

# DISASTER AND FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

May 20, 2026

7:00 PM

Fire Department Division of Training Classroom – 997 Cedar Street

Mayor's Appointee- Andy Katz

District 1 – Michael Wilson  
District 2 – Weldon Bradstreet  
District 3 – Todd Darling  
District 4 – Robert Kinosian

District 5 – Jacob Dadmun  
District 6 – Greg Murphy\*  
District 7 – Taj Herzer-Baptiste  
District 8 – Theo Gordon\*\*

## AGENDA

### Preliminary Matters

Call to Order

Public Present

### Approval of the Agenda

*Discussion –  
Agenda approved as amended by Acclamation or Vote?*

### Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

*Public speakers:*

1. Chairperson's Report
2. Fire Department Staff Report

**REGULAR AGENDA MATTERS** *All Regular Agenda Matters are for discussion and possible action.*

3. **Action/Discussion:** Minutes of April 22, 2026 (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** Approve the Draft Minutes of April 22, 2026, Regular Meeting.

**Written Material:** DFSC April 22, 2026 Draft Minutes
4. **Discussion/Action:** Requesting Alternative Budget Cuts to Those Proposed by The City Manager (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** The DFSC Approves a Written Memo to Request the Mayor and City Council Consider Other Budget Cutting Measure Than some of the Cuts Proposed by the City Manager.

**Written Material:** Draft Memo To City Council
5. **Discussion/Action:** Recommendation to City Council on Measures GG/FF Tax Rate Adjustments (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** Approve the increase to use the 2027 PIG Tax Rate Adjustments..

**Written Material:** Memo To The Budget Office
6. **Discussion/Action:** 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (Katz)

**Recommendation:** Adopt Official Support Positions On All Thirteen Bills Comprising the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package and Authorize and Direct the Mayor, City Manager, or Designee to Transmit Letters of Support To Each Bill's Author and to Senator Jesse Arreguin and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Representing Berkeley in the California Legislature.

**Written Material:** DFSC Report To Council (including letters of support)
7. **Discussion/Action:** Street Trauma Prevention Program One Year Update (Staff/ UC Berkeley Team)

**Recommendation:** None

**Written Material:** PowerPoint Presentation

8. **Discussion/Action:** City of Berkeley FY26 Safe Streets and Roads for All Application (Wilson)

**Recommendation:** Approve A Letter of Support for the City of Berkeley FY26 Safe Streets and Roads for All That Is Led by the Berkeley Fire Department for Its Street Trauma Prevention Program (STPP).

**Written Material:** Draft Letter of Support

9. **Discussion/Action:** Work Plan FY 26/27 (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** Review Work Plan and select Work Group To Participate and/or Lead

**Written Material:** 2026-2027 DFSC Work Plan

## 10. Work Group Reports

Receive reporting on recent activities by the following work groups:

- Plan & Budget Oversight
- Neighborhood Fire Resiliency
- Safe Passages
- Community Outreach
- Street Trauma Prevention Program

Future Agenda Items and Next Steps

- 

## Adjournment

*This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Keith May, [kmay@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:kmay@berkeleyca.gov) 510-981-5508.*

*Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: E-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required but, if included in any communication to a City board, commission, or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission,*

*or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.*

*Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Berkeley Fire Department located at 2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Berkeley, CA.*

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair-accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

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I hereby certify that the agenda for this regular/special meeting of the Berkeley City's Disaster and Fire Safety Commission was posted at the front of the Division of Training, 997 Cedar Street, as well as on the City's website, three days prior to the scheduled Commission meeting.

SECRETARY SIGNATURE

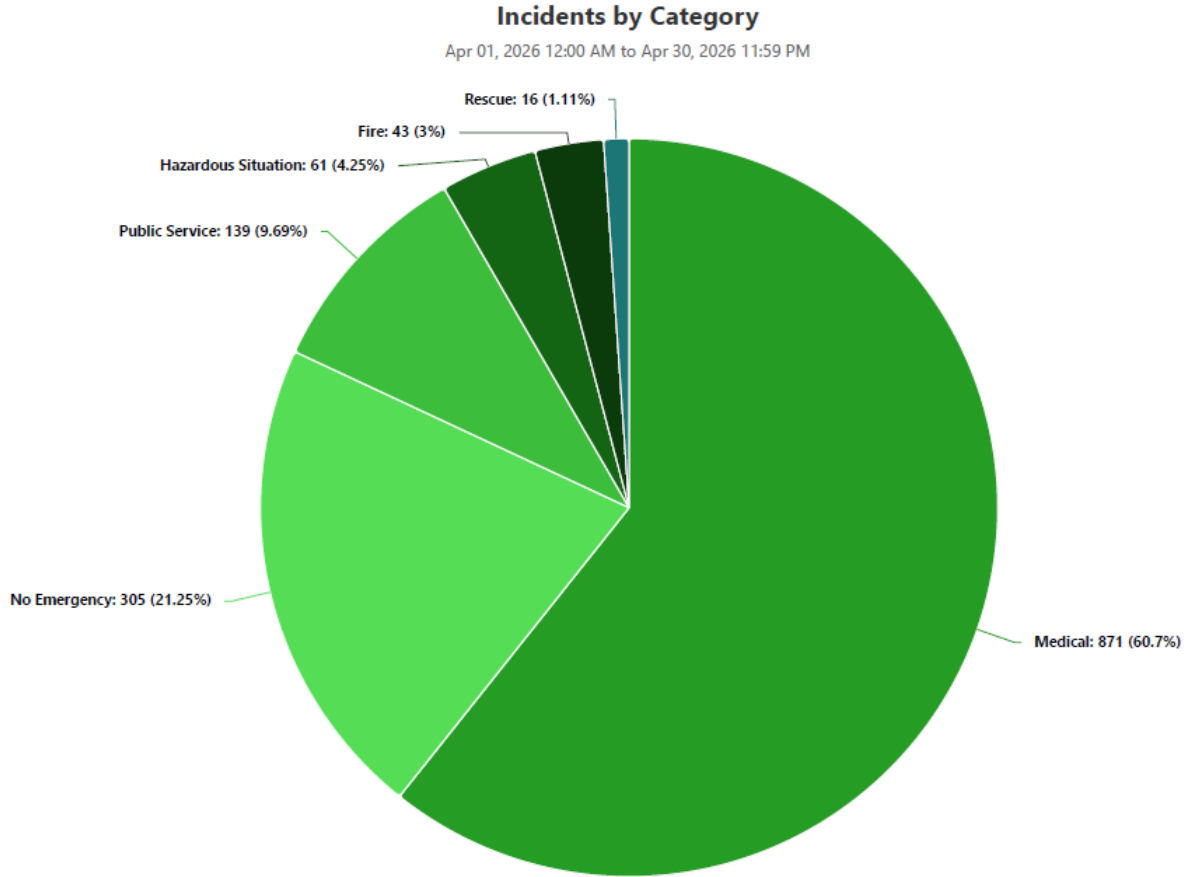
## DFSC Staff Report

May 20, 2026

1. Measure FF Monthly Report
  - a. Budget Overview –
  - b. Quarter 1 (July, August, September) report due in November  
Quarter 2 (October, November, December) report due in February  
Quarter 3 (January, February, March) report due in **May**  
Quarter 4 (April, May, June) End of Year Report due in October
    - i. Program Review
      - **WUI Interns** – The Interns provide Berkeley Fire Department with a trained, mobile and mission-specific workforce that is principally assigned to monitor vegetative hazardous fuel on or near structures, collect data, and identify reduction activities
        - We are starting the next WUI Intern Academy with 10 candidates.
        - The division is developing a new schedule for inspections in the Berkeley Hills.
2. Measure GG Monthly Report
  - a. Budget Overview – No new update
  - b. Quarter 1 (July, August, September) report due in November  
Quarter 2 (October, November, December) report due in February  
Quarter 3 (January, February, March) report due in **May**  
Quarter 4 (April, May, June) End of Year Report due in October
3. Fire Facilities Master Plan (FMP): Berkeley Fire Department stations are undersized, in poor condition and in need of remodels or replacement. The Department initiated a long-term replacement planning process to better understand infrastructure needs. This process will provide the city leaders of today and tomorrow with actionable information ahead of future infrastructure bond measures. (*Measure FF has funded the study only*)
  - a. **Update:** No new updates.
4. Department Activities
  - a. **Olympus Neighborhood Meeting:** Fire Command staff met with two neighborhood groups regarding the house fire on Olympus Avenue. There were great discussions on the fire that occurred and general fire prevention, evacuation, and preparedness.
  - b. **Gilman Street Fair:** The Gilman Street Fair was a well-attended event that also included fire staff from the Office of Emergency Services, Wildland Urban Interface interns, Engine 6 fire personnel, and fire command staff.

### 5. Call Volume Report

Dashboard: [NERIS] Fire Board Report      Topic: All      Timeframe: All Records



### DFSC Action Tracker

| Date of DFSC Action     | Description                                                                                                                                                       | Status                                    |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>October 29, 2025</b> | Direct staff to modify and revise the Draft Update to the Bike Plan dated July 29, 2025, to take into consideration recommendations from the DFSC noted in Report | Scheduled for Council Agenda on 6/30/2026 |

|                       |                                                                                      |                                   |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>March 25, 2026</b> | Support Position on SB (Perez) – Insurance Coverage for Fire-safe Homes Act          | On Consent Calendar for 5/19/2026 |
| <b>March 25, 2026</b> | Support Position on SB 894 (Allen) – the California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program | On Consent Calendar for 5/19/2026 |

**FY26 Year-To-Date Quarter Report Measure FF**

July to June 2026

| PROGRAM/VENDOR                 | AMOUNT              | FY26 BUDGET         | % USED        | NOTES                                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Administration</b>          | <b>3,373,327</b>    | <b>3,478,245</b>    | <b>96.98%</b> |                                         |
| AAA BUSINESS SUPPLIES          | 2,898               |                     |               | FIRE HQ Furniture                       |
| AMS.NET LLC                    | 88,224              |                     |               | Fire HQ Fiber Ports and licenses        |
| B & H PHOTO                    | 316                 |                     |               | Equipment Strategic Proj Headset        |
| BERKELEY OFFICE INTERIORS      | 23,864              |                     |               | FIRE HQ Furniture                       |
| BETTER SOURCE                  | 14,445              |                     |               | FIRE HQ Furniture                       |
| BLAISDELL                      | 229,558             |                     |               | FIRE HQ Furniture                       |
| CALIFORNIA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOC.  | 600                 |                     |               | Professional Dues                       |
| CARASOFT                       | 7,051               |                     |               | Annual Smartsheet Software Subscription |
| CRATEANDBARREL                 | 3,638               |                     |               | FIRE HQ Equipment                       |
| CONFERENCE EXPENSES            | 8,905               |                     |               | Professional development                |
| COOKE & ASSOCIATES             | 59,990              |                     |               | Background Checks                       |
| COSTCO                         | 8,497               |                     |               | FIRE HQ EOC TVs                         |
| DELL MARKETING LP              | 12,078              |                     |               | FIRE HQ Video Conferencing System       |
| EBMUD                          | 2,528               |                     |               | Fire HQ Utility                         |
| EQUIPMENT SIMULATIONS, LLC     | 495                 |                     |               | Sim U Software Subscription             |
| EMBASSY SUITES ANAHEIM S       | 664                 |                     |               | Travel related Lodging                  |
| ELS ARCHITECTURE               | 54,074              |                     |               | New fire headquarters design/management |
| IMAGETREND, LLC                | 97,592              |                     |               | Data Management Software                |
| MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS INC         | 79,123              |                     |               | Alerting System                         |
| MUNICIPAL RESOURCE GROUP, LLC  | 6,494               |                     |               | Professional development                |
| OPENAI *CHATGPT SUBSCR         | 600                 |                     |               | Software Subscription                   |
| PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC CO      | 3,251               |                     |               | Fire HQ: Gas and Electricity            |
| RAVEN & ANVILL LLC             | 27,160              |                     |               | Critical Call Data work                 |
| SABAH INTERNATIONAL INC.       | 720                 |                     |               | Fire HQ: Fire Alarm Monitoring          |
| <b>SALARIES &amp; BENEFITS</b> | <b>585,744.93</b>   | <b>793,810.00</b>   |               | <b>Salary &amp; Benefits</b>            |
| SMITH & WALTERS                | 1,895,900           |                     |               | Fire Headquarters Expenses              |
| SWIFTHAWK CONSULTING LLC       | 110,585             |                     |               | Project Management                      |
| STARLINK INTERNET              | 2,413               |                     |               | Fire HQ Satellite Equipment             |
| SUR LA TABLE                   | 2,774               |                     |               | FIRE HQ Kitchen                         |
| THE HOME DEPOT #0627           | 21,272              |                     |               | Fire HQ: Equipment                      |
| THE WEBSTAIRANT STORE INC      | 15,739              |                     |               | Fire HQ: Equipment                      |
| WALMART                        | 381                 |                     |               | FIRE HQ moving boxes                    |
| WATERS MOVING & STORAGE        | 1,345               |                     |               | Fire HQ Moving to expenses              |
| WELLS FARGO BANK N.A.          | 4,411               |                     |               | Equipment                               |
| <b>Dispatch</b>                | <b>334,686</b>      | <b>378,564</b>      | <b>88.41%</b> |                                         |
| CENTRALSQUARE TECHNOLOGIES LLC | 19,908              | 0.00                |               | CAD to CAD Software                     |
| MISSION CRITICAL PARTNERS, LLC | 79,392              |                     |               | Phase 2 Dispatch needs Analysis         |
| <b>SALARIES &amp; BENEFITS</b> | <b>235,385.98</b>   | <b>328,564.30</b>   |               | <b>Salary &amp; Benefits</b>            |
| <b>EMS</b>                     | <b>1,668,601</b>    | <b>2,908,593</b>    | <b>57.37%</b> |                                         |
| AMAZON                         | 217.63              |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| ASHBY PLUMBING                 | 6.66                |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| AUTOZONE #1131                 | 29.73               |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| BORDEN DECAL                   | 2,827.37            |                     |               | Vehicles Decals                         |
| BOUND TREE MEDICAL LLC         | 40,125.53           |                     |               | Equipment                               |
| CONFERENCE EXPENSES            | 378                 |                     |               | Professional development                |
| FLEETPRIDECOM                  | 556                 |                     |               | Engine E-305 parts for repair           |
| GOMEX, FELICIA                 | 1,599               |                     |               | Worksite Wellness NFPA                  |
| GRAINGER INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY     | 5,824.35            |                     |               | Supplies                                |
| IN *BERKELEY YACHT CLUB        | 820.00              |                     |               | Site for Academy 6 Graduation           |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS | 104,895             |                     |               | Vehicle Replacement Fund                |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE FUEL/MAINT   | 17,083              |                     |               | Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance            |
| JAMECO ELECTRONICS             | 16                  |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| LAURA KOKINDA                  | 39,950.00           |                     |               | Pre-Employment Evaluations              |
| LEHR AUTO ELECTRIC             | 480.91              |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| ORKIN EXTERMINATING            | 3,474.24            |                     |               | Exterminator                            |
| PYRAMID FILMS CORP             | 292.43              |                     |               | CPR Cards and Training Courses          |
| REFUSE CHARGES                 | 929.82              |                     |               | Refuse Charges at 1007 University       |
| <b>SALARIES &amp; BENEFITS</b> | <b>1,335,011.30</b> | <b>3,150,704.00</b> |               | <b>Salary &amp; Benefits</b>            |
| SANTA ROSA JUNIOR COLLEGE      | 122.25              |                     |               | Training Student Fees                   |
| SONIC.NET                      | 379.95              |                     |               | Internet Service                        |
| SP RAM MOUNTS                  | 488.75              |                     |               | Mount for Ipad retrofits                |
| STATE BOARD of EQUALIZATION    | 96.35               |                     |               | Tax                                     |
| THE HOME DEPOT #0627           | 33.45               |                     |               | Vehicle parts for repairs               |
| WELLS FARGO                    | 3,656.93            |                     |               | Equipment                               |
| ZOLL MEDICAL CORP              | 109,306.48          |                     |               | Monthly charges                         |

| PROGRAM/VENDOR                        | AMOUNT           | FY26 BUDGET      | % USED        | NOTES                                                           |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Operations</b>                     | <b>346,606</b>   | <b>372,817</b>   | <b>92.97%</b> |                                                                 |
| 908 DEVICES INC                       | 2,575            |                  |               | Hazmat Equipment Maintenance                                    |
| AMAZON                                | 1,136            |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| ASHBY PLUMBING                        | 8                |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| AUTOZONE #1131                        | 351              |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| BAUER COMPRESSORS, INC                | 7,585            |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| CITYGATE ASSOCIATES, LLC              | 4,311            |                  |               | Standards of Coverage Study                                     |
| CONFERENCE EXPENSES                   | 4,683            |                  |               | Professional development                                        |
| CUMMINS OSM                           | 860              |                  |               | Check Engine light diagnostic                                   |
| DUNN & BYBEE TOOL CO INC              | 3,930            |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| GOMEX, FELICIA                        | 118,335          |                  |               | Worksite Wellness                                               |
| HILTON GARDEN INN -                   | 1,046            |                  |               | Travel related Lodging                                          |
| O2X HUMAN PERFORMANCE                 | 25,028           |                  |               | Employee Health and Wellness                                    |
| MATTRESS FIRM, INC                    | 1,149            |                  |               | Mattresses                                                      |
| NORTHERN TOOL                         | 254              |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| PIERCE MFG                            | 2,887            |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| SALARIES & BENEFITS                   | 119,575.50       | 288,072.42       |               | Salaries and Benefits                                           |
| RESTORATION FAMILY COUNSELING         | 37,544.02        |                  |               | Support services contract                                       |
| SHELL OIL 57443475900                 | 161.38           |                  |               | Fuel for Vehicle 1936                                           |
| SP MILE-X EQUIPMENT IN                | 1,255.75         |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| TECH ELECTRIC                         | 6,924.00         |                  |               | Ring Down Equipment                                             |
| THE HOME DEPOT #0627                  | 31.99            |                  |               | Vehicle parts for repairs                                       |
| WELLS FARGO                           | 3,531            |                  |               | Equipment                                                       |
| WESTERN EXTRICATION SPECIALISTS, INC. | 3,445            |                  |               | Service for Power unit                                          |
| <b>Paramedics Tax</b>                 |                  |                  |               |                                                                 |
|                                       |                  |                  |               | No expenses yet                                                 |
| <b>Training</b>                       | <b>170,269</b>   | <b>400,260</b>   | <b>42.54%</b> |                                                                 |
| ALAMEDA COUNTY TRAINING OFFICERS      | 327              |                  |               | Dues                                                            |
| AMERICAN DEBRIS BOX SERVICE, INC DBA  | 1,096            |                  |               | Fire Academy Toilets                                            |
| ATLAS PHONES                          | 46               |                  |               | Equipment                                                       |
| BERKELEY REPERTORY THE                | 1,697            |                  |               | Academy 114 Graduation Site                                     |
| CAL EMA                               | 176              |                  |               | Board Certificates                                              |
| CONFERENCE EXPENSES                   | 1,527            |                  |               | Professional development                                        |
| DELL MARKETING LP                     | 1,114            |                  |               | Equipment                                                       |
| DEPT OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION    | 1,725            |                  |               | Trainings                                                       |
| HOME DEPOT                            | 1,764            |                  |               | Training Lumber                                                 |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS        | 10,665           |                  |               | Vehicle Replacement Fund                                        |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE FUEL/MAINT          | 2,726            |                  |               | Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance                                    |
| L.N. CURTIS & SONS                    | 139,221          |                  |               | Tech Rescue Equipment                                           |
| OFFICE DEPOT #3306                    | 245              |                  |               | Office Supplies                                                 |
| SALARIES & BENEFITS                   | 3,157.25         | 186,260.00       |               | Salaries and Benefits                                           |
| STATE FIRE TRAINING                   | 2,475            |                  |               | Training                                                        |
| UNITED SITE SERVICE                   | 1,433            |                  |               | Portable Potties                                                |
| WELLS FARGO BANK N.A.                 | 320              |                  |               | Equipment                                                       |
| WWW COSTCO COM                        | 556              |                  |               | Academy 114 water when offsite                                  |
| <b>WUI/FP</b>                         | <b>2,353,912</b> | <b>2,788,393</b> | <b>84.42%</b> |                                                                 |
| ALLIANCE GRAPHICS                     | 2,146            |                  |               | Materials/Printing                                              |
| AMAZON                                | 177              |                  |               | Supplies                                                        |
| BAY AREA TREE SPECIALIST              | 3,360            |                  |               | Hazardous Vegetation Treatment                                  |
| BLAISDELL'S BUSINESS PRODUCTS         | 38               |                  |               | Office Supplies                                                 |
| BRENDAN D DEVLIN                      | 51,940           |                  |               | Chipper Day Program Mgmt                                        |
| BUTLERS UNIFORM                       | 3,203            |                  |               | Uniforms                                                        |
| CALIFORNIA EXPERT TREE SOLUTIONS INC  | 24,430           |                  |               | Vegetation Removal and Restoration                              |
| CALTOPO                               | 2,000            |                  |               | Caltopo Teams fee                                               |
| CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION   | 6,000            |                  |               | Berkeley East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments member fees |
| CONFERENCE EXPENSES                   | 25               |                  |               | Professional development                                        |
| DATA TICKET                           | 416              |                  |               | Materials/Printing                                              |
| DEPT OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION    | 450              |                  |               | Trainings                                                       |
| EAST BAY NURSERY                      | 3,658            |                  |               | Supplies                                                        |
| ECOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE, INC.         | 3,250            |                  |               | Landscape Architects                                            |
| EXCELLENT PACKAGING & SUPPLY          | 1,378            |                  |               | Yard Debris Bags                                                |
| FIRE ASIDE                            | 17,538           |                  |               | Defensible Space Inspection Software                            |
| FORSTER & KROEGER LANDSCAPE           | 165,634          |                  |               | Chipper Day Program Mgmt                                        |
| GENASYS INC                           | 5,810            |                  |               | Outdoor Alerting System                                         |
| GRAINGER                              | 231              |                  |               | Supplies                                                        |
| HILLSIDE ASSOCIATION                  | 50,000           |                  |               | Vegetation Removal and Restoration                              |
| INSIGNIA DESIGNS                      | 3,857            |                  |               | Trailer Reflective custom sign with Logo                        |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS        | 36,198           |                  |               | Vehicle Replacement Fund                                        |
| INT SVC - VEHICLE FUEL/MAINT          | 4,525            |                  |               | Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance                                    |
| INT SVC - CITY PKG PERMITS            | 8,090            |                  |               | Vehicle Parking Permits                                         |
| KLD ASSOCIATES                        | 67,632           |                  |               | Professional Services in Evacuation                             |

| <b>PROGRAM/VENDOR</b>                | <b>AMOUNT</b>    | <b>FY26 BUDGET</b> | <b>% USED</b> | <b>NOTES</b>                                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| MESSAGE DEPARTMENT LLC, THE          | 28,254           |                    |               | Advertising, consulting, mailer, postage, etc |
| PENG, ERICA CONNECTS LLC             | 2,000            |                    |               | Neuro-informed Wildfire Mitigation Training   |
| PROTIVITI GOVERNMENT SERVICES, INC.  | 43,556           |                    |               | Professional Services                         |
| SNACK* CRAVE SUBS BERK               | 97               |                    |               | For CliftonStrengths Coaching Session         |
| SALARIES & BENEFITS                  | 1,678,440.90     | 1,466,595.32       |               | Salary & Benefits                             |
| SOLANO AVENUE                        | 225              |                    |               | OES Space at Solano Avenue Stroll             |
| SQUARE SPACE                         | 794              |                    |               | Web based service                             |
| Transfer Station Chipper Day Program | 20,602           |                    |               | Chipper Day Program                           |
| VERIZON WIRELESS                     | 6,263            |                    |               | Phone Service                                 |
| WELLS FARGO                          | 2,959            |                    |               | Equipment                                     |
| WESTERN TRUCK FABRICATION, INC       | 5,381            |                    |               | Equipment                                     |
| WILDFIRE DEFENSE MESH                | 60,937           |                    |               | Equipment                                     |
| WILDLAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT         | 34,467           |                    |               | Review threat of Wildfire                     |
| WORLD TREE SERVICE, INC              | 7,950            |                    |               | Hazardous Vegetation Treatment                |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                   | <b>8,247,401</b> | <b>10,326,873</b>  | <b>79.86%</b> |                                               |

**FY2026 Measure GG**  
**Quarter 3 Report**

| Program                   | Original Budget     | Revised Budget      | Actuals                  |                         |                         |                         | Q3 Total            | % Budget Available |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
|                           |                     |                     | Q1<br>July-Sept.<br>2025 | Q2<br>Oct.-Dec.<br>2025 | Q3<br>Jan.-Mar.<br>2026 | Q4<br>Apr.-June<br>2026 |                     |                    |
| Disaster Prep             | \$ 1,257,269        | \$ 1,439,069        | \$ 178,470               | \$ 259,493              | \$ 246,533              |                         | \$ 684,496          | 52%                |
| FRALS                     | \$ 540,159          | \$ 484,891          | \$ 20,000                | \$ 54,404               | \$ 190,768              |                         | \$ 265,172          | 45%                |
| Minimum Staffing          | \$ 3,138,589        | \$ 3,138,589        | \$ 7,620                 | \$ 12,934               | \$ 1,264,486            |                         | \$ 1,285,040        | 59%                |
| Radio Interoperability    | \$ 669,251          | \$ 950,620          | \$ 635,651               | \$ 70,177               | \$ 30,383               |                         | \$ 736,211          | 23%                |
| Training                  | \$ 374,048          | \$ 374,048          | \$ 77,137                | \$ 106,101              | \$ 101,085              |                         | \$ 284,323          | 24%                |
| Community Outreach - HHCS | \$ 309,953          | \$ 310,417          | \$ 46,925                | \$ 71,784               | \$ 59,354               |                         | \$ 178,063          | 43%                |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>\$ 6,289,268</b> | <b>\$ 6,697,635</b> | <b>\$ 965,803</b>        | <b>\$ 574,893</b>       | <b>\$ 1,892,609</b>     |                         | <b>\$ 3,433,305</b> | <b>52%</b>         |

| <b>Available<br/>Budget</b> |
|-----------------------------|
| \$ 754,574                  |
| \$ 219,719                  |
| \$ 1,853,550                |
| \$ 214,409                  |
| \$ 89,725                   |
| \$ 132,354                  |
| <b>\$ 3,264,330</b>         |

# DISASTER AND FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

April 22, 2026

7:00 PM

Fire Department Division of Training Classroom – 997 Cedar Street

Mayor's Appointee- Andy Katz

District 1 – Michael Wilson  
District 2 – Weldon Bradstreet  
District 3 – Todd Darling  
District 4 – Robert Kinosian

District 5 – Jacob Dadmun  
District 6 – Greg Murphy\*  
District 7 – Taj Herzer-Baptiste  
District 8 – Theo Gordon\*\*

### Minutes

#### Preliminary Matters

##### Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM

Present: Wilson, Bradstreet, Dadmun, Murphy, Herzer-Baptiste, Gordon, Darling

Late: Katz 7:09 PM

Absent: Kinosian

##### Public Present - 5

##### Approval of the Agenda

*Discussion –*

Motion to Approve: Bradstreet

Second: Herzer-Baptiste

*Agenda approved as approved by Acclamation*

##### Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

*Public speakers: 2*

1. Chairperson's Report
2. Fire Department Staff Report

**REGULAR AGENDA MATTERS** *All Regular Agenda Matters are for discussion and possible action.*

3. **Action/Discussion:** Minutes of March 25, 2026 (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** Approve the draft minutes of March 25, 2026, regular meeting.

**Written Material:** DFSC March 25, 2026 Draft Minutes

Motion to Approve: Gordon

Second: Wilson

Vote:

Ayes: Katz, Wilson, Bradstreet, Darling, Dadmun, Murphy, Herzer-Baptiste

Abstain: Gordon
4. **Discussion/Action:** Budget Reduction Plan (Staff)

**Recommendation:**

**Written Material:** PowerPoint Presentation
5. **Discussion:** Street Trauma Prevention Program Intro (Staff)

**Recommendation:** None

**Written Material:** Introduction Handout

Public Comment – 1
6. **Discussion/Action:** EMBER Update (Staff)

**Recommendation:**

**Written Material:** None

Public Comment – 2
7. **Discussion/Action:** Work Plan FY 26/27 (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** Review Work Plan and select Work Group To Participate and/or Lead

**Written Material:** 2026-2027 DFSC Work Plan

**8. Work Group Reports**

Receive reporting on recent activities by the following work groups:

- Plan & Budget Oversight
  - Meeting planned on May
- Neighborhood Fire Resiliency
  - Working on certification/recognition when they are in full compliance
- Safe Passages
  - Voted on a letter of potential evacuation of the Ferry was read at Council. Looking at what other COB departments are looking at the issue.
- Community Outreach
  - No report
- Street Trauma Prevention Program
  - Bike Plan document
  - Talking with WBB
  - Presenting up in Sacramento on the concept of STPP
  - Meeting with COB Leadership on response time metrics, fire code interpretation and signal

**9. Ad-Hoc Committee**

- Still working on the issues and will bring back to the next meeting recommendations

Future Agenda Items and Next Steps

- 

**Adjournment** 9:13 PM

Motion to Adjourn: Gordon

Second: Wilson

Approved by Acclamation

*This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Keith May, [kmay@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:kmay@berkeleyca.gov) 510-981-5508.*

*Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: E-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required but, if included in any communication to a City board, commission, or committee, will become part of the public record. If you*

*do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission, or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.*

*Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Berkeley Fire Department located at 2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Berkeley, CA.*

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair-accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

I hereby certify that the agenda for this regular/special meeting of the Berkeley City's Disaster and Fire Safety Commission was posted at the front of the Division of Training, 997 Cedar Street, as well as on the City's website, three days prior to the scheduled Commission meeting.

SECRETARY SIGNATURE

DRAFT



DATE: May xx, 2026  
To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
Submitted by: Greg Murphy, Chair  
Subject: Response to proposed budget cuts to the Berkeley Fire Department

On April 22, 2026, Berkeley Fire Chief, David Sprague presented to the DFSC the recommended cuts to the Fire Department from the General Fund budget. Those cuts include the reduction of up to 22 staff including sworn fire fighters, paramedics and leadership. Certain commissioners and members of the public are adamant that none of the proposed cuts be enacted. The Commission does recognize the dire financial situation the City is facing and that the Fire Department probably will be forced to endure some reductions, however some of the recommended cuts we find either unacceptable or counter-productive and urge the Mayor and Council to consider other ways to solve the general fund budget problem.

The threat of enacting the proposed cuts contained in the City Manager's FY 2027–FY 2028 Proposed Budget Balancing Plan transmitted to the Budget & Finance Policy Committee on April 16, 2026 has already greatly affected BFD staff. They are understandably anxious about retaining their jobs, working at even higher stress levels if the reduction in personnel is initiated, and seeing the potential of increased risk to their own safety and effectiveness.

**We understand that some of the proposed cuts would only be implemented if a proposed sales tax increase fails. The recommendation of the DFSC is that regardless of the status of the sales tax, these specific cuts should not be made:**

**1. Closing of Fire Station # 4 and eliminating 9 firefighting and leadership positions**

Closing Station 4 will significantly degrade response times and first-alarm effectiveness in its service area and adjacent districts. Engine 4 responded to 28 fires, 966 emergency medical incidents (including 17 cardiac arrests), and numerous other emergencies in 2025. Response time standards were not consistently met; closure of Fire Station 4 will force responses from more distant stations, further degrading performance.

Delayed emergency response increases risk of fatality and property loss from fires and medical incidents and elevates firefighter risk of injury. Redistribution of calls will increase workload and fatigue at remaining stations, reduce training time, and increase burnout. Reliance on mutual aid will rise but is unsustainable and delayed multi-unit responses will become more common. These impacts are high, and we find this an unacceptable risk to safety of the community and to the firefighters themselves.

**2. The reduction of five firefighters and three paramedics to balance the FY26 budget**

These positions are a part of the staffing that is required to keep the current fleet of fire engines, trucks and ambulances fully staffed. The elimination of these positions will increase the overtime burden, which may be somewhat less expensive than full-time staff, but will transfer all those work hours on the remaining employees. This will increase the stress associated with forced overtime, which the Chief informed us is already substantially higher than pre-pandemic. The Commission is concerned about impacts to the level of service that will result from this cut due to increased stress and fatigue on the staff.

**3. Reduce One Associate Management Analyst (filled)**

This eliminates the department's only staff dedicated to raising funds and will significantly restrict capacity to apply for, monitor, and manage grants. Reassignment of grant and performance reporting to Administrative and Fiscal Services staff—who already manage Fire and Police budgets and coordinate the City's most complex payrolls—will reduce grant management effectiveness. As a result, the department will likely be forced to seek fewer grant opportunities and will struggle to successfully manage and complete the performance reporting for the current grant portfolio.

While the cost of the position is a small burden to the General Fund, the Associate Management Analyst is critical in obtaining and completing the required reporting for over **12 million dollars** of grant funding from various grantors the department has received to operate and fulfill its mission. It is counter productive to eliminate this position as it would put a greater burden on the general fund to make up the loss of funding this position is able to obtain.

**4. Eliminate Disaster Preparedness Programs & Part-Time CERT Instructor FTEs (Hourly Staff)**

Eliminating Disaster Preparedness Programs, including the OES training contract, shelter supply replacement, internships, and conference funding, together with eliminating five part-time CERT Instructor positions, would weaken Berkeley's community preparedness capacity at a time when the City faces significant threats and natural risks.

Berkeley's own Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies earthquake and wildland-urban interface fire as "likely" hazards with potentially catastrophic impacts, and highlights risks from extreme heat, poor air quality, landslide, flood, tsunami, sea level rise, and utility interruption. The proposed staff reductions would leave fewer external resources for curriculum development, shelter supply maintenance, internship support, and professional training, while also reducing or potentially eliminating the CERT program and ending planned community CPR and fire extinguisher training.

The DFSC believes that in a city with Berkeley's hazard profile, preparation is not ancillary work; it is a core public safety function that helps residents respond effectively, supports neighborhood self-sufficiency in the early stages of an emergency, and strengthens the City's overall ability to withstand and recover from major incidents.

The DFSC urges the Mayor and Council to not eliminate Disaster Preparedness Programs but perhaps reduce the CERT program only.

## 5. Reduce One Fire Captain FTE (filled)

Eliminating this position weakens oversight of narcotics compliance, critical equipment and supply management, documentation integrity, and infection control in the emergency medical services program. Redistribution of duties to existing staff will reduce oversight frequency and increase risk.

The proposed reductions would not simply streamline the Fire Department's budget; they would materially reduce Berkeley's ability to prevent emergencies, respond effectively when they occur, and prepare the community for increasingly complex risks.

As Berkeley ages and grows in population density and climate change produces more extreme weather events, the risks to our community increase. These proposed cuts would reverse recent operational and programmatic gains while placing greater strain on an already stretched workforce. The cumulative effect would be slower response times, reduced prevention and inspection capacity, weakened preparedness, diminished support for employee health and resilience, and fewer tools to manage the City's growing public safety demands.

All the proposed cuts to the Fire Department will impose greater burdens on department staff, lengthen already sub-standard response times in certain situations, and limit operations. The specific cuts that we have addressed above go too far and put not only firefighters, but the entire community at too great a risk.

## FY27 Measure GG & FF Tax Rate

Annually, the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) makes a recommendation on the property tax rate that Measures GG and now FF have the option of using. Either the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or Personal Income Growth (PIG) can be applied. Currently, the PIG rate is 4.95%. The CPI rate is 3.7975%

Motion to Recommend City Council Adopt Yearly Adjustments of Measure GG and Measure FF Tax Rate using the PIG rate: 4.95%



[ ] CALENDAR

Date

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

Submitted by: Greg Murphy, Chairperson

Subject: Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt official Support positions on all thirteen bills comprising the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package, as listed below, and authorize and direct the Mayor or City Manager or designee to transmit letters of support to each bill's author and to Senator Jesse Arreguin and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, representing Berkeley in the California Legislature:

- SB 894 (Allen) - Wildfire Mitigation Affordability Act (California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program)
- SB 911 (Becker) - Transfer of Real Property: Fire Hazard Severity Zones: Compliance Documentation
- SB 973 (Becker) - Wildfire County Coordinator Program
- SB 1079 (Stern) - Fire Innovation Unit Act
- SB 1404 (Stern) - Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan: Implementation Strategy
- AB 1699 (Rogers) - Good Fire Act
- AB 1891 (Connolly) - Beneficial Fire Capacity Program
- AB 1934 (Bennett) - Home Hardening Certification Program
- AB 1960 (Bennett) - Wildfire Prevention Grants Program
- AB 1964 (Bennett) - County Recorder: Home Hardening
- AB 1971 (Bennett) - Home Hardening Retrofitting Improvements
- AB 1986 (Bennett) - Residential Property Insurance: Home Hardening
- AB 2013 (Bennett) - Water Suppliers: Emergency Preparedness Program

*Draft letters of support addressed to each bill author are attached as Attachments 1 through 6. Note: the DFSC separately adopted a Support position on SB 894 at its March 25, 2026 meeting; the attached letter updates that position to reflect the broader Megafire Prevention Package context.*

### FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No direct fiscal costs to the City of Berkeley. The recommended action is limited to communicating policy positions and transmitting letters of support; no City appropriation or expenditure is required.

Substantial potential fiscal and public safety benefits to the City. Taken together, the bills in the Megafire Prevention Package address the full spectrum of wildfire risk facing Berkeley - from landscape-scale fuel loads in the East Bay hills and beyond, to the built-environment vulnerabilities of Berkeley's older housing stock, to the insurance market and financing barriers that prevent widespread adoption of mitigation measures. Broad adoption of the package's provisions would be expected to:

- Reduce the risk and severity of catastrophic wildfire losses in Berkeley, particularly in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in the hills, where a major fire event could generate billions of dollars in property damage and impose significant emergency response costs on the City.
- Reduce pressure on the City's emergency response resources, the costs of post-disaster recovery and infrastructure repair, and the burden on City staff and departments during and after wildfire events.
- Reinforce the homeowner's insurance market in Berkeley, where non-renewals and premium escalations continue to threaten housing stability and property values.
- Increase the effectiveness of Berkeley's existing local programs - including the Transfer Tax Rebate for home hardening and the Resident Assistance Program - by supporting the statewide policy infrastructure within which those local programs operate.
- Support regional landscape resilience through beneficial fire programs that reduce the fuel load in open space areas east of Berkeley, creating buffers that reduce the probability of a fire reaching densely populated hillside neighborhoods.

Because these bills operate through state agency programs, private financing mechanisms, and market incentive structures rather than direct City expenditure, the City of Berkeley would receive these benefits at no direct cost to the City's General Fund.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Berkeley faces serious, well-documented, and escalating wildfire risk. The Berkeley Hills are designated a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by CAL FIRE, reflecting the elevated danger posed by steep terrain, dense vegetation, an aging housing stock, and fire-weather conditions that have intensified with climate change. The 1991 Tunnel Fire - which destroyed approximately 3,354 homes and killed 25 people, causing over \$1.5 billion in damages - remains the defining local illustration of what is at stake, but scientists and fire professionals broadly agree that conditions for a similar or larger event have grown worse in the decades since.

The wildfire risk Berkeley faces is not limited to the hills, with the 1923 fire having reached the North Shattuck area, and embers capable of blowing up to 2 miles. The East Bay region as a whole has a significant fire deficit - a long historical accumulation of unburned vegetation resulting from fire suppression policies - that creates landscape-scale fuel loads across the open space and wildland areas to Berkeley's east. A wind-driven fire igniting in Contra Costa County, as occurred during the Diablo Wind events of 2017 and 2019, could threaten Berkeley's hills even if the immediate point of ignition is miles away. Expanding the pace and scale of prescribed fire and other fuels management activities in the broader region is therefore a direct Berkeley safety interest, not merely a state or regional one.

At the same time, the barriers to wildfire risk reduction at the property level - high upfront costs, limited financing options, unclear guidance on what improvements are most effective, and no guarantee that completed improvements will result in access to insurance - have prevented the widespread adoption of home hardening that experts agree is necessary for community-level risk reduction. Approximately 5 million California homes sit in high fire-risk areas; the gap between current hardening rates and what is needed is enormous.

The 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package addresses this multifaceted crisis through a coordinated, comprehensive set of bills spanning landscape-scale fire, community planning, built-environment standards, financing, insurance markets, and technology. The City of Berkeley strongly supports this comprehensive approach and urges the Legislature and Governor to enact the full package.

Action: .

Votes: Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

### BACKGROUND

The DFSC has maintained an active focus on wildfire resiliency in Berkeley for a number of years. The Commission's Wildfire Resiliency Workgroup has examined a range of policy options aimed at increasing the rate of home hardening and defensible space compliance among Berkeley residents, with particular attention to the challenges of affordability and equitable access to improvement resources.

As part of this ongoing work, the DFSC previously reviewed and discussed potential enhancements to the City's Resident Assistance Program, including proposals to expand financial assistance available to lower-income residents for wildfire mitigation improvements. The DFSC recommended - and the Berkeley City Council approved with modifications - a Transfer Tax Rebate program to incentivize wildfire hardening improvements at the point of residential property sale or in the preceding five years.

On March 25, 2026, the DFSC adopted a Support position on SB 894 (Allen), the California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program, and recommended that the City Council authorize letters of support to Senator Allen, Senator Arreguín, and Assemblymember Wicks. That recommendation was the first in what the DFSC anticipates will be an active legislative session for wildfire-related policy. The Commission also previously adopted a Support position on SB 1076 (Pérez), the Insurance Coverage for Fire-Safe Homes Act, which would require admitted insurers to cover properties meeting state wildfire safety standards. SB 1076 is not included in the Joint Megafire Prevention Package but advances closely related objectives.

The bills in the Megafire Prevention Package represent the most comprehensive legislative effort to address California's wildfire crisis in the state's history. They span five thematic areas:

- Home Hardening Financing (SB 894): Establishes the California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program, administered by CAEATFA, to provide a loan loss reserve and interest rate buy-down mechanism that reduces the upfront and ongoing cost of wildfire hardening improvements for residential, multifamily, and small business properties statewide.
- Community Planning and Coordination (SB 973, SB 1404): SB 973 formalizes and expands the Wildfire County Coordinator Program, directing CAL FIRE to develop standardized risk assessment guidance and requiring the program to be administered by the California Fire Safe Council. The program has already secured over \$104 million in local mitigation funding and reached nearly 1 million residents; SB 973 puts this success on a durable statutory footing. SB 1404 strengthens the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan by linking it to a dedicated implementation funding mechanism.
- Real Property Disclosure (SB 911): Extends and strengthens the requirement that sellers of real property in high and very high fire hazard severity zones provide buyers with documentation of compliance with fire safety requirements, ensuring home buyers have clear information about a property's wildfire risk status at the point of sale.
- Technology and Innovation (SB 1079): Establishes a Fire Innovation Unit within CAL FIRE to serve as the state's principal hub for wildfire technology research, coordination, procurement, and deployment - closing the gap between rapidly emerging wildfire technologies and the state's capacity to identify, pilot, and scale them.

- Built Environment Standards and Incentives (AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013): Assemblymember Bennett's six-bill package establishes a home hardening certification program (AB 1934); prioritizes state wildfire prevention grants for communities where 50% or more of homes have earned certification (AB 1960); directs a statewide survey to identify homes in fire-risk areas that still need hardening (AB 1964); exempts home hardening improvements from increased property tax reassessments (AB 1971); requires insurers to provide homeowners with side-by-side premium quotes reflecting a property's current risk and its risk if fully hardened (AB 1986); and establishes enhanced emergency preparedness requirements for water suppliers in fire-risk areas (AB 2013).
- Beneficial Fire (AB 1699, AB 1891): The Good Fire Act (AB 1699) expands the California certified Burn Boss (CA-RX) program, which provides training and certification for prescribed burn managers on non-federal land, and reforms liability standards for certified burn managers operating within approved parameters - shifting from strict liability to a gross negligence standard. This dramatically reduces the practical barriers to prescribed burning on private land, which has been a major bottleneck in regions like the East Bay with large amounts of privately held open space. AB 1891 dedicates 10% of CAL FIRE's California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund allocation to a grant program for beneficial fire workforce development, with 25% dedicated to tribal programs. This addresses the emerging workforce bottleneck - there is broad expert consensus that increasing the scale of beneficial fire is necessary, but there are not enough trained practitioners to execute at the needed pace.

The beneficial fire bills have particular relevance for Berkeley and the East Bay. While prescribed burns within Berkeley's city limits are not feasible, the East Bay region's fire deficit - the accumulated fuel load resulting from decades of fire suppression - poses significant regional risk. An East Bay Prescribed Burn Association is currently forming, and its viability depends in part on the expanded training, certification, and liability protections that AB 1699 and AB 1891 would provide. Reducing regional fuel loads to Berkeley's east directly reduces the probability that a wind-driven wildland fire could reach Berkeley's hillside neighborhoods.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

- Take no position, or support individual bills without a package position. The DFSC could recommend support for individual bills separately as they advance through the Legislature, as it did with SB 894 and SB 1076. However, the DFSC finds that the Joint Megafire Prevention Package's bills are closely interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and that a coordinated package position better reflects both the urgency of the wildfire crisis and the comprehensiveness of the legislative response. The City retains the option to take separate positions on individual bills in the package if any bill is significantly amended.

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

- Pursue local equivalents of package provisions where City authority exists. The City of Berkeley has authority over certain aspects of home hardening standards, property disclosure at the point of sale, and fire safety inspection requirements. However, local action cannot substitute for the statewide financing infrastructure, insurance market reforms, county planning coordination, or landscape-scale beneficial fire programs that the package addresses. The DFSC recommends that local complementary actions be considered in the future but deferred pending the outcome of the package legislation

### CITY MANAGER

### CONTACT PERSON

Keith May, Commission Secretary, Deputy Fire Chief, (510) 981-5508

### Attachments:

- 1: Draft Letter to Senator Allen re: SB 894
- 2: Draft Letter to Senator Becker re: SB 911 and SB 973
- 3: Draft Letter to Senator Stern re: SB 1079 and SB 1404
- 4: Draft Letter to Assemblymember Rogers re: AB 1699
- 5: Draft Letter to Assemblymember Connolly re: AB 1891
- 6: Draft Letter to Assemblymember Bennett re: AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, and AB 2013

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013) CALENDAR

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

*Draft Letter of Support - SB 894 (Allen): Wildfire Mitigation Affordability Act*

[DATE]

The Honorable Ben Allen  
California State Senate, District 24  
State Capitol, Room 2054  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - SB 894 (Allen): Wildfire Mitigation Affordability Act / California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program

Dear Senator Allen:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am writing to express strong support for Senate Bill 894, the Wildfire Mitigation Affordability Act, which would establish the California Wildfire Resilience Loan Program. The Berkeley Disaster and Fire Safety Commission recommended this support position at its March 25, 2026 meeting, and the City Council is pleased to formally transmit this letter as part of our broader support for the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package.

Berkeley is acutely aware of the wildfire risk facing our community. The Berkeley Hills are designated a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and the memory of the 1991 Tunnel Fire - which destroyed more than 3,300 homes and claimed 25 lives - shapes our ongoing commitment to wildfire preparedness and mitigation. Despite that commitment, the upfront cost of home hardening and defensible space improvements remains a significant barrier for many residents, particularly those of moderate means who may not qualify for or have access to affordable private financing.

SB 894's approach - leveraging CAEATFA's proven financing expertise to create a loan loss reserve and interest rate buy-down program - is precisely the right model to address this barrier at scale. By reducing the cost and risk of private lending for wildfire resilience improvements, the bill would mobilize investment that neither government grants nor property-tax-based financing alone can achieve. The program's statewide scope and its availability to properties regardless of hazard zone designation would ensure that communities like Berkeley, with significant WUI risk throughout our hillside neighborhoods, can fully participate.

The City of Berkeley has long worked to advance wildfire resiliency, including through a Transfer Tax Rebate for home hardening and ongoing resident assistance initiatives. SB 894 would complement and extend these local efforts by providing the affordable financing infrastructure our residents need to take action at scale. We also recognize that

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

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improved home hardening at scale is essential to stabilizing the homeowner's insurance market in California's most vulnerable communities, and we strongly support that goal.

The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass SB 894 and respectfully requests the Governor's signature. We look forward to working with your office and with CAEATFA to ensure Berkeley residents are well-positioned to benefit from this program.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9  
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14  
Berkeley City Council

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013) CALENDAR

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

*Draft Letter of Support - SB 911 and SB 973 (Becker)*

[DATE]

The Honorable Josh Becker  
California State Senate, District 13  
State Capitol, Room [Room Number]  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - SB 911 (Becker): Transfer of Real Property: Compliance Documentation; and SB 973 (Becker): Wildfire County Coordinator Program

Dear Senator Becker:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am pleased to write in strong support of Senate Bills 911 and 973, two of your contributions to the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package. Together, these bills address two of the most critical infrastructure gaps in California's wildfire resilience framework: county-level planning and coordination capacity, and the information available to homebuyers about the fire safety status of properties they are purchasing.

SB 973 would formalize and expand the Wildfire County Coordinator Program in statute, directing CAL FIRE to develop standardized wildfire risk assessment guidance and requiring the program to be administered by the California Fire Safe Council. The program's track record is extraordinary - since 2021, it has secured more than \$104 million for local mitigation projects and reached nearly 1 million California residents with wildfire resilience education. Placing this program on a durable statutory footing, with clear requirements for data collection, risk assessment standards, and coordination with local and regional partners, is essential to sustaining and growing these results. Berkeley and Alameda County have benefited from this kind of county-level coordination, and we strongly support codifying it.

SB 911 would strengthen the requirement that sellers of real property in high and very high fire hazard severity zones provide buyers with documentation of compliance with fire safety requirements. Ensuring that homebuyers in fire-risk areas have clear, verified information about a property's wildfire safety status at the point of sale is a straightforward and important transparency measure. It creates an additional market incentive for sellers to complete required hardening and defensible space work before listing, and it ensures that buyers understand what they are purchasing. Berkeley's own experience with its Transfer Tax Rebate program has demonstrated the value of connecting home hardening compliance with the real estate transaction process.

The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass both SB 911 and SB 973.

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14

Berkeley City Council

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013) CALENDAR

### **ATTACHMENT 3**

*Draft Letter of Support - SB 1079 and SB 1404 (Stern)*

[DATE]

The Honorable Henry Stern  
California State Senate, District 27  
State Capitol, Room [Room Number]  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - SB 1079 (Stern): Fire Innovation Unit Act; and SB 1404 (Stern): Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan: Implementation Strategy

Dear Senator Stern:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am pleased to write in strong support of Senate Bills 1079 and 1404, your contributions to the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package. These bills address California's urgent need for both a more agile approach to deploying wildfire technology and a stronger mechanism for implementing the state's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

SB 1079 would establish a Fire Innovation Unit within CAL FIRE - serving as the state's principal hub for wildfire technology research, coordination, procurement, and deployment. The pace of innovation in wildfire detection, prediction, and suppression technologies is outrunning California's current capacity to evaluate, pilot, and scale those technologies. Firefighters and land managers need streamlined access to early detection systems, decision support tools, and suppression innovations that can make a meaningful difference in the first critical minutes and hours of a fire. The Fire Innovation Unit's structure - with dedicated offices for technology research, outreach and coordination, and rapid acquisition and deployment - creates a formal, coherent pathway from promising technology to statewide operational use. Berkeley strongly supports this approach and believes it will make California firefighters and communities meaningfully safer.

SB 1404 would strengthen the implementation of California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan by establishing a dedicated implementation funding strategy linked to the plan's goals and key actions. California has developed sophisticated wildfire resilience planning over the past decade, but the gap between planning and on-the-ground execution has been a persistent challenge. SB 1404 addresses this gap directly, and Berkeley supports the bill's intent to ensure that the Action Plan's objectives translate into funded, accountable implementation.

The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass both SB 1079 and SB 1404.

Sincerely,

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14

Berkeley City Council

#### **ATTACHMENT 4**

*Draft Letter of Support - AB 1699 (Rogers): Good Fire Act*

[DATE]

The Honorable Chris Rogers  
California State Assembly, District 7  
State Capitol, Room [Room Number]  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - AB 1699 (Rogers): Good Fire Act

Dear Assemblymember Rogers:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am pleased to write in strong support of Assembly Bill 1699, the Good Fire Act. This legislation addresses one of the most consequential and underappreciated barriers to wildfire risk reduction in California: the liability, permitting, and certification obstacles that have significantly constrained the pace and scale of prescribed and cultural burns.

Berkeley is located in a region with a severe fire deficit - the accumulated result of decades of fire suppression policy that has allowed fuel loads to build across East Bay open space and wildland areas. While it is not feasible to conduct prescribed burns within Berkeley's city limits, the regional landscape surrounding our community carries a level of fuel loading that poses serious risk to Berkeley's hillside neighborhoods. Wind-driven fires igniting in open space to our east could reach Berkeley's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone even from miles away. Reducing regional fuel loads through beneficial fire is therefore a direct Berkeley safety interest.

AB 1699 would expand the California certified Burn Boss (CA-RX) program, which provides training and certification for prescribed burn managers on non-federal land. Prior to CA-RX, certification pathways were largely limited to the federal government, dramatically constraining who could legally manage prescribed burns on private and non-federal public land. The bill would also reform liability standards, shifting from strict liability to a gross negligence standard for certified burn managers operating within approved burn plans and weather parameters. This combination - expanded certification and reduced liability - addresses the two most significant practical barriers that have prevented prescribed fire from scaling to meet expert recommendations.

The East Bay Prescribed Burn Association is currently forming. Its viability and eventual effectiveness depend directly on the training, certification, and liability framework that AB 1699 would establish. Without this legislation, the capacity of the emerging East Bay prescribed fire community to conduct burns at meaningful scale is severely limited. With it, the regional beneficial fire landscape looks dramatically different.

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass AB 1699.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9  
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14  
Berkeley City Council

## **ATTACHMENT 5**

### *Draft Letter of Support - AB 1891 (Connolly): Beneficial Fire Capacity Program*

[DATE]

The Honorable Damon Connolly  
California State Assembly, District 12  
State Capitol, Room [Room Number]  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - AB 1891 (Connolly): Beneficial Fire Capacity Program

Dear Assemblymember Connolly:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am pleased to write in strong support of Assembly Bill 1891, the Beneficial Fire Capacity Program. This bill addresses what many fire experts identify as the critical next bottleneck in California's prescribed fire effort: workforce capacity. Even as permitting and regulatory barriers to prescribed burns have been meaningfully reduced in recent years, the shortage of trained and employed practitioners capable of conducting burns at the scale that experts recommend remains a profound constraint.

AB 1891 would dedicate 10 percent of CAL FIRE's annual allocation from the California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to a grant program for beneficial fire workforce development, with 25 percent of those funds dedicated to tribal programs. Eligible recipients would include Prescribed Burn Associations, local nonprofits, fire agencies, landowners, and Conservation Corps programs - exactly the organizations doing the on-the-ground work of expanding beneficial fire in California's most fire-deficient landscapes.

The workforce development problem is not simply a matter of numbers. Historically, grant funding for prescribed fire has been sporadic and shifting, making it difficult for organizations to invest in staff, training programs, or the multi-year maintenance of burn projects when their funding might disappear at any moment. AB 1891's approach - establishing a sustainable, dedicated funding stream tied to an existing and durable revenue source - addresses this structural problem directly. Organizations like East Bay Regional Park District and the nascent East Bay Prescribed Burn Association would be potential beneficiaries, and a sustained funding stream would dramatically expand their capacity to conduct beneficial fire projects in the landscapes surrounding Berkeley.

We also note the bill's important recognition of California Tribes as essential partners in beneficial fire. Tribal nations have stewarded California's landscapes through fire since time immemorial; their knowledge, leadership, and authority are irreplaceable in any serious beneficial fire effort. The 25 percent tribal set-aside reflects this and ensures that the bill's resources support tribal-led programs at meaningful scale.

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass AB 1891.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14

Berkeley City Council

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013) CALENDAR

## **ATTACHMENT 6**

*Draft Letter of Support - AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, and AB 2013 (Bennett)*

[DATE]

The Honorable Steve Bennett  
California State Assembly, District 38  
State Capitol, Room [Room Number]  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support - AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, and AB 2013 (Bennett): Home Hardening and Community Preparedness Package

Dear Assemblymember Bennett:

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I am pleased to write in strong support of your six-bill package as part of the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package. These bills reflect a sophisticated and integrated approach to accelerating home hardening and community preparedness in wildfire-vulnerable communities, and they address barriers that Berkeley has encountered directly in our own local efforts.

AB 1934 would direct the State Fire Marshal's Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop a home hardening certification program - establishing clear, verifiable standards for what it means for a home to be 'hardened' against wildfire. This is a foundational piece that gives meaning to the other bills in your package and to broader legislative efforts: without a clear certification standard, incentives, grants, insurance disclosures, and tax policies all lack an objective benchmark to reference. Berkeley strongly supports establishing this standard.

AB 1960 would prioritize state wildfire prevention grants for communities where at least 50 percent of homes have earned home hardening certification. This provision recognizes a fundamental truth about wildfire risk: community-level protection increases exponentially as more homes in a neighborhood are hardened. A single hardened home in a block of vulnerable structures provides limited protection; a neighborhood where the majority of homes are hardened behaves qualitatively differently in a fire. Aligning grant prioritization with community-level adoption rates creates a powerful incentive for collective action.

AB 1964 would require a statewide survey identifying homes in fire-risk areas that still need hardening and assessing the remaining steps. This is essential information for targeting state resources, measuring progress, and holding programs accountable. Berkeley has found through its own programs that knowing where the hardening gap

Support Position on the 2026 Joint Megafire Prevention Package (SB 894, SB 911, SB 973, SB 1079, SB 1404, AB 1699, AB 1891, AB 1934, AB 1960, AB 1964, AB 1971, AB 1986, AB 2013)

CALENDAR

exists - by neighborhood, by housing type, by income level - is necessary for effective outreach and assistance. AB 1964 would provide this intelligence at statewide scale.

AB 1971 would exempt home hardening improvements from increased property tax reassessments, removing a disincentive that has no rational policy justification. Homeowners who invest in making their homes more fire-safe should not face a higher property tax bill as a result. This exemption is analogous to existing exemptions for seismic retrofitting and solar installations, and it reflects the same principle: the state should not impose tax penalties on property improvements that serve important public safety and environmental goals.

AB 1986 would require insurers to provide homeowners with side-by-side premium quotes showing what they would pay for coverage on their property as-is and what they would pay if the home were fully hardened to state certification standards. This transparency requirement addresses a critical information gap: many homeowners do not know how much they could save on insurance premiums by completing hardening improvements, and many are not aware that hardening can restore access to coverage they have lost. Making the potential savings visible at the point of insurance interaction creates a powerful and direct incentive for investment.

AB 2013 would establish enhanced emergency preparedness requirements for water suppliers in fire-risk areas, ensuring that the water systems that firefighters depend on meet minimum performance standards under fire conditions. Water supply reliability is a critical and often overlooked component of community-level fire preparedness, and Berkeley supports requiring that our water suppliers plan for the demands of a major wildfire event.

Taken together, your six bills represent a coherent and mutually reinforcing strategy to make home hardening the norm rather than the exception in California's fire-risk communities. The City of Berkeley urges the Legislature to pass all six bills.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Berkeley

**cc:**

Senator Jesse Arreguín, California State Senate, District 9  
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California State Assembly, District 14  
Berkeley City Council

BERKELEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Strategic Programs & Partnerships Division

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# 12 Months of STPP

## Why Year 2 Matters

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Presented to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
May 2026



Street Trauma Prevention Program

# The Problem

*Why Berkeley needed a new approach*

## +12%

**Increase in BFD  
Calls for Service**

15,720 → 17,659  
(2019 – 2025)

## 21

**Fatal Pedestrian &  
Bike Collisions**

in Berkeley  
(2019 – 2025)

## 1,164

**Total Collisions  
Recorded**

in the same  
7-year period

In March 2025, Berkeley Fire Department launched STPP to balance the emergency response needs and preventable street trauma.

**The core vision: streets safe for everyone — without compromising emergency response times.**

# 1 Year of STPP

*From concept to foundation*

We Are Here



*12 of 13 core program duties initiated in Year 1 — Berkeley has connected with cities such as Oakland, Alameda, and Fremont to explore areas of regional collaboration and Berkeley's model inspired Oakland to develop a similar program.*

# Why STPP is Different

*A multidisciplinary, Fire-informed approach to street safety*

|                | Vision Zero (8 years)                  | STPP (1 year)                                                                |
|----------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mission / Lead | Public Works                           | Fire Mission                                                                 |
| Approach       | Engineering (infrastructure)           | Multidisciplinary                                                            |
| Areas of Focus | Speed reduction, quick builds, TCD     | Non-infrastructure solutions, messaging & education, Fire/EMS lens on design |
| Support System | International data: SWITRS             | Local & regional: SWITRS + BFD incident data                                 |
| Perception     | Well-established infrastructure effort | Collaborative public safety & health effort that brings people together      |

# Collaboration & Partnerships

*Building the relationships needed for lasting change*

# 26

**Internal  
Collaborators**

# 23

**External  
Partners**

## INTERNAL

- Fire (9 staff)
- Public Works (10 staff)
- Police (3 staff)
- Economic Development (1)
- City Manager's Office

## EXTERNAL & ACADEMIC

### **UC Berkeley (13 students)**

Innovation Lab + Goldman School of Public Policy

### **UC Davis (3 researchers)**

Institute of Transportation Studies — training curriculum

### **SFSU (1 partnership)**

Senior safety internship program (launching Aug 2026)

### **Peer Learning (8 agencies)**

Oakland, Alameda, Fremont + 5 jurisdictions, 7 departments

### **Local Community**

Volunteer network, community members

# Program Accomplishments

12 of 13 core duties initiated in Year 1



## 9 Project Design Reviews

Integrated Fire/EMS operational insights early in planning — Vision Zero Action Plan, Berkeley High SR2S, Adeline Street Quick Build, Telegraph Multimodal Corridor, and 5 more.



## 8 Data Point Maps, 2019–2025

First-ever mapping of auto/ped injuries, critical interventions, transports, and response data. Revealed significant data gaps — and launched a department-wide data improvement effort.



## STPP Webpage Published

Action-driven public webpage launched May 2026. Enables community volunteers to connect directly with STPP. Foundation for a broader messaging and outreach campaign.



## 11 University Students Engaged

Partnered with UCB Innovation Lab (emergency signal routing app using Fire/EMS data — a national first) and Goldman School of Public Policy on community safety research.



## Peer Learning Across 5 Cities

Convened 7 departments across Oakland, Alameda, Fremont and beyond. Berkeley's model is now being replicated — positioning STPP as a regional leader.

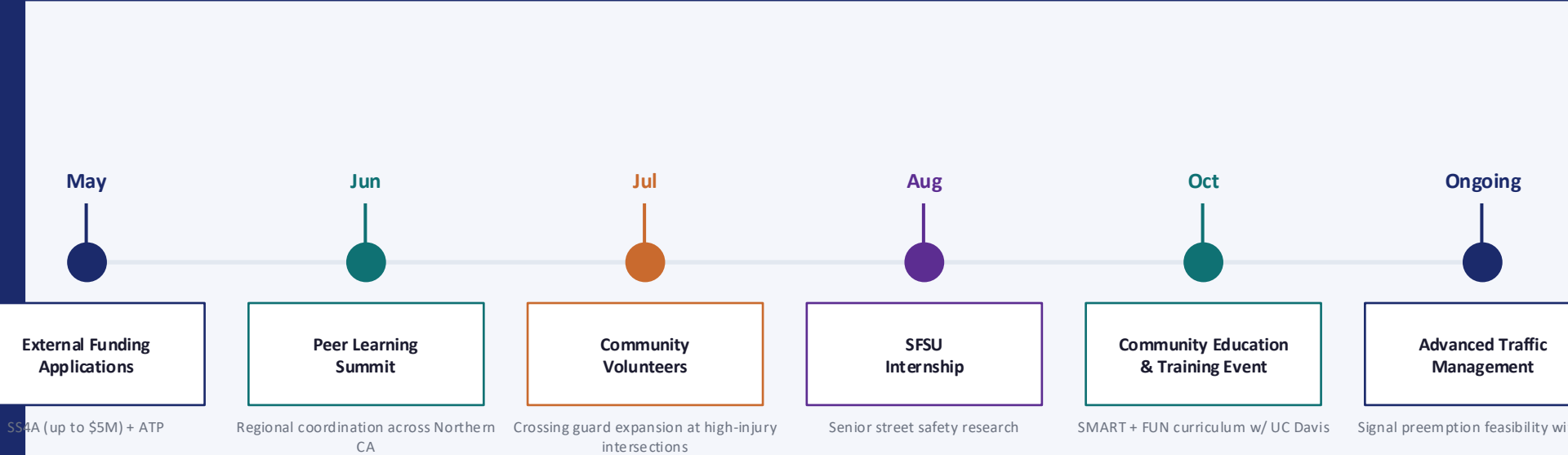


## Monthly Public Works Coordination

10 PW staff across divisions meet monthly with STPP. Facilitated the first-ever joint meeting of logistics, Fire captain, and preemption experts around signal management.

# Year 2 Projects Timeline

Translating Year 1 learning into action



Grant applications due May 26 (SS4A) and June 22 (ATP) — external funding is the single most important near-term action to sustain and scale STPP.

# Program Areas

STPP is creating a culture of safety



## Data Analysis

Mapped 8 data points 2019–2025; initiated data governance reform across BFD systems.



## Advanced Traffic Management

Monthly PW coordination; UCB student-built emergency signal routing app.



## Collaborative Design & Innovation

9 Fire-informed design reviews on active city projects including Vision Zero and SR25.



## Compliance & Enforcement

Partnered with BPD Traffic Unit; participated in Alameda County HITT enforcement operation.



## Public Education & Outreach

STPP webpage live. UC Davis community training curriculum in development for Oct 2026.



## Community Leadership & Partnerships

26 internal + 23 external collaborators. Peer learning across 5 cities, 7 departments.

# What's at Stake

*The cost of discontinuing STPP now*

## Grant funding forfeited

Applications due May 26 & June 22 — if STPP is discontinued, Berkeley cannot execute or manage the award. Up to \$5M SS4A + ATP funding lost.

## Year 1 investments stranded

All data collection, system alignment, academic partnerships, and relationship-building become unusable without the dedicated function to convert them into prevention tools.

## Collaborative projects dissolved

Active projects across 9 city design reviews, UCB signal routing pilot, peer learning summit, and UC Davis training curriculum all discontinued.

## Fire/EMS integration eliminated

STPP is the only dedicated function integrating Fire/EMS prevention expertise into street design — discontinuing it reverts the city to siloed decision-making.

**Impact:** Berkeley loses its only capacity to convert Year 1 learning into prevention tools — exposing the community to continued preventable street trauma while other cities continue seek collaboration and grant partnership opportunities with STPP and seek to learn about or adopt our model.

**This program's future is contingent on two votes on June 23.**



## 2 Votes Required

Vote 1

**STP Program**

Vote 2

**STP Program Manager**



## Upcoming Meetings

Committee

Budget & Finance Committee

May 14

Council

Full Council – First Hearing

May 19

Council

Discuss Revised Budget

Jun 16

VOTE DAY

**City Council Adopts Budget**

Jun 23

# Thank You

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Disaster Fire and Safety Commission

May 2026

Presented by Rania Ahmed · Berkeley Fire Department

**Questions & Discussions**

# Up Next

Student Presentations — UCB Partnerships

Two teams who worked directly with STPP this year will now share their findings.

1

UCB Goldman School of Public Policy

## Hayley Ellen Bates

### Balancing Traffic Safety & Emergency Response

A mixed-methods analysis — collision data, a 75-person community survey, spatial mapping, and 7 stakeholder interviews — to understand what's actually driving severe and fatal incidents in Berkeley, how residents perceive risk, and how the city makes decisions about street safety and emergency response.

Policy Research

Community Engagement

2

UCB Innovation Lab · Collider Cup 2026

## Team GreenWave

### Dynamic Route Optimization with Integrated Traffic Signal Preemption

Nine graduate students. One semester. Using real BFD incident data — never done before — to build a working emergency routing and signal preemption prototype, purpose-built for Berkeley's streets and infrastructure.

Innovation Lab

Signal Preemption

# STREET TRAUMA PREVENTION PROGRAM

# ALIGNING EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND STREET SAFETY IN BERKELEY

A Mixed-Methods Analysis for the Berkeley Fire Department



Presented by: Hayley Bates  
May 20, 2026

Berkeley Public Policy  
The Goldman School



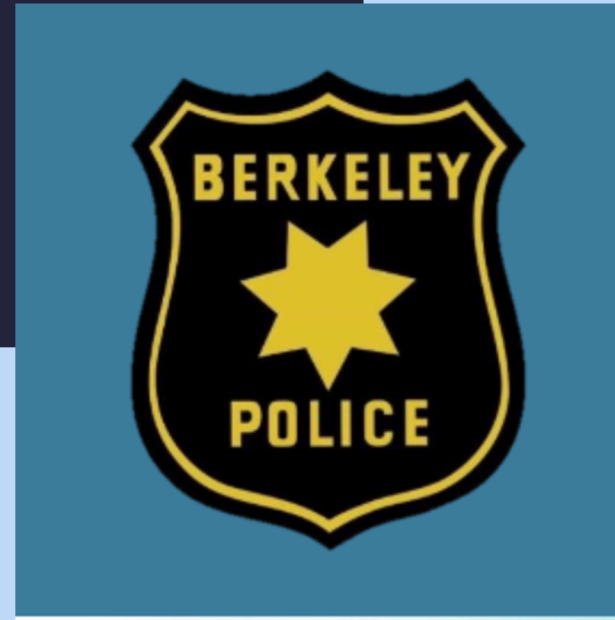
## GUIDING QUESTIONS

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- What drives severe and fatal incidents for pedestrians and cyclists in Berkeley?
- How do residents themselves perceive risk and safety?
- How are decisions about emergency response and traffic safety made?

# METHODS

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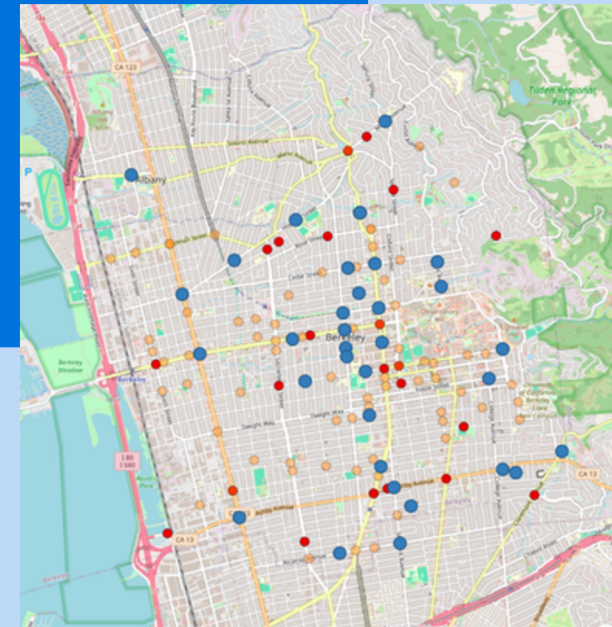
## **Berkeley Police Collision Data Analysis**

Severe and Fatal Car,  
Truck, Bus, or  
Motorcycle vs  
Pedestrian, Bike, E-  
Bike, or Scooter



## **Community Survey**

75 respondents  
Ages 18-84  
19 multiple-choice  
questions  
6 open-ended  
questions



## **Spatial comparison**

police data collisions  
vs. survey near  
misses



## **Stakeholder Interviews**

7 stakeholders  
across:  
City staff  
Community  
advocates  
External experts

**“When thinking about street safety changes in Berkeley, what are your concerns?”**

**“EVACUATION DELAYS”**

**“PEDESTRIAN SAFETY”**

**“HURTING LOCAL  
BUSINESS ACCESSIBILITY”**

**“PARKING LOSSES”**

**“I DON’T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
IMPACTS”**

**“CONGESTION IMPACTING  
EMERGENCY ACCESS”**

**“IMPROVING EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE TIMES”**

**“AMBULANCE DELAYS”**

**“REDUCING CAR SPEEDS”**

***THE BERKELEY COMMUNITY WANTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC  
SAFETY. IT JUST CAN’T AGREE ON HOW.***

# WHAT IS CAUSING INCIDENTS?

## STAKEHOLDERS SAY:

- Distracted Driving
- Speeding
- Bikes are often at fault
- Need more infrastructure

## I FOUND:

- Pedestrian incidents are concentrated at crosswalks
  - BUT, we don't know *WHY*
- Bike incidents occur in intersections
- Bad pavement causes harm

# DATA LIMITATIONS ARE PREVENTING ALIGNMENT

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Inconsistent and  
incomplete data  
sources  
lead to misaligned  
decision making

“Near misses and  
secondary collision  
factors could help  
inform trends”

No data on response  
impacts → assumptions  
drive decisions → tension  
follows

# PROCESS GAPS ARE EXACERBATING TENSIONS

---

Without a framework for traffic safety decisions, misaligned expectations create tension

“Departments are siloed...staff turnover inhibits progress”

By developing consistent, stakeholder relationships and finding those “win-wins”

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand Public Transparency Around Emergency Response Data**
- **Expand Evaluation of Emergency-Compatible Traffic Calming**
- **Implement Community Ride-Alongs**
- **Expand Collision Data to Include Contextual Factors**
- **Continue this work: Expand Survey Reach and Continue In-Depth Interviews**



# **FINDINGS:**

## STPP IS AT THE INTERSECTION OF THESE PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS

- Improving life-saving emergency response times
- Addressing evacuation route concerns
- Improving pedestrian and bike safety
- Reducing firefighter incidents of PTSD and other mental health issues by reducing exposure to traumatic incidents

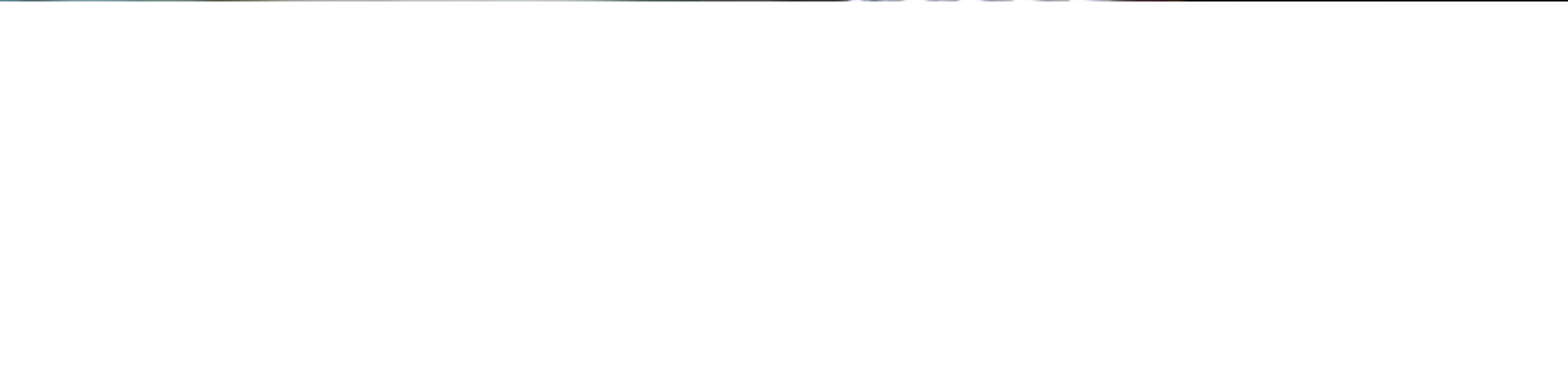


# CONCLUSION

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**Core Finding:** The tension between emergency response and street safety is largely perceptual and structural—not an inevitable tradeoff. Data gaps and communication silos drive misunderstanding between departments.

**Key Takeaway:** Stakeholders share common goals but lack shared frameworks. STPP is well-positioned to lead integration and transparency efforts, bridging the gap between street safety and emergency response.



**THANK YOU**





# GreenWave

Dynamic Route Optimization with  
Integrated Traffic Signal Preemption



In collaboration with Berkeley Fire Department



City of Berkeley



# Every Second Counts



**1 min**

Delay reduces survival by 10–15%.



**5 min**

Average time lost due to traffic.



**32%**

of intersections experience congestion.

# Introducing GreenWave



Real Need



Testable pilot city



Existing  
Infrastructure



Direct  
Collaboration



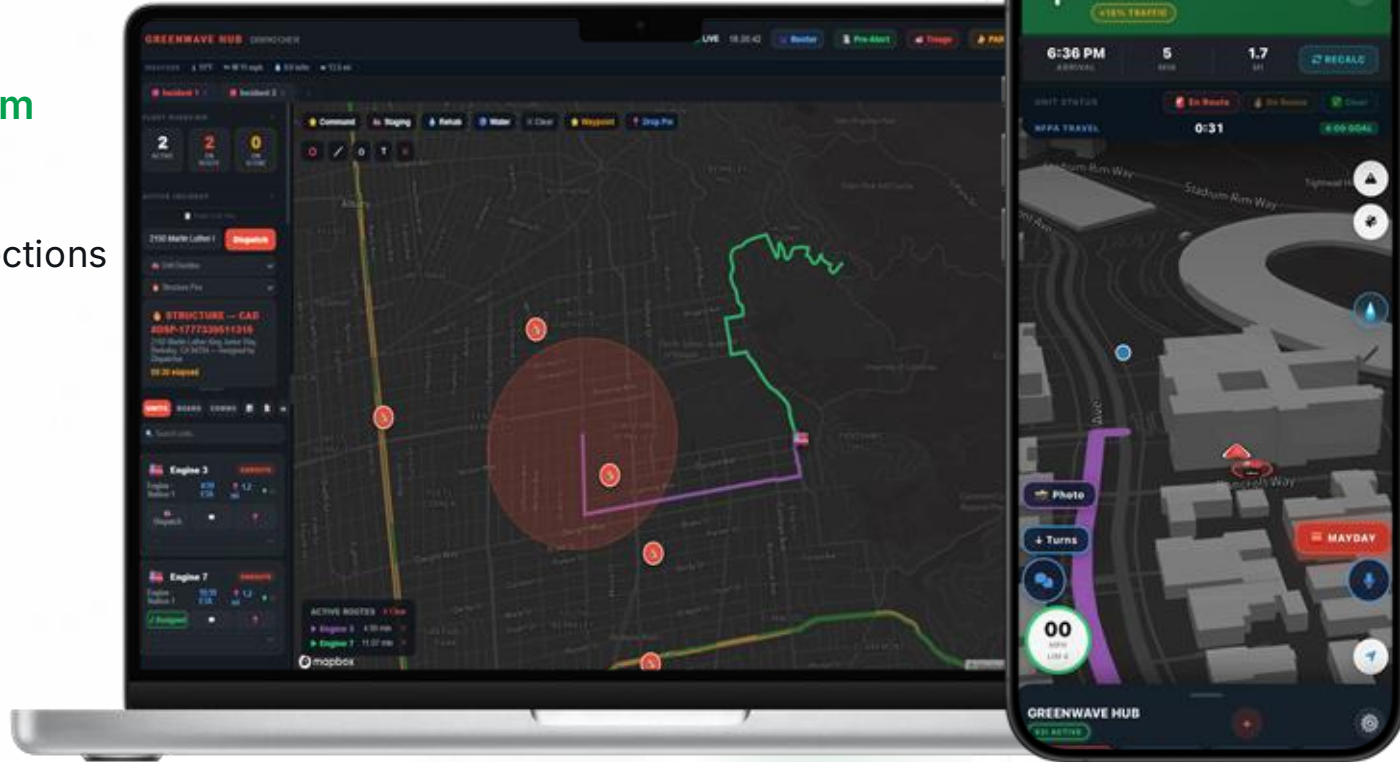
# How GreenWave Works



# Grounded in Berkeley

## 📍 Berkeley Pilot Program

- 1 emergency corridor
- 5-10 signalized intersections



# Impact and Business Model



## Projected Impact

**20-60%**

Reduction in response time

**5-15**

Lives saved per year

## Market Opportunity



- TAM** \$1b 300,000-500,000 signalized intersections in the USA, global expansion
- SAM** \$600m 3,000 cities/towns with population over 10k (signal system infrastructure)
- SOM** \$10m 50 cities within California, Avg 200k contract

# Give Emergency Response the **Green** Light

Faster response. Safer Intersections. More lives saved.





Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

**May 5, 2026**

U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Letter of Support — City of Berkeley FY26 Safe Streets and Roads for All Application**

Dear Colleagues,

I write on behalf of the City of Berkeley's Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC) to express the Commission's strong support for the City of Berkeley's FY26 Safe Streets and Roads for All application, led by the Berkeley Fire Department for its Street Trauma Prevention Program (STPP).

Street trauma prevention is a core function of the modern fire-service mission. The work fire departments perform has shifted dramatically over the past several decades: today, traumatic injuries—particularly those resulting from collisions on streets and highways—represent a substantial and growing share of emergency response. The Berkeley Fire Department is no exception. Rescue and EMS responses, which include motor vehicle collisions and the traumatic injuries that result from them, consistently make up a large majority of BFD's call volume: in October 2025 alone, the Department responded to 1,015 rescue and EMS incidents, compared with 41 fires.

In the City of Berkeley, an average of 694 people are injured and five are killed in street trauma each year, with severe and fatal collisions disproportionately affecting people walking and biking. In addition, growing evidence shows that responding to critically injured patients takes a toll on emergency responders' mental health: post-traumatic stress injuries among firefighters are now presumed to be work related in California, for purposes of workers compensation coverage. A 2022 study of 32 peer review papers reported a prevalence rate of 57% for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among firefighters, compared to 38% for military personnel.<sup>1</sup>

In short, treating street trauma as a fire-service prevention priority is not a departure from the fire department's traditional mission—it is a recognition of where the mission now lives, and an

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<sup>1</sup> Obuodi-Donkor G, Oluwasina F, Nnamdi N, Aghyapong V (Jan 29, 2022). A Scoping Review on the Prevalence and Determinants of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among Military Personnel and Firefighters: Implications for Public Policy and Practice. *Int J Res Public Health* 2022 Jan 29;19(3). <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8834704/>. Accessed May 8, 2026.

acknowledgement that this mission now requires the fire service to participate constructively in efforts to build genuinely safer cities, while also protecting the mental health of front-line responders and responding effectively to emergencies.

The DFSC was the original advocate for the creation of the STPP at Berkeley Fire. In May 2024, the Commission unanimously recommended that the City Council fund a Program Manager II position within the Fire Department to establish a Street Trauma Prevention Program, on the rationale that street trauma is a serious and worsening public safety problem that the fire service is uniquely positioned to address through prevention. The Commission supported STPP in the context of the fire service's long-standing success in fire prevention—reducing fire-related deaths nationwide over the past 50 years through codes, education, inspections, and prevention-focused engineering.

This remarkable legacy demonstrates a proven model that can and should be applied to the leading source of traumatic injuries that responders see today. The STPP at Berkeley Fire is the institutional framework for applying that prevention-oriented approach to roadway safety; it is also the first municipal fire-led program of its kind nationwide.

In our assessment, since its launch in March 2025, the program has built a strong and credible foundation. Its first year focused on establishing cross-departmental coordination with Public Works and Police, formalizing partnerships with academic institutions, such as the University of California (UC), Davis and UC Berkeley; convening a regional peer-learning network; and identifying key data gaps.

The proposed SS4A-funded work, including a fire-informed Action Plan and demonstration activities, represents the appropriate next step to translate this foundation into measurable outcomes—reducing the volume and severity of traumatic injuries that the fire service is increasingly called to respond to. SS4A funding will enable the program to advance into action and deliver on its intended purpose.

By invitation, we have presented the work of the STPP in plenary sessions at the national Life Savers Conference in Long Beach; the California Active Transportation Program Symposium at UC Davis, under sponsorship of the California Transportation Commission and the California Department of Transportation; and at the California Bicycle Summit in Sacramento. The popularity of these presentations among conference participants reflects our experience, as well as emerging research, that the fire service can play a key role in either advancing or hindering critical improvements in street safety.

The STPP at Berkeley Fire represents a working model that cities and street safety advocates across the nation can point to as a new and refreshing role for the fire service: one that applies the lens of prevention to street trauma. This places the fire service in an important role in building a genuinely safer city, alongside its traditional emergency response function. Supporting the STPP program through SS4A funding will allow it to continue this momentum at a time when the City of Berkeley is otherwise struggling through a budget contraction.

The Commission supports this application as the body that originally recommended the program's creation; as an advisory body to the City Council on disaster, emergency response and fire safety matters; and as advocates for Berkeley residents and workers who deserve both safer streets and effective emergency response. We respectfully urge the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund this application.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns at [mpwilson@berkeley.edu](mailto:mpwilson@berkeley.edu), or 415-638-1266.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Wilson, PhD, MPH  
Commissioner  
Berkeley Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

## ARTICLES ON THE BERKELEY FIRE STREET TRAUMA PREVENTION PROGRAM

It's Time for the Fire Service to Join Communities in Preventing Street Trauma (Sept 30, 2025). *Medium: Vision Zero Cities Journal*.

<https://medium.com/vision-zero-cities-journal/its-time-for-the-fire-service-to-join-communities-in-preventing-street-trauma-67f4a36a45c9>.

Building an Alliance Between Firefighters and Street Safety Advocates (April 17, 2025). *California Bicycle Coalition*.

<https://www.calbike.org/building-an-alliance-between-firefighters-and-street-safety-advocates/>.

A Near-fatal Bike Crash May Shift How Berkeley Does Street Design (August 6, 2024) *The Berkeley Scanner*.

<https://www.berkeleyscanner.com/2024/08/06/traffic-safety/berkeley-street-trauma-prevention-program-mike-wilson-meg-schwarzman/>

Berkeley City Council, Consent Calendar (May 7, 2024). Support the Fire Department to Fund a Program Manager II Position. Street Trauma Prevention. Berkeley Disaster and Fire Safety Commission. [City Council Report ##-##-####](#).

Berkeley Fire 'Street Trauma Prevention' Position Closer to Reality (May 8, 2024). *Berkeleyside*.

<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/05/08/berkeley-fire-department-road-safety-emergency-response>

**Action:** Amendment and Approval of individual activities proposed in a 2026 – 2027 DFSC Work Plan that will then be finalized and submitted to City Council for Approval

**Recommendation:** The DFSC reviews, amends if necessary and approves the proposed workplan, with the activities and outcomes as detailed below. To the extent possible, commissioners will be selected for each work plan assignment with a designated leader of each work group. The final approved plan will be effective commencing on the date of approval of the new Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2026 by the City Council.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

The City Council requires Commissions submit an annual Work Plan. The current Commissioner’s Manual, dated 2019\* states:

#### DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PLAN

In 2016, the City Council took formal action directing all commissions, except Board of Library Trustees (BOLT), Design Review, and Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB), to submit an annual work plan at the start of each fiscal year to the Council in the form of an Information Report. A commission work plan should contain the commission’s mission statement, goals, resources, activities, outputs, and desired outcomes. This planning document specifies how and when the commission plans to accomplish its objectives (by specifying outcomes) during the fiscal year. Goal statements explain the nature and scope of the work to be performed, and the time needed to accomplish the goal. Designing yearly work plans or goal statements may be done in conjunction with the development of the relevant departmental work plan so that the work of the department and the commission will complement each other throughout the year. When developing a work plan, commissions should take special care to ensure that they remain within the subject area purview of their enabling legislation.

Written Material:

Berkeley Disaster and Fire Safety Commission  
Proposed WORK PLAN – FY 2026-2027

Mission Statement The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission serves as the public oversight body for Berkeley’s Measure GG and Measure FF funds, charged with reviewing the budget on a regular basis to ensure that the funds are spent in accordance with the intent of the voter approved measures, recommending the appropriate annual increase to the tax rate, and recommending new programs and policy positions requiring Measure GG and Measure FF funding. The ultimate goal of the Commission is to increase community safety, resilience, and education for community disaster preparedness. The Commission also reviews and makes recommendations on items referred by the City Council or other Commissions.

Summary of –2026-2027 Work Plan Activities

| NAME                                                                                              | ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | EXPECTED OUTCOMES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | COMMISSIONERS                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>1. Plan &amp; Budget Oversight</b></p> <p><b>BFD Staff Contact: D. Sprague / K. May</b></p> | <p>a) Review BFD budget materials on a quarterly basis</p> <p>b) Review current presentation materials / dashboards and make possible recommendations for changes or modifications</p> <p>c) Review the percentage of funds earmarked for Grizzly Peak and Panoramic Fire Zones</p> | <p>a) Provide input for quarterly and annual budget; Provide Annual budget recommendation to City Council on FF &amp; GG; Provide City Council on annual GG increases</p> <p>b) Review and Support concentration of FF mitigation funds to Fire Zones 3 &amp; 4 without sacrificing important programs and efforts in remaining fire zones</p> <p>c) Research possible funding for the Facilities Master Plan</p> | <p><u>Murphy</u><br/>Gordon<br/>Herzer-Baptiste</p> |
| <p><b>2. Neighborhood Fire Resiliency</b></p> <p><b>BFD Staff Contact: C. Arnold</b></p>          | <p>a) Initiate process to monitor EMBER and new Building Code compliance with Staff-including the Fire Marshall and Building Department</p> <p>b) Obtain updates on HH mesh program</p>                                                                                             | <p>a) Review metrics and presentation materials/dashboards provided by Staff on EMBER and HH compliance</p> <p>b) Provide input and recommendations to BFD on expanding and improving the HH program</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p><u>Murphy</u><br/>Dadmun<br/>Katz</p>            |

2026-2027 DFSC WORK PLAN

Internal

|                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Monitor progress by Berkeley Firesafe Council on Tree removal and clean-up project</li> <li>d) Collaborate with Staff on providing recommendations to obtain additional funding for Vegetation Management and Home Hardening</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Reports to full Commission from the Workgroup on a regular basis and requests an annual presentation from BFC</li> <li>d) Research possible funding resources for Home Hardening and Vegetation Management</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                     |
| <p><b>3. Safe Passages</b></p> <p><b>BFD Staff Contact: C. Arnold / S. Lana</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review Safe Passage Components to EMBER ordinance, discuss implementation priorities with Staff</li> <li>b) Review Evacuation Study Results with Staff and draft recommendations for implementation</li> <li>c) Coordinate efforts with Vision Zero Workgroup</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Recommendations for Safe Passages implementation in very high and high Fire Zones</li> <li>b) Provide input to Staff on recommendations and implementation</li> <li>c) Provide a joint report with Street Trauma Prevention Program workgroup to the full commission</li> </ul>                                                                                                            | <p><u>Gordon</u><br/>Bradstreet<br/>Darling</p>     |
| <p><b>4. Street Trauma Prevention Program</b></p> <p><b>BFD Staff Contact: R. Ahmed</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Meet regularly with the STP program manager on priorities, decision-making, internal processes, challenges and other matters.</li> <li>b) Develop policy briefs and recommendations related to street trauma prevention and response.</li> <li>c) Develop a compilation of research findings and best-practices related to street trauma prevention and response and provide, or arrange for, presentations to the DFSC, and, if warranted, to members of Council.</li> <li>d) Collaborate and communicate with other entities, including other City commissions,</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Assist in the development of written STPP goals, methods, and measurement tools.</li> <li>b) Provide ongoing feedback and recommendations to improve the STPP.</li> <li>c) Memoranda and / or referrals for approval from the DFSC for the City Council.</li> <li>d) Presentations and approved recommendations from DFSC to the City Council. Presentations for other entities</li> </ul> | <p><u>Wilson</u><br/>Gordon<br/>Herzer-Baptiste</p> |

2026-2027 DFSC WORK PLAN

Internal

|  |                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|  | on the role of the fire service in preventing, and responding to, street trauma incidents. | on the STP program and the role of the fire service in both preventing, and responding to, street trauma incidents. Written communications and possible special sessions with relevant City Commissions such as Transportation and Infrastructure, Planning, Aging and others. |  |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

\* COMMISSIONERS MANUAL..8676 edition-Amended and officially adopted by Resolution No. 2020\_N;Sj..(8676)

Alternative Action Considered:  
None

# Its Time Berkeley Put Traffic Safety Front and Center

**Taj Herzer-Baptiste**

*Taj Herzer-Baptiste is a Berkeley resident and EMT and serves as a Commissioner on the City of Berkeley Disaster and Fire Safety Commission and the Community Health Commission. The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not represent the official position of either Commission, the City of Berkeley, or any other body. Per Commission rules, only the Chair of a Commission may speak on its behalf.*

Berkeley is known for its progressive values, walkable neighborhoods, and commitment to climate-conscious transportation. But for all our talk about livable streets and community wellness, we are falling behind when it comes to a basic tenet of public safety: keeping people alive and uninjured on our roads.

Recent federal crash data confirm what advocates and researchers have warned for years: the escalating toll of pedestrian deaths in the United States is not accidental, nor is it driven primarily by individual behavior. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that 7,522 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes in 2022—the highest number since 1981—with pedestrians accounting for 18 percent, close to 1-in-5 of all traffic fatalities nationwide. This represents a continuation and acceleration of a deadly trend that has unfolded over the past decade, disproportionately impacting people walking in urban environments. Critically, the majority of these deaths occur in cities, away from intersections, and under low-visibility conditions—patterns that point directly to roadway systems engineered for speed and vehicle throughput rather than human safety. From a Vision Zero perspective, these outcomes are predictable and preventable, reflecting longstanding urban design failures—wide arterials, inadequate lighting, long crossing distances, and insufficient traffic-calming—that continue to place pedestrians, particularly in marginalized communities, at unacceptable risk.

In 2024 alone, there were 7 traffic fatalities in Berkeley, one of the highest in years. That's 7 lives cut short—people walking, biking, or driving—often in preventable crashes on city streets. And while we've seen some efforts toward safer infrastructure, the urgency still doesn't match the scale of the problem.

Traffic violence is a public health crisis that demands a response commensurate with its severity—it is not merely an unfortunate consequence of transit. We must fundamentally change our approach and elevate this issue to the same level of focus, sustained funding, and rigorous follow-through that we dedicate to other significant public health emergencies. This shift in perspective is crucial, recognizing that preventable deaths and serious injuries on our streets have profound, lasting impacts on individuals, families, and the community at large, warranting a comprehensive, data-driven, and urgent governmental commitment.

Cities across the United States are showing us what works. In Hoboken, New Jersey, a densely populated city of approximately 60 thousand residents located right across the river from Manhattan, there have been zero traffic deaths in the past eight years. This remarkable achievement demonstrates that traffic fatalities are preventable, not inevitable. To achieve this, the city adopted a comprehensive Vision Zero plan that centers collaboration across city departments, including engineering, planning, and police. Furthermore, they implemented proven safety measures such as “daylighting” at intersections—removing parking spaces near the corner to increase visibility—reduced speed limits city-wide and significantly prioritized the creation and maintenance of safe pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure. These aren’t flashy boondoggles or overly expensive experiments—they’re basic, data-driven design choices that prioritize human life and save lives.

In Portland, Oregon, the “Greenways” program has helped slow residential traffic and divert cut-through drivers off neighborhood streets. A study published by Portland State University found an average 25% reduction in crashes along improved corridors.<sup>1</sup> That’s hundreds of motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists spared from potentially fatal collisions.

Seattle lowered speed limits on arterials from 30 to 25 mph and built protected bike lanes and curb bulbouts (which give walkers a head start at crosswalks). As a result, the city saw a 20% reduction in serious injuries and fatalities in just three years.

New York City’s use of automated speed enforcement cameras in school zones led to a 70% reduction in speeding where the cameras were installed, according to NYC DOT.<sup>2</sup> A Federal Highway Administration report echoed these findings: cities that implement “safe system” principles—reducing speed, improving lighting, narrowing lanes—see measurable safety gains quickly.<sup>3</sup>

Across the Bay Area, cities are proving that bold traffic safety interventions work—saving lives, reducing injuries, and transforming how communities interact with public space. Berkeley doesn’t have to reinvent the wheel; these strategies are working just across the Bay.

San Francisco was one of the first U.S. cities to adopt a Vision Zero policy in 2014, committing to eliminate traffic deaths by 2024. While the city hasn’t reached zero, it has developed one of the most advanced traffic safety data programs in the country.

One of the most impactful recent projects is the Oak Street Quick-Build Project, which proposes to reduce traffic lanes, install protected bike lanes, and reconfigure intersections. Its nearby counterpart, Fell Street, underwent a similar treatment and saw:

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<sup>1</sup><https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/60994>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/speed-camera-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/20072/20072.pdf>

- A 38% reduction in total collisions
- A 50% decrease in pedestrian collisions
- Zero fatalities since implementation

San Francisco has also aggressively pursued:

- Automated red-light and speed enforcement pilot programs (via AB 645), with strict privacy rules and targeted placement along high-injury corridors
- Daylighting enforcement under AB 413, banning parking within 20 feet of crosswalks at over 2,000 intersections citywide
- A growing network of protected bike lanes, pedestrian bulb-outs, and raised crosswalks, especially in underserved neighborhoods like the Tenderloin and Bayview
- Expansion of “Slow Streets” after the COVID-19 pandemic to make entire corridors safer for walking and biking—not just through signage, but through diverters, barricades, and community engagement

San Francisco’s layered approach—automated enforcement + engineering + education + equity—is now a national model for urban traffic safety.

Another Vision Zero city, Oakland has achieved significant success in its safety efforts by strategically addressing its most dangerous streets. Oakland’s High Injury Network (HIN) map revealed that just 6% of streets account for over 60% of severe injuries and deaths. In response, the city prioritized those corridors with projects such as:

- Foothill Boulevard protected bike lanes, which reduced crashes by over 30%
- Community-informed traffic calming through the Department of Transportation’s Neighborhood Bike Routes and Slow Streets programs
- A Safe Oakland Streets (SOS) Initiative, which explicitly addresses racial disparities in traffic injuries and enforcement outcomes

Oakland’s success highlights the importance of hyperlocal planning—inviting neighborhood input and focusing interventions where injuries disproportionately affect low-income communities of color, especially Asian communities which have a major presence in Chinatown, Eastlake, and San Antonio.

San Jose, another Vision Zero city, has prioritized speed reduction as the most effective crash countermeasure. The city:

- Installed over 250 radar speed feedback signs, especially near schools
- Implemented road diets and lane reductions on fast arterials like Senter Road and Story Road

- Launched a Quick-Build Toolkit to allow for pilot interventions within 30–90 days, using paint and flex posts
- Developed a Vision Zero Dashboard to publicly track progress and build transparency

Despite being California’s third-largest city, San Jose is showing how nimble data use and sustained political commitment to slowing cars can make a measurable difference.

Berkeley, by contrast, has the right goals on paper. The City’s Vision Zero Action Plan commits Berkeley to eliminating traffic deaths by 2028. That plan was the product of extensive interdepartmental collaboration and community engagement in 2018 and 2019—but it was adopted just as the COVID-19 pandemic forced an abrupt shift in city operations. In the years that followed, public health emergency response, leadership turnover, and significant staffing shortages stalled much of the momentum behind Vision Zero implementation. As a result, progress slowed not because the strategy was flawed, but because the city’s capacity to execute it was severely constrained.

Only in the past six months has Berkeley’s transportation apparatus begun to stabilize and rebuild the staffing, coordination, and focus necessary to meaningfully advance Vision Zero work again. In many respects, the city is now restarting from near zero. That reality makes this moment especially consequential: Berkeley is finally regaining the institutional footing required to act—but the clock on traffic violence has not paused. The question is whether we will seize this window to recommit to Vision Zero with the urgency the crisis demands.

Case in point: San Pablo Avenue, one of Berkeley’s most dangerous corridors. In 2024, the intersection of Ashby and San Pablo Avenue recorded the highest number of traffic collisions citywide, including 10 injury crashes and 17 total injuries. Gilman and San Pablo also saw the highest number of serious injuries. In 2021, a pedestrian was killed in the crosswalk at San Pablo and Ashby—just one of several instances where long-recognized design failures have had fatal consequences. Although this corridor is included in the Alameda County Transportation Commission’s San Pablo Avenue Safety Enhancements Project,<sup>4</sup> progress on safety upgrades has been uneven, underscoring the gap between adopted policy and on-the-ground change.

We still see long delays for basic fixes: installing speed humps on residential streets or repairing sidewalks that force wheelchair users into the street. Meanwhile, the most dangerous intersections—identified repeatedly in publicly available crash data—go unchanged for years. If we truly believe in equity, sustainability, and public health, then making our streets safer can’t remain a side project. It must be a top-tier city priority.

Traffic injuries don’t just have lasting effects for those involved at the time of the crash. Humans are not mere numbers: every serious crash requires an urgent, resource-intensive emergency

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<sup>4</sup>[https://www.alamedactc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Open-House-Map-Boards-03db\\_Segment3\\_103123.pdf](https://www.alamedactc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Open-House-Map-Boards-03db_Segment3_103123.pdf)

response from Berkeley's firefighters, paramedics, and police officers. These incidents take a physical and emotional toll on first responders—many of whom must render aid at the same dangerous intersections repeatedly. Repeated exposure to traumatic injuries and fatalities contributes to burnout, PTSD, and staffing challenges in our emergency services. A 2023 analysis study published in *Frontiers in Public Health* revealed that paramedics across the world suffer from higher rates of PTSD. When we invest in preventing crashes, we're not just protecting the public—we're also protecting the sustainability of Berkeley's emergency response system.

## **Building on the Transparency Hub: Berkeley's Opportunity to Lead**

To its credit, in response to the Reimagining Public Safety process, the Berkeley Police Department has already laid a strong foundation for traffic safety transparency with its Transparency Hub's Traffic Safety section. The hub offers interactive data on traffic collisions by location, severity (since 2023) time of day, and contributing factor—including filters by pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle involvement.

This is a major step forward. But compared to cities like San Jose, Berkeley still lacks a unified Vision Zero performance dashboard that links crash data to street design changes, enforcement activity, equity analysis, and measurable outcomes. San Jose's dashboard goes beyond tracking collisions alone; it monitors project delivery, community engagement, and progress toward eliminating traffic deaths—allowing the city to move from reactive responses to proactive safety planning.

Berkeley could build a similar platform by consolidating existing datasets from the Police Department, Public Works, and the Transportation Division into a single public portal and displaying real-time metrics such as fatal and serious injury crashes, measured speeds from Engineering & Traffic Safety studies alongside street speed limits, traffic volumes on streets with high pedestrian and bicyclist activity, miles of protected infrastructure installed, locations with daylighting or other pedestrian improvements, and the status of Measure FF-funded projects. Embedding a community feedback tool would also allow residents to flag dangerous corridors and request traffic calming directly.

Critically, such a system would enable Berkeley to prioritize safety investments proactively rather than relying solely on resident requests. Cities like Boston have eliminated petition-based approaches for speed humps and traffic calming, instead maintaining a ranked list of streets where measured speeds exceed safe thresholds and systematically installing infrastructure starting with the most dangerous locations. A data-driven dashboard would allow Berkeley to adopt a similar best-practice model—targeting high-risk corridors first, reducing inequities in who receives safety improvements, and accelerating progress toward Vision Zero.

Berkeley can fund this work with the recently passed Measure FF bond, for example, by hiring a dedicated data analyst or GIS technician and maintaining low-cost visualization tools like ArcGIS, Tableau Public, or Google Data Studio.

We don't need to start from scratch—we need to connect the dots between what we already measure and what the public deserves to see. A comprehensive Vision Zero Dashboard would strengthen accountability, build public trust, and keep both policymakers and departments focused on results.

## What Berkeley Can Do Now

1. Implement quick-build designs citywide—curb-protected bike lanes, painted buffers, daylighting, speed cushions, and signal phasing—while permanent redesigns are in planning.
2. Add protective infrastructure to prevent parking in daylight spots and where not possible, advance daylighting enforcement, ensuring vehicle parking does not obstruct pedestrian sightlines at crosswalks and intersections.
3. Deploy automated speed enforcement cameras, prioritizing Berkeley's high-injury corridors to deter dangerous speeding and reduce crashes. While some residents have raised valid concerns about privacy and surveillance, California's 2023 AB 645 pilot program—which includes Oakland and San Francisco—requires strict data minimization standards, including:
  - No facial recognition or license plate tracking beyond speed enforcement,
  - Speed data must be deleted within 5 business days,
  - Only vehicles exceeding the posted limit by 11+ mph are cited,
  - Violations are civil (not criminal) and do not impact insurance.

A well-designed program in Berkeley can maintain residents' Constitutional privacy rights while reducing the speeding that leads to severe injuries and fatalities—especially in school zones and on high-speed arterials.

4. Lower speeds to 20 mph on residential streets and 25 mph on arterials to ensure crashes are survivable.
5. Leverage Measure FF (Safe Streets Initiative) — passed by voters in November 2024 — to fund critical safety infrastructure. Measure FF generates approximately \$15 million annually for 14 years, with 30% dedicated to improvements such as raised crosswalks, traffic calming, street lighting, and separated bike lanes. These investments must be fast-tracked toward Berkeley's most dangerous corridors in line with the city's Vision Zero, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Master Plans.

A truly safe Berkeley requires a multi-faceted approach—one that integrates proven engineering solutions with robust data analysis, targeted enforcement, and sustained community engagement. Enforcement should be focused on the behaviors most strongly associated with fatal and serious crashes: excessive speeding and drivers' failure to stop or yield at crosswalks and stop signs. By learning from the successes of peer cities and prioritizing strategies such as quick-build street redesigns, lower speed limits, and behavior-focused enforcement—including tools like red-light cameras and emerging automated speed management where legally permitted—Berkeley can shift from reactive policing to proactive harm prevention through use of targeted accountability. Coupled with strategic Measure FF investments, these actions can transform our streets from places of peril into spaces of safety, accessibility, and dignity for all. The time for decisive action is now; our community deserves nothing less.

## **Modernizing the Dispatch System: A Missing Link in Street Safety**

While infrastructure improvements are essential, Berkeley must also examine how emergency services are dispatched to traffic collisions. The City's current dispatch system is operated separately from Alameda County and neighboring jurisdictions, which leaves it fragmented, under-resourced, and siloed across agencies. This affects response times, coordination, and the city's ability to effectively respond to high-volume emergencies on dangerous corridors.

When collisions occur on Berkeley streets, the speed, coordination, and appropriateness of the emergency response are as life critical as the design of the street itself. Yet according to Berkeley's 2023 Standards of Coverage and Community Risk Assessment, the City's dispatch performance is falling short—undermining Vision Zero goals by delaying the identification and deployment of the right resources to crash scenes. NFPA standards, particularly those concerning response times, are often cited as industry benchmarks, but their rigid application across diverse urban environments must be approached with caution. Berkeley should acknowledge that direct, uncontextualized comparisons to other cities based purely on NFPA metrics, such as the 1:30 standard for Emergency Medical Dispatch call-processing, can indeed be misleading.

## **Contextualizing Response Time Metrics**

Focusing narrowly on an arbitrary national benchmark can obscure local realities. Cities with vastly different demographics, population densities, street networks, and call volumes will inherently have different optimal response performance.

Key considerations for Berkeley include:

- **Street Geometry and Density:** Berkeley's constrained street network and high density can pose unique challenges to apparatus response that a general NFPA standard doesn't account for.

- **Demographic Vulnerability:** The city should prioritize response times not just to meet a general average, but to ensure equity. Response times to neighborhoods with higher concentrations of vulnerable populations or high-injury corridors must be scrutinized to prevent disparities in care.
- **System Integration:** As noted, Berkeley's siloed dispatch system is a primary hurdle. Improving internal coordination and triage (what the dispatch system sends and how) can be more impactful on patient outcome than simply shaving seconds off the clock.

The goal should be to establish locally appropriate, outcome-focused benchmarks that reflect a standard of care suitable for Berkeley's unique characteristics, rather than merely chasing an NFPA target. This means prioritizing system resilience, accurate triage, and coordinated multi-agency deployment over superficial adherence to a potentially inadequate national time standard.

As traffic injury collisions reached a six-year high in 2024, Berkeley's non-integrated dispatch system has struggled to manage overlapping medical, fire, and police responses. Serious crashes—especially those involving pedestrians and cyclists—often require multiple units from different departments, yet dispatch software, CAD platforms, and response protocols do not consistently communicate across agencies. This fragmentation can result in sequential rather than coordinated deployment, slower scene control, and delays in patient care.

Dispatch quality also affects what is sent, not just how fast. When incidents are not accurately triaged, larger response vehicles may be deployed where smaller, more maneuverable units would be more effective. In a city increasingly designed to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety—with narrower lanes, traffic calming, and curb extensions—large apparatus can face slower travel times and greater difficulty navigating streets, compounding delays and contributing to unnecessary wear on local infrastructure. Better dispatch coordination helps ensure the right equipment is sent the first time, reducing response times while aligning emergency operations with street safety goals.

Berkeley's Emergency Medical Dispatch call-processing time at the 90th percentile is 2 minutes and 29 seconds—nearly one full minute slower than the NFPA best-practice benchmark of 1:30. In severe crashes, especially those involving pedestrians and cyclists, delays in recognizing acuity, assigning priority, and coordinating the appropriate response can be the difference between survivable injuries and fatalities. This is precisely where modern, AI-assisted dispatch tools could play a critical role. Platforms such as Prepared911 are designed to support faster call triage, improved situational awareness, and cross-agency coordination by assisting call-takers in real time and reducing cognitive load during high-stress incidents. Leveraging this kind of technology would not replace dispatch professionals but rather augment their capacity—helping ensure that high-risk crashes are identified earlier, the right responders are sent sooner, and emergency response aligns more closely with Berkeley's Vision Zero and public-health objectives.

While the City has invested in street design improvements—such as protected bike lanes, curb extensions, and daylighting—those efforts must be matched with 21st-century dispatch coordination. The City of Berkeley Evacuation Time Study, released last year, reinforces the importance of responder ingress, system interoperability, and real-time coordination, particularly in complex urban environments where congestion and constrained street geometry already challenge emergency access. Although the Study focuses on large-scale emergencies, its findings underscore a broader truth: emergency response systems function best when coordination, routing, and deployment decisions are made proactively and holistically, not in silos.

To fully realize Berkeley's Vision Zero goals, the City's emergency response system must be as integrated, data-driven, and forward-looking as its infrastructure ambitions—ensuring that when crashes occur, help arrives quickly, appropriately, and without avoidable delay.

## **Learning from San Francisco: The Department of Emergency Management Model**

Berkeley can look to San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management (SF DEM) as a blueprint for how to integrate public safety systems in support of citywide safety goals. SF DEM brings together 9-1-1 call takers, dispatchers, emergency medical services, fire and police operations, and city transportation staff under a single coordinating umbrella. This structure allows for:

- Real-time, cross-agency and seamless dispatch for collisions, ensuring paramedics, fire, and police arrive together
- Shared Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and communication systems, with improved incident tracking and analytics
- Faster response to traffic hot spots, including TIM (Traffic Incident Management) protocols for major corridors
- Data-informed deployment, where injury history, traffic flow, and social vulnerability help guide staffing and positioning

This approach turns dispatch into a strategic tool for crash survival, not just a passive conduit for help.

## **What Berkeley Should Do**

To align emergency dispatch with Berkeley's Vision Zero and public safety commitments, the City should act on the deficiencies identified in its own Dispatch Needs Analysis<sup>5</sup>, presented in the May 15, 2023 Public Safety Agenda Packet. That analysis highlighted fragmentation across systems, limited interoperability, and growing strain on dispatch operations—conditions that directly affect response times and coordination during traffic collisions.

Specifically, Berkeley should:

- Modernize Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocols by adopting a nationally recognized triage model—such as MPDS or Medical Priority Dispatch System—that enables faster, more consistent identification of high-risk traffic collisions and supports earlier, better-matched resource deployment, as recommended in the Dispatch Needs Analysis.
- Establish a centralized public safety coordination structure, modeled after San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management, to address the Needs Analysis finding that dispatch, fire, police, EMS, and related functions currently operate in silos with limited real-time coordination.
- Invest in shared CAD and radio systems to resolve the interoperability gaps documented in the Needs Analysis, enabling coordinated response, improved situational awareness, and more effective mutual aid during complex, multi-unit incidents.
- Use crash and dispatch data proactively—not just reactively—to inform unit deployment, training priorities, and infrastructure placement, consistent with the Needs Analysis' emphasis on data-driven operations and systemwide planning.
- Create a dispatch and response performance review body, including transportation planners, fire and EMS leadership, dispatch professionals, and data analysts, to regularly assess response times, triage accuracy, equipment deployment, and cross-agency coordination.
- Integrate dispatch performance metrics into a public-facing Vision Zero Dashboard, as noted earlier, allowing residents and policymakers to track call-processing times, response intervals, and outcomes across neighborhoods—directly addressing the transparency and accountability gaps identified in the Needs Analysis.

Solving traffic violence is not the responsibility of a single department or a single plan. As the Dispatch Needs Analysis makes clear, it requires coordinated systems, shared data, and clear accountability across agencies. Berkeley has already diagnosed the problem. The next step is acting decisively on those findings to ensure that when crashes occur, help arrives quickly, appropriately, and without avoidable delay.

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<sup>5</sup><https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-agendas/2023-05-15%20Agenda%20Packet%20-%20Public%20Safety%20-%20Updated.pdf>

Every minute lost in triage, classification, or coordination costs lives. We can't eliminate traffic fatalities if the systems we rely on to respond are built for yesterday's emergencies.

If Berkeley is ready to lead on traffic safety, we must treat dispatch reform as core infrastructure—not just a backend function. That means real investment, regional coordination, and public accountability. Because safer streets don't just prevent crashes—they ensure we're ready when they happen.

Berkeley currently operates without this level of integration. Our dispatch system remains siloed, with fire, EMS, and police using separate tools, protocols, and triage models. This leads to fragmented response—with traffic collisions often seeing delayed or incomplete deployment of necessary units.

## **Why This Matters**

Traffic safety doesn't stop at better design—it extends into the systems that mobilize help when the unthinkable happens. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe System Approach emphasizes shared responsibility—that all parts of the system (roadway designers, vehicle manufacturers, policymakers, emergency responders, and the public) must work together to anticipate human error and prevent deaths and serious injuries. By treating dispatch modernization and public-safety integration as core elements of this shared safety system, Berkeley can begin to close the gap between safer streets and survivable outcomes when crashes occur.

If Berkeley is serious about Vision Zero, it must treat dispatch modernization and public safety integration as essential components and not administrative afterthoughts. A comprehensive safety strategy accounts for post-crash care as a core element, not an add-on; research and federal guidance emphasize that timely access to emergency medical care and coordinated incident management are critical to enhancing crash survivability and reducing fatal outcomes. By embracing a more unified model such as San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management, Berkeley can not only reduce crashes through safer streets, speeds, and infrastructure but also improve survivability when crashes do occur. Because safer streets aren't just about preventing impact; they're about ensuring care arrives quickly when it's needed most.

Dispatch reform is not simply about operational efficiency; it's about the foundational element of Vision Zero: achieving faster emergency response times and ultimately saving lives when it matters most. Every minute shaved off a crash response can mean the difference between life and death. By establishing reliable, integrated systems aligned with Safe System principles—anticipating human error and building redundancy into emergency response—Berkeley can bring its response systems in line with its safety ambitions and work toward eliminating traffic fatalities altogether.

Some critics point to the number of overlapping advisory bodies—such as the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission, Disaster and Fire Safety Commission, and the City Council’s Vision Zero Subcommittee—as evidence of fragmentation and mismatched priorities. But this framing misses a deeper reality: these bodies are responding to different layers of the same systemic street safety crisis, each within a clearly defined scope and mandate.

For example:

- The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission focuses on emergency response readiness, disaster resilience, and fire department capacity, advising the City Council on matters affecting fire safety and emergency preparedness. Within this role, the Commission also provides input on how street conditions, paving plans, and infrastructure decisions affect emergency access, response times, and system resilience—particularly during large-scale emergencies or high-acuity incidents.
- The Transportation and Infrastructure Commission concentrates on the physical design of Berkeley’s streets, including roadway redesigns and approval of quick-build and longer-term capital improvement projects. Its work addresses the upstream conditions—speed, geometry, visibility, and conflict points—that determine whether crashes occur in the first place.
- The City Council’s Vision Zero Subcommittee is charged with interlinking these threads into a single narrative of prevention, accountability, and action.

Berkeley doesn’t suffer from too many voices on traffic safety. It suffers from collisions that keep happening while decisions are stalled. These commissions are not rhetorical—they are reactive, data-driven, and grounded in the lived experiences of residents and first responders alike. They should be empowered—not sidelined—as we move from planning to protection. Berkeley’s various advisory bodies on traffic safety are not redundant; instead, they address distinct but interconnected elements of street safety, spanning prevention, design, emergency response, and recovery. The city’s challenge lies not in having multiple voices, but in failing to coordinate, elevate, and translate their essential insights into prompt action. Collectively, these groups affirm that traffic safety is a complex issue, merging public health concerns, infrastructure equity, emergency response protocols, and behavioral design principles.

## **Enhancing Fire Department Readiness for Traffic Collisions**

As Berkeley traffic injuries surge to a six-year high, the Berkeley Fire Department is at the frontline of response. Nearly every major traffic collision requires a fire engine or ambulance staffed by firefighter-paramedics. Yet the department’s ability to meet demand is increasingly strained by rising call volume, limited staffing, and growing complexity in on-scene logistics.

According to Berkeley’s own Standards of Coverage and Community Risk Assessment, EMS incidents now comprise over 70% of all BFD call volume. Traffic collisions, particularly those

involving vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists), disproportionately require advanced trauma management, coordination with police for scene control, and specialized extrication equipment. Many of these calls occur on arterials like San Pablo Avenue and Ashby, where high speeds and poor infrastructure amplify injury severity.

BFD is not only a response agency in this work; the Department is also home to one of the City's most important upstream prevention programs. The Street Trauma Prevention Program (STPP) is one of the few City programs taking a structured public-health approach to traffic violence—supervising injury-prevention internships and coordinating with Public Works, the Transportation Division, and community partners on outreach, data, and education in the neighborhoods most affected by crashes. STPP is the operational complement to the design and policy work of the City's commissions, translating Vision Zero principles into measurable harm reduction on the ground. Continued investment in STPP, including its Program Manager position, is essential to Berkeley's ability to prevent traffic injuries before they happen and to support the Department's response capacity downstream.

To improve traffic collision response, BFD should:

- Expand peak-hour EMS coverage, particularly in high-collision zones. Measure FF funding, along with analysis from dispatch and call data, can help determine whether added ambulances or quick response 'squad' units are needed during rush hours and weekend traffic peaks.
- Deploy smaller, quicker units such as the aforementioned EMS squad vehicles or motorbike medics for rapid access and quick treatment on congested corridors. These units can provide initial stabilization while full ALS resources are en route.
- Pre-position units near collision-prone intersections—like Ashby & San Pablo or Gilman & San Pablo—during high-traffic windows, based on predictive modeling of crash likelihood.
- Strengthen coordination with dispatch and traffic signal control, including expanded use of emergency vehicle signal pre-emption. Signal pre-emption allows responding units to request green lights and hold cross-traffic at red signals, reducing response times, limiting high-risk intersection conflicts, and improving responder safety. When integrated with modern dispatch systems and the City's traffic management infrastructure, signal pre-emption can be activated selectively along response corridors—prioritizing severe crashes without unnecessarily disrupting general traffic flow. This coordination becomes especially critical on pedestrian-oriented streets with traffic calming, where emergency vehicles may otherwise face slower progression through signalized intersections.
- Integrate Public Works and Transportation staff into traffic incident response, enabling real-time signal adjustments, corridor control, and detour management during major

crashes. Coordinated signal timing and temporary traffic control can shorten response and clearance times while reducing secondary crashes.

- Track and report post-collision performance metrics, within HIPAA guidelines, including response time intervals, signal pre-emption usage, and patient transport outcomes. Sharing this data with the City Council, Vision Zero stakeholders, and the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission would allow Berkeley to evaluate whether operational and signal-control changes are measurably reducing harm.

Traffic collisions are not isolated events—they are system-wide stress tests. Ensuring that emergency vehicles can move quickly, predictably, and safely through Berkeley’s signalized street network is as critical to saving lives as staffing levels or clinical skill. Signal pre-emption, when thoughtfully deployed and coordinated, represents a high-leverage tool for aligning emergency response operations with the City’s Vision Zero and Safe System commitments.

## **A Culture of Safety Is Possible**

The goal isn’t about blaming drivers, cyclists, or pedestrians. It’s about designing a system where mistakes don’t result in death. We have the tools. We have the data. What we need now is the political and community will to act.

Traffic safety is public safety. Let’s make Berkeley a national model for how a city can care for its residents—not just in theory, but at every intersection.

Mike Wilson, PhD, MPH  
Commissioner  
Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

May 12, 2026

## **MEMO TO THE DFSC**

### **FUNDING THE STREET TRAUMA PREVENTION PROGRAM (STPP)**

Dear Members,

I am hopeful you will support the continued funding of the Street Trauma Prevention Program (STPP) at Berkeley Fire as the City faces its current budget shortfall.

The DFSC was the original advocate for the creation of the STPP. In May 2024, the Commission requested that the City Council fund a Program Manager II position within the Fire Department to establish the STPP, on the recognition that street trauma is a worsening public safety problem in Berkeley that the fire service is uniquely positioned to address through prevention. The Commission supported STPP in the context of the fire service's long-standing success in fire prevention—reducing fire-related deaths nationwide over the past 50 years through codes, education, inspections, and prevention-focused engineering.

The STPP represents the first step in incorporating street trauma prevention into the core operations of the Department. This will improve the Department's engagement with Public Works, the community, street safety advocates, and others working in this arena. A comprehensive street trauma prevention strategy is necessary to protect the lives of Berkeley residents and workers, especially when they walk or ride a bike on Berkeley streets; reduce the number of calls for street trauma received by Berkeley Fire; and avoid the financial and emotional toll that street trauma exacts on its victims and their loved ones.

#### **Reducing the street trauma call volume through prevention**

Traumatic injuries that result from collisions on streets and highways represent a substantial and growing share of emergency responses in Berkeley. Rescue and EMS responses, which include street trauma, consistently make up a large majority of the Department's call volume. In October 2025 alone, the Department responded to 1,015 rescue and EMS incidents, compared with 41 fires. An average of 694 people are injured and five are killed in street trauma each year in Berkeley, with severe and fatal collisions disproportionately affecting people walking and biking. Reducing street trauma calls through verified traffic calming measures and other prevention strategies is needed to reduce the number and severity of street trauma calls received by Berkeley Fire. The STPP is charged with leading the Department's efforts in this area.

#### **Protecting the well-being and mental health of Berkeley's firefighters**

A growing body of evidence find that responding to critically injured patients affects the long-term mental health of firefighters and paramedics. Post-traumatic stress injuries among firefighters are now presumed to be work-related in California, for purposes of workers compensation coverage. A 2022 evaluation of 32 peer review papers reported a prevalence rate of 57% for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among firefighters, compared to 38% for military personnel.<sup>1</sup> Preventing exposure to street trauma is far more effective, and less costly, approach to preventing long-term mental health challenges among firefighters and paramedics compared to after-the-fact counseling and other support services.

### **Building a genuinely safer city through prevention.**

The STPP is not a departure from the fire department's traditional mission—it is a recognition of where the mission now lives, and an acknowledgement that this mission requires the fire service to participate constructively in efforts to build genuinely safer cities, while also responding effectively to emergencies. The STPP is the institutional framework for applying this prevention-oriented approach to street safety. Berkeley is the first municipal, fire-led program of its kind nationwide.

In my assessment, since its launch in March 2025, the program has built a strong and credible foundation. Its first year focused on establishing cross-departmental coordination with Public Works and Police, formalizing partnerships with academic institutions, including UC Davis and UC Berkeley; convening a regional peer-learning network; and identifying data gaps. The STPP is now developing a fire-informed Action Plan to translate this foundation into measurable outcomes. Continued funding will enable the program to apply for additional grants as it works to deliver on its intended purpose.

The STPP at Berkeley Fire represents a working model that cities and street safety advocates across the nation can point to as a new and essential role for the fire service: one that applies the lens of prevention to street trauma.

Thanks for your consideration,



Mike Wilson  
Commissioner, District 1

### **BERKELEY'S STREET TRAUMA PREVENTION PROGRAM IN THE MEDIA**

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<sup>1</sup> Obuodi-Donkor G, Oluwasina F, Nnamdi N, Aghyapong V (Jan 29, 2022). A Scoping Review on the Prevalence and Determinants of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among Military Personnel and Firefighters: Implications for Public Policy and Practice. *Int J Res Public Health* 2022 Jan 29;19(3). <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8834704/>. Accessed May 8, 2026.

By invitation, we have presented the work of the STPP in plenary sessions at the national Life Savers Conference in Long Beach; the California Active Transportation Program Symposium at UC Davis, under sponsorship of the California Transportation Commission and the California Department of Transportation; and at the California Bicycle Summit in Sacramento.

The popularity of these presentations among conference participants reflects our experience, as well as emerging research, that the fire service can play a key role in either advancing or hindering improvements in street safety, such as Vision Zero.

This attention has also been reflected in publications highlighting the STPP, as follows.

It's Time for the Fire Service to Join Communities in Preventing Street Trauma (Sept 30, 2025). *Medium: Vision Zero Cities Journal*.

<https://medium.com/vision-zero-cities-journal/its-time-for-the-fire-service-to-join-communities-in-preventing-street-trauma-67f4a36a45c9>.

Building an Alliance Between Firefighters and Street Safety Advocates (April 17, 2025). *California Bicycle Coalition*.

<https://www.calbike.org/building-an-alliance-between-firefighters-and-street-safety-advocates/>.

A Near-fatal Bike Crash May Shift How Berkeley Does Street Design (August 6, 2024) *The Berkeley Scanner*.

<https://www.berkeleyscanner.com/2024/08/06/traffic-safety/berkeley-street-trauma-prevention-program-mike-wilson-meg-schwarzman/>

Berkeley Fire 'Street Trauma Prevention' Position Closer to Reality (May 8, 2024). *Berkeleyside*.

<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/05/08/berkeley-fire-department-road-safety-emergency-response>