



Commission on the  
Status of Women

**Commission on the Status of Women**  
Wednesday, February 19, 2025 – 7:00pm  
North Berkeley Senior Center  
1901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709

## AGENDA

**Mayor Adena Ishii:**

**Rashi Kersarwani:**

**Terry Taplin:**  
Mercy Gray

**Ben Bartlett:**  
Kameka Goodwin

**Igor Tregub**  
Shirley Posey

**Shoshana O'Keefe**  
Kera Binns

**Brent Blackaby:**  
Dianna Mullins

**Cecilia Lunaparra:**  
Najuna Kiggundu

**Mark Humbert**  
Peggy Scott

***All items are for discussion and possible action.***

1. Roll Call.
2. Reading of Land Acknowledgment.
3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda.
4. Approval of the Agenda. Discussion and Possible Action.
5. Approval of the January 15, 2025 minutes. Discussion and Possible Action.
6. Chair Report. Discussion Only.
7. Chair and Vice-Chair Election. Discussion and Possible Action.
8. Continued Discussion of Work Plan. Discussion and Possible Action.
9. Discussion and Possible Action on Mayor Ishii's Agenda that we should be aware of to support her in the initiatives we prioritize
10. Discussion and Possible Action Around Cease and Desist Orders that have come down from the Federal government that directly impact women

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### **SB 343 Disclaimer**

*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 the City Manager's Office located at 2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor.*

### **Commission Contact Information**

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Commission on the Status of Women

Commission on the Status of Women  
January 15, 2025

## DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm with Kera Binns (Chair) presiding. Okeya Vance-Dozier, Secretary.

### SECTION A. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. **Roll Call**

**Present:** Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Chegundo

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Posey

**Leave of Absence:**

2. **Announcements**

None

3. **Comments from the Public**

Public Attendance: 3

Public Comments: 1

4. **Review and approval of meeting minutes**

Peace and Justice Commission approved minutes from 11/20/24.

**M/S/C:** Mullins, Chegundo

**Ayes:** Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Chegundo

**Noes:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

5. **Commission Updates & Chairperson's Report (No Action Taken):**

6. **Secretary's Report (No Action Taken)**

### SECTION B. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

**4. Commission on the Status of Women Meeting Schedule for 2025**

Calendar has been set

**M/S/C:** Binns, Mullins

**Ayes:** Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Chegundo

**Noes:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Posey

**5. In-Depth Discussion of Domestic Violence/Gender-Based Violence Recommendations. Discussion and Possible Action**

No Action Taken.

**M/S/C:**

**Ayes:**

**Noes:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

**6. Further Development of Work Plan. Discussion and Possible Action.**

No action taken.

**M/S/C:**

**Ayes:**

**Noes:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

**SECTION C. COMMUNICATIONS**

**7. No communications received prior to meeting.**

**SECTION D. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

**M/S/C:** Binns, Mullins

**Ayes:** Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Chegundo

**Noes:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Posey

Respectfully Submitted,

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Okeya Vance-Dozier, Secretary  
Peace and Justice Commission

## **Land Acknowledgement Statement**

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

INFORMATION CALENDAR

DATE ##, 2025

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

**From:** Commission on the Status of Women (COSOW)

**Submitted by:** Kera Binns, Chair, COSOW

**Subject:** Commission on the Status of Women 2025 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Commission on the Status of Women (COSOW) exists to advocate for gender equity and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women. Its purpose includes identifying and addressing systemic barriers in areas such as employment, education, housing, healthcare, and public policy. The Commission evaluates city policies affecting women, makes recommendations to City Council, and promotes initiatives that advance equal opportunities and safety for all women in Berkeley. By engaging with the community, monitoring local issues, and advising on policies, COSOW works to foster an inclusive and just environment where women can thrive free from oppression and inequality.

This document serves as a guide to the work the COSOW plans to take on in 2025. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, the COSOW will adjust this plan accordingly.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The COSOW has a broad scope and a responsibility to support and investigate. To organize our work, we propose to establish three subcommittees, each with at least two focus areas, as indicated in the table below.

Our 2025 subcommittees and projects include:

<b>Subcommittee: Student Safety</b> <i>Najuna, Mercy, Shirley</i>		
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Digital and	Expand education on women's safety, with a	Najuna

School Safety for Young Women	focus on online and school settings. Assess the availability and effectiveness of safety education programs, and make recommendations to Council on strategies to ensure young women receive comprehensive and accessible safety information.	
Gender-Based Violence in BUSD Schools	Assess the ability of BUSD female, transgender, and gender-expansive students to report gender-based violence and receive support, identify gaps in reporting mechanisms and response systems, and make recommendations to Council on strengthening protections and resources.	Mercy
Addressing Crime Near BHS	Identify local crime issues affecting female Berkeley High School students, with a focus on incidents involving the homeless population residing in the park area behind City Hall and near the school. Evaluate risks, assess current safety measures, and recommend actions to Council to enhance protections and mitigate crime.	Shirley

**Subcommittee: Supporting Students, Families and Caregivers**

*Kera and Dianna*

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Extracurricular Support and Care for BUSD Students	Examine current after-school and summer support programs for female and non-gender-conforming BUSD students, identify service gaps, and make recommendations to Council and School Board regarding policies, partnerships, and programming to address these needs.	Kera
Reducing Chronic Absenteeism	Identify and address systemic barriers to school attendance faced by Berkeley families, particularly single mothers, families experiencing homelessness, and those affected by domestic violence. Examine gaps in transportation,	Dianna

	aftercare, and school placement policies that contribute to absenteeism, and recommend policy changes to Council.	
<b>Proposed Subcommittee: Women's Safety &amp; Justice</b> <i>Mercy, Shirley, and Kera</i>		
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Women Experiencing Homelessness	Investigate the conditions and unique needs of women experiencing homelessness in Berkeley, identify service gaps, and make recommendations to Council regarding targeted interventions and policy improvements.	Kera
Human Trafficking Response	Conduct a comprehensive analysis of human trafficking identification and response in Berkeley, evaluate current policies and services, and recommend improvements to Council to enhance victim support and prevention efforts.	Mercy
Protecting Elderly Women from Crime	Continue to assess and address local issues and system gaps regarding elderly women targeted as victims of crime. Identify trends, evaluate response measures, and make recommendations to Council on strategies to improve safety and support for elderly women.	Shirley

At the February 18, 2025 meeting the COSOW approved the work plan to send to the City Council as follows: **Motion/second to approve the 2025 Workplan.**

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future action items that the COSOW may send to City Council could require staff time to develop, finalize, and/or implement. The COSOW strives to ensure proposals provide significant net triple bottom line benefits to the City when evaluating total costs and benefits across areas of impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Okeya Vance-Dozier, Secretary, COSOW, [ovance-dozier@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:ovance-dozier@berkeleyca.gov)

# Menu of Actions for the Commission on the Status of Women

*Prepared by Kera Binns, Acting Chair, February 2025*

If the Commission on the Status of Women (COSOW) wishes to make a recommendation to City Council or take further action on a topic, it can consider the following steps, in alignment with the Berkeley Commissioner Handbook and best practices:

## **1. Research and Information Gathering**

- Request presentations from subject-matter experts, city staff, or community organizations.
- Conduct public hearings or listening sessions to gather community input.
- Analyze reports, data, and best practices from other municipalities.
- Form subcommittees to conduct in-depth research on specific topics.

## **2. Develop a Recommendation or Position**

- Draft a formal recommendation outlining the issue, its impact, and proposed actions.
- Develop a white paper or policy brief summarizing research findings and proposed solutions.
- Hold internal discussions to refine recommendations and reach consensus.

## **3. Engage with Stakeholders**

- Collaborate with other commissions, community organizations, and advocacy groups.
- Conduct outreach to impacted populations to ensure diverse perspectives are considered.
- Seek input from legal or policy experts on implications of proposed actions.

## **4. Communicate with City Council**

- Submit a written recommendation to City Council through the designated process.
- Request a meeting with individual Councilmembers to discuss the issue.
- Provide testimony at City Council meetings or public comment sessions.
- Issue a formal resolution expressing the Commission's position.

## **5. Monitor Implementation and Impact**

- Follow up with City Council on the status of recommendations and policy actions.
- Track implementation of relevant policies and assess their impact.
- Provide periodic updates and reports on progress or continued gaps.
- Recommend adjustments or further actions as needed.

By following this structured approach, the Commission can ensure that its recommendations are well-researched, effectively communicated, and have the best chance of leading to meaningful policy changes.