



Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

AGENDA

Wednesday, September 16, 2026

6:30 PM

Berkeley City Hall – Cypress Room – 2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid model with both in-person and virtual attendance. Attend this meeting remotely using **Zoom**: <https://cityofberkeley-info.zoomgov.com/j/1655164575> To request to speak, use the “raise hand” function in Zoom. To join by phone: Dial **1-669-254-5252** or **1-833-568-8864 (Toll Free)** and enter **Meeting ID: 165 516 4575**. To provide public comment, Press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair. To submit a written communication for the public record, email hhcshwcac@berkeleyca.gov. This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting, however, if you are feeling sick, please do not attend the meeting in person. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to hhcshwcac@berkeleyca.gov.

Public comment policy: Members of the public may speak on any items on the Agenda and items not on the Agenda during the initial Public Comment period. Members of the public may also comment on any item listed on the agenda as the item is taken up. Members of the public may not speak more than once on any given item. The Chair may limit public comments to 3 minutes or less.

Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call
2. Agenda Approval
3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Update/Action Items

The Commission may take action related to any subject listed on the agenda, except where noted.

Berkeley Community Action Agency Board Business

1. Approve minutes from the 07/15/2026 regular meeting (Attachment A) – All
2. Election of low-income representatives – All
3. Discussion and Possible Action: Recommendation for anticipated 2027 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Contract (Attachment B) – Staff
4. Fiscal Year 2026 Community Services Block Grant Impact Review Presentation - Staff

Other Discussion Items

1. Discussion and Possible Action: Submission of Opposition Letter regarding Flock Software Contracts to City Council (Attachment C) – Herzer Baptiste & Lippman

2. Discussion and Possible Action: Outreach and Resource Connection to Community Needs following Copwatch Presentation at July 2026 HWCAC Meeting - Sol
3. Discussion and Possible Action: A Solidarity Grocery for Southside Berkeley Presentation and Recommendation to City Council (Attachment D) – Herzer-Baptiste
4. Announcements
5. Future Agenda Items
6. Adjournment

Attachments

- A. Draft minutes of the 07/15/2026 regular meeting
- B. Community Services Block Grant Contract Memo
- C. Draft Opposition to Flock Software Contract Letter to City Council
- D. A Solidarity Grocery for Southside Berkeley Presentation

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I hereby certify that the agenda for this meeting of the Berkeley City Commission was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on 9/10/26

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kat Larowe'.

Kat Larowe, Secretary



## Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

### DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

6:30 PM

Berkeley City Hall – Cypress Room – 2180 Milvia Street  
Berkeley, CA 94704

### Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call
  - a. Meeting Start Time: 6:35
  - b. Present: Gelsinger, Herzer-Baptiste, Huchting, Lippman, and Sol.
  - c. Absent:
  - d. Quorum: 3 (Attended: 5)
  - e. Staff Present: Kat Larrowe
  - f. Number of Public Present: 4
2. Agenda Approval  
**Action:** M/S/C (Huchting/Sol): Motion to approve agenda as written  
**Vote:** Ayes: Gelsinger, Herzer-Baptiste, Huchting, Lippman, and Sol; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None
3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters  
1

### Update/Action Items

***The Commission may take action related to any subject listed on the agenda, except where noted.***

4. Presentation from Andrea Pritchett, Founder of Copwatch

**No action taken**

### **Berkeley Community Action Agency Board Business**

1. Approve minutes from the 06/17/2026 regular meeting (Attachment A) – All  
**Action:** M/S/C (Herzer-Baptiste/Lippman): Approve 6/17/2026 regular meeting minutes with no modifications  
**Vote:** Ayes: Gelsinger, Herzer-Baptiste, Huchting, Lippman; Noes: None; Abstain: Sol; Absent: None
2. Election of low-income representatives – All

**No action taken**

### **Other Discussion Items**

3. Discussion and possible action submitting an Opposition Letter regarding Surveillance Software Company Contracts to City Council (Attachment B)  
**Action:** M/S/C (Huchting/Herzer-Baptiste): Create and appoint George Lippman and Taj Herzer-Baptiste to a subcommittee to review and respond to the City's Surveillance

Software Company Request for Proposal and draft a letter HWCAC commission review at the September 2026 meeting

**Vote:** Ayes: Gelsinger, Herzer-Baptiste, Huchting, Lippman; Sol. Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None

4. Discussion and possible action to invite a representative from the Alameda County Supervisor's Office from District 5 to present on the process of Measure W funding for housing to Berkeley's homeless population  
**No action taken**

5. Discussion and possible action to draft a City Council Report regarding funding opportunities for the Berkeley Community Physical Therapy Clinic  
**No action taken**

6. Announcements

7. Future Agenda Items

8. Adjournment

**Action:** M/S/C (Herzer-Baptiste/Gelsinger): Adjourn meeting at 8:29

**Vote:** Ayes: Gelsinger, Herzer-Baptiste, Huchting, Lippman; Noes: None; Abstain: Sol; Absent: None

## **Attachments**

- A. Draft minutes of the 06/17/2026 regular meeting
- B. Draft Opposition to Surveillance Software Companies Letter to City Council

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kat Larowe, Secretary



Health, Housing &  
Community Services Department  
**Housing & Community Services Division**

**To:** Members, Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC)

**From:** Kat Larrowe and Cynthia McClellan, HHCS

**Date:** September 16, 2026

**Subject:** **Recommended Approval of Anticipated 2027 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Funding**

## RECOMMENDATION

Housing and Community Services (HCS) staff recommend that the Human Welfare Community Action Commission (HWCAC) recommend the City Council accept the anticipated calendar year (CY) 2027 CSBG funding. The anticipated award amount for CY 2027 is approximately \$300,000. If the state does not allocate sufficient funds to cover the allocations designated during FY25-FY28 Community Agency Request for Proposal (RFP) this year or subsequent years, the City may either terminate or amend the resultant agreements with agencies without any liability occurring to the City. A record copy of said agency contracts and amendments are on file with the City Clerk.

## CURRENT SITUATION

The City of Berkeley is a Community Action Agency (CAA) and therefore receives CSBG funding to support anti-poverty programs. CSBG funds are part of the federal Department of Health and Human Services budget passed through the state to local CAAs. Historically, the City of Berkeley has awarded CSBG funds to community service programs providing health and other services to those living in poverty in Berkeley.

The HWCAC acts as the tripartite advisory Board for CSBG funding and makes recommendations to Berkeley City Council. The Berkeley City Council is responsible for all final CSBG funding decisions.

HCS staff are requesting that the HWCAC make this recommendation now to ensure the City meets state contracting guidelines. If the HWCAC recommends it to Council, and Council adopts it before the end of the year, it will help the City execute the revenue contract on time and stay compliance with state requirements.

Award notifications from CSD have historically arrived in November. Once we have an official award amount, HCS staff will report back to the HWCAC on that amount.

***A Vibrant and Healthy Berkeley for All***

**BACKGROUND**

CSBG supports the City of Berkeley's anti-poverty efforts. The total award amount for both calendar year 2025 and 2026 is approximately \$327,299. This includes \$26,000 in discretionary funding for each year. The CY 2027 allocation in CSBG funds complement anti-poverty General Funds which are used for other critical community services.

The table below illustrates the CSBG and leveraged funding breakdown for 2025 as an example of how the City uses CSBG funding:

|                                                                               | <b>CSBG</b> | <b>CSBG Disc.</b> | <b>City Leveraged Funds (Measure E)</b> | <b>Total</b>    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                                                | \$301,299   | \$26,000          | \$1,834,487                             | \$2,161,786     |
|                                                                               |             |                   |                                         |                 |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                                            |             |                   |                                         |                 |
| Community Agency – Lifelong Health Services                                   | \$161,804   | \$0               | \$0                                     | \$161,804       |
| Community Agency – Easy Does It Disability Services                           | \$0         | \$0               | \$1,834,487                             | \$1,834,487     |
| Community Agency – Women's Daytime Drop-In Clinic                             | \$0         | \$26,000          | \$0                                     | \$26,000        |
| Administration – 12% cap of total operating budget, including leveraged funds | \$139,495   | \$0               | \$0                                     | \$139,495 (=6%) |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                  | \$301,299   | \$26,000          | \$1,834,487                             | \$2,161,786     |

## Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

*A Vibrant and Healthy Berkeley for All*

### Communication

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC)

**Submitted by:** Catherine Huchting, Chair, HWCAC

**Subject: Opposition to Renewal of Flock Safety Contracts**

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

We write concerning the City's contracts with Flock Safety, and we write not as technicians of procurement but as trustees of the welfare of Berkeley's people. Some will say that a surveillance contract is a police matter, and that a welfare commission should keep to its lane. But the harms of this technology do not keep to lanes. Wherever the wellbeing of Berkeley residents is diminished, this Commission is no outsider — and it is being diminished now.

Dr. King taught that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Flock Safety has made the point literal. The company has built a network of more than one hundred thousand cameras, and what enters that network anywhere can surface everywhere. A license plate scanned on San Pablo Avenue does not remain a Berkeley record; it becomes a national one, reachable by agencies this city never invited and would never welcome. We are bound to every other community on that network — not in a web of mutuality, but in a web of watching. And whether a Berkeley family will drive to a clinic, walk into a shelter, or call this city for help now depends on what is done with their movements in databases Berkeley does not control.

The facts are not in serious dispute, and we recite only a few, because a moral argument must stand on true things. California law forbids sharing license plate data with federal or out-of-state agencies (Civil Code § 1798.90.5 et seq.). Yet city after city has discovered, usually only after auditing its logs, that the sharing happened anyway: Santa Cruz, which cancelled in January after finding its data had reached ICE; Mountain View, which darkened every camera in February after an audit revealed unauthorized federal access; Dayton, Ohio, whose June audit surfaced more than seven thousand searches run for immigration enforcement in defiance of the city's own policy. At least eighty American cities have now cancelled or deactivated their Flock contracts. And in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, a city council revoked its approval within a single day, after learning that a company executive had misrepresented the system's tracking capabilities to their faces.

These facts raise a question older than any camera: what becomes of a community when there is one law on the books and another in life? A statute that forbids federal sharing, bolted to a system that shares federally by default, is not protection; it is decoration. When a city continues a practice it cannot bring within its own commitments — the ALPR Privacy Act, our Surveillance Technology Ordinance, our sanctuary promises — it teaches its residents that law binds the governed but not the government. Few lessons corrode a city's soul faster.

We anticipate the counsel of moderation: renew now and audit later; accept the vendor's newest toggle, its latest disclaimer, its next promise. But we have come to believe the greatest obstacle here is not the open advocate of surveillance. It is the moderate who prefers the appearance of safety to its substance; who prefers an order without justice to the harder work of justice itself; who says “wait” while the database grows by billions of scans a month. Other cities waited. Waiting is how Dayton arrived at seven thousand forbidden searches. For the family deciding tonight whether it is safe to drive to a food pantry, “wait” has a cost the rest of us never see.

Nor should we imagine that time alone will mend this. The vendor asks for patience — a new toggle this winter, a new disclaimer this spring, a new promise each time an audit uncovers what the last promise concealed. But time is not neutral here. While a city deliberates, the archive of its residents' movements deepens, and what has been collected can never be un-collected. The bill is already arriving elsewhere: the ALPR Privacy Act carries statutory damages of \$2,500 per violation, and

# ATTACHMENT C

California cities now face class actions over data shared with federal agencies more than a million times. Waiting will not make these contracts lawful; it will only make the reckoning larger.

And we must say plainly who pays the truest cost. Not those with the least reason to fear being watched. The cost falls on the immigrant mother who no longer drives her child to the pediatrician; on the unhoused neighbor who stops coming in for services; on the low-income families this Commission and the Community Action Agency exist to serve. A public safety technology that makes the most vulnerable less safe — less willing to seek shelter, medical care, or the City's own outstretched hand — has failed the only test that matters.

Nor are these harms hypothetical. Last year a Texas sheriff's deputy searched more than 83,000 Flock cameras across the country — including cameras in states where reproductive care is protected by law — hunting for a woman over a self-managed abortion; the reason typed into the search log read “had an abortion, search for female,” and court records later showed prosecutors were consulted about charging her, even as the company insisted the search had been for her safety. California has promised to be a haven for such patients. A camera network searchable from Texas makes every Berkeley intersection a potential breach of that promise. And the watchers themselves have gone unwatched: researchers have documented more than two dozen officers using these cameras to stalk former partners and spouses — among them a Kansas police chief who ran two hundred searches on a woman he once shared a life with, and a California officer who pleaded guilty this spring to tracking his wife and other women through Flock while under a restraining order. A tool so easily turned against a woman leaving a violent marriage, or a patient seeking lawful care, is not an instrument of safety. It is an instrument of intimate harm, and Berkeley is being asked to keep it loaded.

We do not doubt that cameras have solved crimes, and we do not question the good faith of those who hoped this tool would serve Berkeley well. But when Flock's chief executive dismissed the communities raising these questions as enemies of public safety, it was a police chief, in Staunton, Virginia, who answered that citizens questioning their government's surveillance is “democracy in action” — and whose city then ended its contract. Berkeley, of all cities, should not need to be reminded of that by anyone.

We appeal, finally, to Berkeley's own memory. This is the city that desegregated its schools without waiting for a court to order it; the city where disabled Americans built the independent living movement out of a few blocks near the university; the city that adopted one of the nation's first surveillance technology ordinances because it understood, earlier than most, that liberty can be lost by default setting and by subscription as surely as by decree. Berkeley has been early before. It has never been made poorer by choosing its principles ahead of the crowd, and it will not be made poorer now.

Nor do we ask the Council to choose between safety and justice, for they are not rivals. Real safety is the kind a resident can walk toward: a shelter bed that feels safe to claim, a clinic that feels safe to enter, a city phone number that feels safe to dial. That is the safety this Commission and the Community Action Agency labor for daily, and it is built from trust — slowly, face to face — in a way no camera can replicate and any camera, wrongly used, can unmake in an afternoon. Every dollar, and every measure of public trust, spent on a network that frightens our neighbors away from our own front doors is taken from that work.

We therefore urge the Council: first, to decline renewal of the City's contracts with Flock Safety; second, in all events, to order a full public audit of every external access to Berkeley's ALPR data before any renewal comes to a vote; and third, to direct that any future surveillance acquisition proceed only through the full community review our Surveillance Technology Ordinance was written to guarantee. One day this city will be asked what it did when the machinery of mass surveillance arrived on its streets dressed as a subscription service. Let the answer be that Berkeley looked, understood, and chose its people. This Commission stands ready to help.

Sincerely,

Catherine Huchting, Chair

Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

A PROPOSAL FOR CITY COUNCIL

# A Solidarity Grocery for Southside

*The equity companion to Berkeley's Telegraph food-access strategy*

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Presented to the Human Welfare & Community Action Commission

Taj Herzer-Baptiste, Commissioner · [Meeting date]

## THE PROBLEM

# Southside has a food-access gap the market alone won't close

**Council already acted on the supply side.**

In January 2026 Council adopted a zoning amendment (Ord. 7,996-N.S.) lifting the alcohol-sales ban in the Telegraph Commercial district. The stated goal: Southside lacks a full-service grocery store, and the old rule deterred grocers from locating there.

**But a market-rate grocer answers availability — not affordability.**

For low-income residents, students, and seniors, a new store on Telegraph does not by itself make food reachable on a tight budget.

## THE STRATEGY SO FAR

**Zoning change (done)**

Removed a barrier so a private grocer will consider Telegraph.

**What it reaches**

General shoppers who can pay retail prices.

**What it misses**

Households in precarity — the affordability layer.

## THE MODEL

# The épicerie sociale: a grocery store, not a food line

A French social-welfare model: a subsidized, self-service store where eligible shoppers choose their own groceries and pay a small fraction of retail. It preserves dignity and choice, and pairs food access with a social-work touchpoint.

**1****Retail, not relief**

Shoppers browse and pay — no pre-packed parcels.

**2****10–30% of price**

Clients pay a small share of the supermarket cost.

**3****Referral-based**

Social workers screen and refer; access is time-limited.

**4****Food + support**

A social counselor connects shoppers to other help.

## WHY IT WORKS FOR PRECARITY

# The same groceries, at a reachable price

At Montpellier's social groceries, shoppers pay only a fraction of retail — the affordability layer a market store can't provide.

# 15–30%

*of real cost is what students pay at Rayon 34, Montpellier's youth-focused social grocery.*



## PROOF OF CONCEPT

# Montpellier runs a network of social groceries

## GENERAL

## L'EPSO

- ~140 referred families shop weekly, self-service
- Prices set at 10–30% of supermarket cost
- City & county social workers handle referrals
- Supplied via the Hérault food bank

## STUDENTS

## Rayon 34

- Opened 2025 for students in precarity
- City provides the 90 m<sup>2</sup> premises; food bank runs it
- Motivated by ~1 in 3 young people skipping meals
- Groceries at 15–30% of real cost

## THE BERKELEY FIT

# It completes the strategy Council already started

## ZONING CHANGE · ADOPTED

## Market grocer for the general population

Answers availability. Reaches shoppers who can pay retail.

## SOLIDARITY GROCERY · PROPOSED

## Affordability layer for households in precarity

Answers affordability. Reaches students, seniors, low-income residents.

## Berkeley already has the ingredients

### Local precedent

Berkeley Student Food Collective, a co-op grocery at 2440 Bancroft.

### Supply partner

Alameda County Community Food Bank for sourcing.

### Access rails

Ecology Center CalFresh / Market Match; Berkeley Food Pantry.

## HOW THE CITY SHOWS UP

# A low-exposure role: enabler, not operator

Montpellier's city government does not run the stores. It convenes and enables — which keeps the financial and operational risk off the General Fund.

1

## City

Provides or brokers a space; convenes partners; refers via social workers.

2

## Food bank

Sources and supplies inventory at low or no cost.

3

## Nonprofit operator

Runs day-to-day operations, staffing, and the social-work function.

*Berkeley analogue: the City lends siting help and a referral pipeline; a food bank and a community operator do the rest.*

## PAYING FOR IT

# Fundable without a General Fund ask

HWCAC already weighs anti-poverty allocations. That gives the commission a natural, credible funding argument to bring to Council.

## CSBG

Frame a pilot as a Community Services Block Grant–eligible anti-poverty program — HWCAC's core remit.

## Grants & philanthropy

Foundation and food-security grants; a startup-cost model like Montpelier's.

## In-kind partnership

Food-bank inventory and a donated or low-cost space cut the cash need.

## THE ADVISORY PATH

# How HWCAC moves this to Council

1

## Adopt a recommendation

Agendize, then adopt a short commission report by roll-call vote so it transmits as an official communication.

2

## Refer for feasibility

Ask Council to refer to the City Manager: siting, eligibility design, operator, and funding.

3

## Pair with Health

A companion item from the Community Health Commission frames food access as health and signals consensus.

4

## Attach the money

Name CSBG / grant pathways so it arrives as a fundable pilot, not a General Fund request.

**Timing note:** the zoning ordinance is closed and Councilmember Lunaparra is not seeking reelection — so this needs a carrying councilmember and a fresh HWCAC-initiated referral, not an amendment to her item.

## THE ASK

# Recommended motion & next steps

**DRAFT MOTION**

*“That HWCAC recommend Council refer to the City Manager a feasibility study for a subsidized ‘solidarity grocery’ serving Southside and student populations — modeled on Montpellier’s épiceries sociales — as the affordability companion to the adopted Telegraph grocery zoning change, and identify CSBG and grant funding pathways.”*

**IMMEDIATE STEPS**

- Circulate a one-page concept memo to commissioners
- Agendize as an action item for the next meeting
- Coordinate a companion item with CHC
- Line up a carrying councilmember for the referral

ADAPT, DON'T COPY

# A design to adapt — not a program to import

France's model leans on national structures (the ANDES network and mandated municipal social-action offices) that don't map onto Berkeley one-to-one.

What is portable is the design: a dignity-preserving retail format, referral-based eligibility, and food bundled with case management — delivered through Berkeley's existing food-bank and CalFresh infrastructure.

*Availability was step one. Affordability is the commission's to carry.*