disasters, on the City government's financial condition, particularly its reserve levels for the General Fund. The City engaged the GFOA to produce a recommendation to help it decide the

appropriate reserve level for the general fund, given the risks from extreme events. A key part of GFOA's mission is to promote best practices in public finance, including reserve policies. The analysis by GFOA also shed light on the potential broader economic losses to the community from the risks posed by extreme events.

Hazards Described in the 2024 Plan

For the first time, the plan identifies poor air quality, high wind, sea level rise, utility interruption, and infectious disease as hazards of concern. Significant changes and updates to the analysis of each hazard are described below:

Earthquake (Section B.2)

- The Earthquake section has been pared down to improve readability.
- The descriptions of vulnerable building types have been updated and now include photos.
- The map of potentially vulnerable buildings in Berkeley has been updated.

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire (Section B.3)

- This section has been updated to include the following:
 - Information about the Berkeley Overnight Camps and their fire risk.
 - Information about the 2017 Grizzly Fire.
 - A detailed description of fire weather, outlining Red Flag and Extreme Fire Weather days.
 - New data and narrative about wildfire risk in Berkeley from the National Institutes of Standards and Technology and East Bay Regional Parks.
- This section has been updated to include the following new maps that better contextualize the wildfire risk in Berkeley:
 - Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area from Cal Fire
 - City of Berkeley Fire Zones 1, 2, and 3
 - Wildfire Hazard Map for Fire Prevention Planning which classifies the hazard from lowest to highest
 - Density of Structures in Berkeley Fire Zones 2 and 3
 - Wildfire Risk to Structures Map which combines the hazard classification with structure density to show the areas of higher wildfire risk to structures
 - Distance Between Structures in Berkeley Fire Zones 2 and 3
 - An updated map of the 1923 fire boundary

Extreme Heat Events (Section B.4)

- This section has been updated to include the following:
 - Information and a map showing thermal belting, the phenomenon where the Berkeley hills has higher temperatures than the rest of the city.
 - Graphics about forecasting heat risk.
 - Extreme heat events since 2019 in Berkeley.

- Data and a map of excess emergency rooms visits on extreme heat days by zip code have been included demonstrating higher rates for people in central, south, and west Berkeley.
- A map of cooling center locations in Berkeley.
- New data for potential impacts and losses from a study of the 2006 heat wave in California showing the excess statewide healthcare costs and premature deaths.

Poor Air Quality (Section B.5)

- Poor air quality events are a newly-introduced hazard of concern for the 2024 LHMP.
- The poor air quality section describes the factors that contribute to poor air quality, how it is measured, and how it can concentrate in the Berkeley hills due to marine layer inversion. It also describes the chronic poor air quality issues from industry and transportation infrastructure in west and south Berkeley.

High Wind (Section B.6)

- High wind events are a newly introduced hazards of concern for the 2024 LHMP.
- The high wind section describes what constitutes high wind and the seasonality of wind events in Berkeley. High wind events are very closely connected to fire weather. However, high wind in any season can damage trees, infrastructure, and utilities.

Rainfall-Triggered Landslide (Section B.7)

- This section has been updated to include the following:
 - Landslide occurrences in Berkeley since 2019.
 - New maps of Berkeley using data from the California Landslide Inventory and Landslide Susceptibility Classes from the California Department of Conservation.

Tsunami (Section B.8)

- This section has been updated to include the following:
 - A new map of the Tsunami Inundation Zone, which was updated to reflect new science and feedback from local jurisdictions.
 - Updated maps of the Berkeley Tsunami Evacuation Phases from the Tsunami Evacuation Playbooks. These Playbooks, developed by the California Geological Survey, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), reflect more refined and detailed planning, in which forecasted tsunami amplitudes, storm surge, and tidal information can help guide which areas might be inundated in different scenarios, depending on the extent of the event. This analysis uses helps NOAA to better predict inundation areas during actual tsunami events. Local emergency managers can use this information to better target evacuation areas during actual tsunami events.
 - Information about the 2023 tsunami advisory for Berkeley as a result of the underwater volcano eruption near Tonga.
 - New data and maps that show the probability of a tsunami occurring in Berkeley, expressed in 100-year, 200-year, 475-year, and 975-year return periods.
 - New data about the people and structures that might be impacted by a tsunami in Berkeley.

Sea Level Rise (Section B.9)

- Sea level rise is a newly introduced hazard of concern for the 2024 LHMP. It was listed in the 2019 LHMP as a related impact of climate change in that section, but did not have its own section.
- The section provides analysis of amounts of sea level rise anticipated under different projected carbon emissions scenarios, as well as maps of expected levels of inundation from 2-ft, 4-ft, and 5.5-ft sea level rise scenarios using the Adapting to Rising Tides Bay Shoreline Flood Explorer.
- New studies about shallow groundwater rising and related maps are included.

Floods (Section B.10)

- This section has been updated to include the following:
 - Newly-revised flood exposure map for Berkeley using data from the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program.
 - A map of Community Calls for Service to report storm drain back up during the January 2023 winter storms.
 - Information about the most recent flooding in December 2022 and January 2023, which resulted in a Federal Major Disaster Declaration for Alameda County.

Utility Interruption (Section B.11)

- Utility interruption is a newly introduced hazard of concern for the 2024 LHMP. It was listed as secondary impact of several of the other hazards of concern in the 2019 LHMP. However, utility interruption can occur without a preceding hazard and can cause severe impacts, resulting in it receiving its own section in the 2024 update.
- This section describes the utility systems, who manages them, and what the impacts of interruptions (planned or not) can have on people and infrastructure.

Hazardous Materials Release (Section B.12)

- The Hazardous Materials Release section contains updated figures on the number of sites with hazardous materials in Berkeley.

Infectious Disease (Section B.13)

- Infectious disease is a newly introduced hazard of concern for the 2024 LHMP.
- This section describes infectious diseases, recent occurrences of outbreaks like the COVID-19 pandemic, and the potential impacts on people, daily life, and healthcare infrastructure.

Element C: Mitigation Strategy

Through many years of diligent effort by City government and the community, Berkeley has developed many innovative initiatives to increase our disaster resilience. The authorities, policies, programs and resources that Berkeley will use to support execution of the 2024 LHMP Mitigation strategy include:

- The City has strengthened its ability to serve the community during and after disasters by seismically upgrading or replacing buildings that house critical City functions. In 2022, work was completed on the North Berkeley Senior Center. In 2021, work was completed on the Live Oak Community Center.
- The City has worked diligently to enhance public safety and reduce physical threats from earthquakes by requiring owners of soft story and unreinforced masonry buildings to retrofit their structures.
 - Berkeley was the first city in the nation to inventory the community's soft-story buildings. As of July 2023, 277 buildings have completed their retrofit, 26 still need to be retrofitted, and 61 buildings were removed from the list.
- The City offers a comprehensive suite of programs to encourage the community to strengthen buildings to be more hazard-resistant.
 - In early 2017, the Building and Safety Division developed a new Retrofit Grants program with funding from a Hazard Mitigation Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). As of August 2023, 63 design grants and 75 construction grants have been disbursed.
 - Since July 2002, the City has distributed over \$12 million to homeowners through the Transfer Tax Rebate Program, which reduces the real estate transfer tax to building owners who perform seismic safety work.
 - The City participates in the Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB) program, a grant program administered by the California Earthquake Authority, providing grants of up to \$3,000 for seismic retrofits of owner-occupied residential buildings with 1-4 dwelling units.
- The City, working together with key partners, is using a comprehensive strategy to aggressively mitigate Berkeley's wildland-urban interface (WUI) fire hazard. These approaches include:
 - Prevention through development regulations with strict building and fire code provisions, as well as more restrictive local amendments for new and renovated construction;
 - Enforcement programs including annual inspections with support from the YouthWorks internship program;
 - Providing home hardening and defensible space materials and instructions to low income residents in targeted high risk areas;
 - Natural resource protection through vegetation management programs;
 - Improvement of access and egress routes;
 - Coordinating regional wildfire mitigation strategies with key partners and stakeholders;

- Infrastructure maintenance and improvements to support first responders' efforts to reduce facilitate emergency evacuation and fire spread.
- The City is embarking on an update to the General Plan, including a new Environmental Justice and Safety Element. These processes and documents will build off the 2024 LHMP and Planning Process.
- The City's Office of Emergency Services encourages community readiness and participation in hazard mitigation strategies. Through the 2024 LHMP Planning Process, the City created new videos, guides, and outreach materials intended to support community members in understanding their risks and what actions they can take to reduce risks.

These programs, and many others, place Berkeley as a leader in disaster management. Long-term maintenance and improvements to these programs will support execution of the 2024 LHMP Mitigation strategy, and will help to protect the Berkeley community in our next disaster.

Disaster Mitigation Goals

Berkeley will focus on five goals to reduce and avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the hazards identified in *Element B: Risk Assessment*:

- A. Reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, and economic damage to Berkeley residents and businesses from earthquakes, wildfires, landslides, floods, tsunamis, climate change, extreme heat, poor air quality, infectious disease, sea level rise, wind, utility disruption and their secondary impacts.
- B. Increase City government's ability to serve the community during and after hazardous events by mitigating risk to key City functions.
- C. Protect and enhance quality of life in Berkeley.
- D. Connect with residents, community-based organizations, institutions, businesses, and essential lifeline systems in order to increase mitigation actions and disaster resilience in the community.
- E. Co-create mitigation plans, policies, and programs with Berkeley's underserved communities, elevating the voices of these community members and prioritizing their needs to prepare for and adapt to climate change and natural hazards.

Overview of Actions

This plan identifies and analyzes 33 mitigation actions to reduce the impacts from hazards described in *Element B: Risk Assessment*. This suite of actions addresses every natural hazard posing a threat to Berkeley, with an emphasis on new and existing buildings and infrastructure.

Tables 2, 3, and 4 below summarize all of the actions. The tables group actions by their priority level (see *Element C.5* for details on prioritization of actions), and identify the hazard(s) and each action addresses.

Table 2. High-Priority Actions in mitigation strategy

Action	Hazards
Continue appropriate seismic and fire safety analysis based on current and future use for all City-owned facilities and structures.	Multi-hazard
Strengthen or replace City buildings in the identified prioritized order as funding is available.	Multi-hazard
Reduce hazard vulnerabilities for non-City-owned buildings throughout Berkeley.	Multi-hazard
Implementation of the Retrofit Grants Program which helps Berkeley building owners increase safety and mitigate the risk of damage caused by earthquakes	Earthquake
Continued Implementation of the Soft Story Retrofit Program, which mandates seismic retrofit of soft story buildings with 5+ residential units.	Earthquake
Complete the ongoing program to retrofit all remaining non-complying Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings.	Earthquake
Monitor passage and implementation of mandatory seismic retrofit ordinances for concrete buildings in other jurisdictions to assess best practices.	Earthquake
Reduce fire risk in existing development through fire code updates and enforcement.	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Reduce fire risk in existing development through vegetation management.	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Manage and promote pedestrian evacuation routes in Fire Zones 2 and 3.	Earthquake Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Improve responder access and community evacuation in Fire Zones 2 and 3 through roadway maintenance and appropriate parking restrictions.	Earthquake Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Research, identify, and implement infrastructure improvements to facilitate emergency evacuation.	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Tsunami
Reduce fire risk through utility undergrounding.	Earthquake Wildland-Urban Interface Fire High Winds

Action	Hazards
Work with EBMUD to ensure an adequate water supply during emergencies and disaster recovery.	Earthquake Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Reduce Berkeley’s vulnerability to extreme heat events and associated hazards.	Extreme Heat Poor Air Quality
Mitigate hazards associated with natural gas usage, including disaster damage and energy service disruption, by minimizing need for energy use and moving toward use of electricity in lieu of natural gas.	Multi-hazard
Mitigate hazardous materials release in Berkeley through inspection and enforcement programs.	Multi-hazard
Maintain City participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.	Floods
Maintain City programs and projects to mitigate the impacts of infectious diseases in Berkeley.	Infectious Disease
Collect, analyze and share information with the Berkeley community about Berkeley hazards and associated risk reduction techniques.	Multi-hazard
Coordinate with and encourage mitigation actions of key City partners.	Multi-hazard
Coordinate regional wildfire mitigation strategies with key partners and stakeholders	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Advance equitable community resilience, with a focus on disadvantaged communities.	Multi-hazard

Table 3. Medium-Priority Actions in mitigation strategy

Action	Hazards
Mitigate wildfire risk to Berkeley’s overnight camps.	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire
Reduce Berkeley’s vulnerability to severe storms and associated hazards through proactive research and planning, zoning regulations, and improvements to stormwater drainage facilities.	Landslide Floods
Reduce Berkeley’s vulnerability to extreme heat events and associated hazards.	Extreme Heat Poor Air Quality
Implement energy assurance strategies at critical City facilities.	Multi-hazard
Implement existing City programs, plans, and projects designed to reduce emissions that contribute to poor air quality.	Poor Air Quality Extreme Heat
Mitigate the impacts of sea level rise in Berkeley.	Sea Level Rise Flood

Table 4. Low-Priority Actions in mitigation strategy

Action	Hazards
Mitigate climate change impacts by integrating climate change research and adaptation planning into City operations and services.	Multi-hazard
Collaborate with partners to increase the security of Berkeley’s water supply from climate change impacts.	Multi-hazard
Mitigate Berkeley’s tsunami hazard.	Tsunami
Give priority to project applications that would rebuild to current standards following disasters.	Multi-hazard

-
- 1 Detweiler, Shane and Wein, A., 2018, The HayWired Earthquake Scenario – Earthquake Hazards: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2017-5013-A-H, p.4
 - 2 Maranghides, A., et al. (2022) WUI Structure/Parcel/Community Fire Hazard Mitigation Methodology. NIST Technical Note 2205. National Institute of Standards and Technology. Gaithersburg, MD. <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.TN.2205>
 - 3 <https://cal-adapt.org/about/>
 - 4 California Adaptation Planning Guide, July 2012.
 - 5 Seo, H. (2022, August 19). How heat waves take a toll on Mental Health. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/19/well/mind/heat-mental-health.html>
 - 6 Southerland, et al., 2021. “Assessing the Distribution of Air Pollution Risks within Cities: A Neighborhood-Scale Analysis Leveraging High-Resolution Data Sets in the Bay Area, California.” Environmental Health Perspectives, Volume 129, Issue 3. doi: 10.1289/EHP7679
 - 7 May, C. L.; Mohan, A.; Plane, E.; Ramirez-Lopez, D.; Mak, M.; Luchinsky, L.; Hale, T.; Hill, K. 2022. Shallow Groundwater Response to Sea-Level Rise: Alameda, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties. Pathways Climate Institute and San Francisco Estuary Institute. <https://www.sfei.org/documents/shallow-groundwater-response-sea-level-rise-alameda-marin-san-francisco-and-san-mateo>



PLANNING COMMISSION

Notice of Public Hearing

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Planning Commission of the City of Berkeley will hold a public hearing on the above matter, pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 23.412, on **Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.** at the **North Berkeley Senior Center**, 1901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley (wheelchair accessible). In accordance with the Brown Act, Planning Commission meetings will be held in person only.

The agenda will be posted on the Planning Commission website (<https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/planning-commission>) no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 31, 2025.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) update identifies natural hazards in Berkeley and outlines a five-year strategy to further protect Berkeley's people, buildings, infrastructure and environment from those hazards. Adoption of the updated LHMP is required for the City to be eligible for federal and state mitigation funding and post-disaster recovery funding. In order to comply with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (Cal OES) requirements, the City's General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element must be amended to explicitly reference the adoption year of the LHMP update. City's LHMP was last adopted in 2014 and 2019. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing, consider public input and make a recommendation to City Council regarding the LHMP and associated technical edit to the General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element.

LOCATION: Citywide.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS

The proposed change would be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Guideline Sections 15183(d), 15262, 15306 and 15061(b)(3) because a) the Plan is consistent with the General Plan; b) the Plan involves feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions; c) the Plan involves basic data collection, research, experimental management and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource; and d) it can be seen with certainty that the proposed amendment would not have a significant effect on the environment.

PUBLIC COMMENT & FURTHER INFORMATION

All persons are welcome to attend the hearing and will be given an opportunity to address the Commission. Comments may be made verbally at the public hearing and/or in writing before the hearing. Written comments must be directed to:

Faye Messner
Planning Commission Clerk
Email: PlanningPC@berkeleyca.gov

City of Berkeley, Land Use Planning Division
1947 Center Street, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

Correspondence received by **12pm on Tuesday, January 28, 2024**, will be included as a

Communication in the agenda packet. Correspondence received after this deadline will be conveyed to the Commission and the public in the following manner:

- Correspondence received by **12pm on Monday, February 3, 2024** will be included in a Supplemental Packet, which will be posted to the online agenda as a Late Communication one day before the public hearing.
- Correspondence received by **5pm on Tuesday, February 4, 2024** will be included in a second Supplemental Packet, which will be posted to the online agenda as a Late Communication by 5pm on the day of the public hearing.
- Correspondence received **after 5pm on Tuesday, February 4, 2024** will be saved as part of the public record.

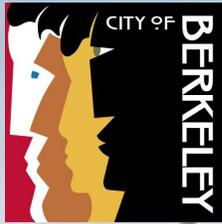
Members of the public may submit written comments just before or at the beginning of the meeting by providing 15 printed copies of the correspondence to the Planning Commission Secretary.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS

To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on audiocassette, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call (510) 981-7410 (voice) or 981-6903 (TDD). Notice of at least five (5) business days will ensure availability. All materials will be made available via the Planning Commission agenda page online at <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/planning-commission>.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Questions should be directed to Alisa Shen, at (510) 981-7409 or ashen@berkeleyca.gov. Current and past agendas are available on the City of Berkeley website at: <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/planning-commission>.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT + DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE

PREPARED, SAFE, AND HEALTHY BERKELEY FOR ALL

WORKSHOP #1

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

**Location: South Berkeley Senior Center
2939 Ellis Street, Berkeley, CA 94703**

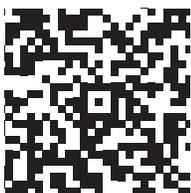
Help us identify climate change, disaster preparedness, and environmental justice issues and assets in Berkeley.

About the Project

The City is embarking on a new, multi-year project to update the City's **General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element**, develop a new **General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element**, and create metrics to monitor and evaluate the City's progress towards advancing its climate action and resilience goals.

Topics of Discussion

Project Introduction
Identifying Hazards & Risks
Mapping Vulnerable Communities



RSVP

While it is not required, we request that you please RSVP by Friday, January 31, 2025 to help staff plan for the event.

For more information, visit:
<https://berkeleyca.gov/prepared-safe-healthy>

For questions, contact:
PreparedSafeHealthy@berkeleyca.gov

Communications

From: Arlene Owseichik <bigpicturedesign@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 1:34 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: CEQA and the UA Theater, 2274 Shattuck

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

I am a long time Berkeley resident, a lover of history and architecture. I have been befuddled for almost two years that folks on the City Council, the Preservation Commission, and the Zoning Board have not taken a stand to prevent the demolition of the UA Theater at 2274 Shattuck.

The building was an Art Deco masterpiece when it opened in 1932. We believe architectural elements still exist under the remodel in the 1970's when the theater became a multi-plex.

The UA is on the California Register of Historical Resources. It is National Register-eligible and is also now a city landmark. The building is a cultural and historical resource under the CEQA statute. It could become Berkeley's version of the Oakland Paramount, a multi-purpose venue and community gathering place.

www.savetheuaberkeley.org recently filed an appeal to the decision to bypass CEQA. We urge you to consider this appeal and follow the laws regarding CEQA.

Why has the developer been granted an exemption from CEQA? Why was the Zoning board not aware of the reports filed by the Rincon Group, whom the city hired, that declared the property to be of historic significance?

Why is everyone so chummy with Patrick Kennedy at the expense of Berkeley history? What depth does a 17 story "dorm" bring to downtown?

The Shattuck Cinemas were demolished and now a vacant hole sits in the middle of our main thoroughfare. What if the same thing happens with the UA property?

We hear the drumbeat to build more housing! There are other places where that building could be built on Shattuck that are centrally located, near transportation and the University.

Once the UA is gone, such a building will never again be built in Berkeley. What a loss for current and future generations.

Sincerely,
Arlene Oweichik
1412 Santa Fe Avenue

Arlene Owseichik
bigpicturedesign@sbcglobal.net

510-407-0225
www.bigpicturedesign.biz