

PARKS, RECREATION, AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, November 13, 2024, 7:00 P.M.
Frances Albrier Community Center - auditorium
2800 Park Street, Berkeley, CA 94702

Agenda

The Commissions may discuss any items listed on the agenda, but may take action only on items identified as Action.

1. **Call to Order** (Chair).
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary).
3. **Land Acknowledgement:** The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair).
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for October 16, 2024 (Chair).*
6. **Public Comment.**
7. **Chair's Report.** (Kawczynska).
8. **Discussion/Action:** Elect new chair for the next commission meeting (Kawczynska).
9. **Director's Report:** Special events, community engagement, capital project update.
10. **Presentation/Action:** Receive staff presentation and conduct a public hearing on the City's Notice of Intent for Council to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex Restrooms and Community Space Project.*
11. **Presentation/Action:** Provide Comments on the Draft Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) (Erickson).¹
12. **Discussion/Action:** Appoint a commissioner to speak on the Draft Waterfront Specific Plan at the Council's Special Meeting on Nov 18, 2024. (Kawczynska).
13. **Information Reports*:** Recent PRW Council Reports.
14. **Future Agenda Items:** Waterfront Specific Plan; Public Art in Aquatic Park (Lavvorn); PRW Commission Workplan 2024; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Locations for Dog Parks; Dog subcommittee.
15. **Communications.*** Emilie Strauss, 10-18-2024.
16. **Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, January 8, 2025.
17. **Adjournment.**
 - * document is attached to agenda packet and on the commission website.
 - ** document will be provided at the meeting.

¹ See link to the **Waterfront Specific Plan Project** webpage. The **Draft WSP** will be shown in the list of documents at the bottom of the page: <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/capital-projects/waterfront-specific-plan>

ADA Disclaimer: This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request disability-related accommodations 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.

SB343 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 Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA.

Communications Disclaimer: 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.** All communications to the Commission should be received at least 10 days before the meeting date. 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 commission or committee for further information.

Commission Information: The agenda packets for the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Waterfront Commission are available for review at www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions; the Berkeley Main Library and the Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street –3rd Floor, during their normal business hours. If you have questions, call Commission Secretary, Roger Miller at 981-6704 at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 or by email at rmiller@cityofberkeley.info.

MISSION STATEMENT – PARKS AND WATERFRONT: Reviews and advises the City Council on issues related to all City/public parks, open space, greenery, pools, programs, recreation centers, the Waterfront, and resident camps: their physical conditions, policies, projects, programs, planning efforts, activities, and funding; early childhood education programs; and animal care issues in parks.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mayor-	District 3 - Gianna Ranuzzi	District 6 - Liliana Cardile
District 1 - Reichi Lee	District 4 - Erin Diehm	District 7 - Alyssa Hurtado
District 2 - Claudia Kawczynska	District 5 - Brennan Cox	District 8 - Allan Abshez

Current assignments

Subcomm on dogs and parks (06-12-2024)

Liaison - Civic Center Planning – Erin Diehm
Liaison - Civic Arts in Parks – Brennan Cox

2024 Commission Meeting Dates

Name of Commission: Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

Commission Secretary: Roger Miller

Location: Frances Albrier Community Center, 2800 Park St

Month	Meeting Day and Date (2 nd Wednesday per month)	Time	Notes
2024			
January	Wednesday, January 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
February	Thursday, February 15	5:30 p.m.	Regular Mtg/Corp Yard Rm
March	Wednesday, March 13	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
April	Wednesday, April 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
May	Wednesday, May 8	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
June	Wednesday, June 12	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
July	Wednesday, July 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
August	No meeting		
September	Wednesday, September 11	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
October	Wednesday, October 16	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
November	Wednesday, November 13	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
December	No Meeting		
2025			
January	<i>Wednesday, January 8</i>	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Regular Mtg</i>

**PARKS, RECREATION AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, October 16, 2024, 7:00 P.M., Frances Albrier Community Center, 2800 Park St

Minutes - Draft

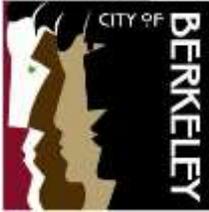
The Commissions may discuss any items listed on the agenda, but may take action only on items identified as Action.

1. **Call to Order** (Chair): 7:10pm
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary): Present: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado (arr. 7:15pm), Kawczynska; Lee (arr. 7:25pm). Absent: Ranuzzi.
3. **Land Acknowledgement**: Read by Diehm.
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair): M/S/C (Kawczynska/Diehm/U) to move Director's Report before Public Comment, add "Ohlone Greenway/Measure L" after "C. Fred" in the Communications Section and to approve the rest of the agenda. Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado, Kawczynska. Noes: None. Absent: Lee; Ranuzzi.
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for September 11, 2024 (Chair).* M/S/C (Kawczynska/Diehm /U) to list Diehm as a speaker for item 9 (Ohlone Greenway Safety Improvements) and to approve the September minutes. Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; HurtadoKawczynska; Lee. Noes: None. Absent: Ranuzzi.
6. **Director's Report**: Capital Improvement Projects Update, CEQA Meeting in November. (Ferris)
7. **Public Comment**. a) Steve Morros, North Bowling Green; b) Community Member (name unknown), North Bowling Green; c) Susan, Aquatic Park; d) Herbert, Fishing at Berkeley Pier, Frontage Road; e) Ted Steen, Field Allocation Process.
8. **Chair's Report**: Cal Sailing Council Item passed; Measure Y; Burrowing Owls. (Kawczynska)
9. **Discussion/Action**: Rose Garden Plaque approval* (Ferris). M/S/C (Diehm/Abshez/U) to approve Rose Garden Plaque Donation. Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado, Kawczynska; Lee. Noes: None. Absent: Ranuzzi.
10. **Discussion/Action**: Councilmember Kesarwani's Referral to PRW Commission re: Naming the Harrison St Skate Park in Honor of Terrance McCrary* (Ferris). M/S/C (Diehm/Cox/U) Approve to rename Harrison Street Skate Park in honor of Terrance McCrary. Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado, Kawczynska; Lee. Noes: None. Absent: Ranuzzi.
11. **Discussion**: Waterfront Parking and Transportation Demand Management Study* (Kawczynska). Item was discussed. Public Comment: a) Gordon Wozniak.
12. **Discussion**: Aquatic Park Dreamland Area Project / Survey* (Ferris). Item was discussed.
13. **Information Reports***: Recent PRW Council Reports.
14. **Future Agenda Items**: CEQA/Tom Bates Sports Complex; Waterfront Specific Plan; Public Art in Aquatic Park (Lavvorn); PRW Commission Workplan 2024; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Locations for Dog Parks.
15. **Communications**. * Eastshore Alliance Fútbol Club, 9-12-2024; C Fred, Ohlone Greenway/Measure L, 10-03-2024; Memo from Center for Biological Diversity – Burrowing Owl, 10-10-2024.
16. **Next PRW Commission meeting**: Wednesday, November 13, 2024.
17. **Adjournment**: 9:00pm M/S/C (Cox/Hurtado/U)

* document is attached to agenda packet and on the commission website.

** document will be provided at the meeting.

- Commissioners in attendance: 6 of 7 appointed.
- Public in attendance: 11
- Public speakers: 5



Parks, Recreation and Waterfront

CITY OF BERKELEY MEMORANDUM

To: Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission
From: Nelson Lam, Supervising Civil Engineer
Date: November 7, 2024
Subject: Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex Restrooms and Community Space
Public Hearing for the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration

The purpose of this memorandum is to brief the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission on the Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex Restrooms and Community Space Project (TBRSC Project) California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, and the Public Hearing for the TBRSC Project scheduled for the November 13th Commission Meeting. The TBRSC Project is in the process of completing environmental reviews, detailed design, and acquiring building and environmental permits. The Project is anticipated to start construction in summer 2025, with a 12 to 18 months construction period. The new elements are expected to open to the public by late 2026. The existing fields will remain open during the course of construction.

CEQA Process & Findings

As the lead agency for the Project, the City of Berkeley (City) is required to comply with CEQA. This consists of several steps: establishing the Project Description, analyzing environmental impacts, conducting public review, and adoption of final determination.

Project Description

The City of Berkeley Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Division proposes implementing various new elements to the existing Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex. The proposed conceptual layout includes a new community space building with restrooms, multi-use room and storage room; new soccer field for players under the age of 8 (U8); eight pickleball courts and bleachers for two of the courts; reconfigured parking lot to add more stalls and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and temporary lot during construction; bicycle racks and lockers and walkways that are compliant with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA); stormwater bioretention features and landscaped areas; new electric service and a sanitary sewer lift station. The Project description was developed with extensive public input, including:

- Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) Members and Stakeholder Meeting on March 7, 2018
- Sports Field Users Meeting on April 17, 2018
- Bi-Annual Coordination Meeting with the East Bay Regional Park District on July 19, 2018

2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 Tel: 510.981.6700 TDD: 510.981.6903 Fax: 510.981.6710

E-mail: parks@cityofberkeley.info Website <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/parks>

- Meeting held with Alameda County Transportation Commission Design Team for Gilman/I-80 Interchange Project on August 20, 2018
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on November 8, 2018
- Project information posted on site to seek user comments from January to March, 2019
- Bi-Annual Coordination Meeting with the East Bay Regional Park District on March 18, 2019
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on August 26, 2020
- Parks and Waterfront Commission on March 10, 2021
- City Council Work Session on March 16, 2021
- East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors Meeting on February 7, 2023
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on April 5, 2023
- TBRSC Staff Workshop Held on July 18, 2023
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on October 25, 2023
- TBRSC Staff Workshop Held on November 2, 2023
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on June, 5 2024
- JPA Members and Stakeholder Meeting on September 25, 2024
- Harvest Festival on October 19, 2024
- Community Tour and Discussion on October 19, 2024
- TBRSC Staff Workshop Held on November 5, 2024

Environmental Impacts

The City conducted extensive analysis of existing environmental resources at the Project site, and potential Project impacts to those resources. Potentially significant impacts were identified for the following resources: biological, cultural, hazardous materials, and mandatory findings of significance. Mitigation measures have been developed and incorporated into the Project that reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Public Review

On November 7, 2024, the City of Berkeley (City) published the Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex Restrooms and Community Space Project. Public review of the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) began on November 7, 2024, and will close 30-days later, on December 7, 2024.

The NOI and IS-MND is available on the City's website here:

<https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/capital-projects/tom-bates-regional-sports-complex-restroom-community>

Any interested party may comment on the proposed MND/IS. All comments received will be considered by the City prior to finalizing the MND/IS and making a decision on the Project. Written comments must be received no later than 5:00 pm on **December 7, 2024** and sent to:

Jesus Espinoza, Project Manager
City of Berkeley
Parks Recreation & Waterfront
1947 Center Street, Fifth Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
Email: JEspinoza@berkeleyca.gov

Although not required by law, the City is conducting a public hearing on the Project at the November 13, 2024 Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission Meeting. Any verbal comments received during the public hearing will be summarized and become a part of the Project record. The Project Team will attend the November 13th Commission meeting and provide a brief overview of the Project and the CEQA process and environmental impact findings, and record any verbal comments received. Please note that the purpose of the CEQA public review process is to receive public comment on the environmental impacts of the Project, not on the Project design.

Next Steps

After completion of the public review period, the IS-MND may be modified to address comments received, after which the Berkeley City Council will consider and take action on adoption of the final MND. It is anticipated the final Notice of Determination for the MND will appear on the February 25, 2025 City Council Agenda.

**PARKS, RECREATION AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION
RECENT COUNCIL REPORTS**

The following recent PRW council reports can be accessed from the City Council Website by using the following URL's:

October 21, 2024 (closed session)

3. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 54956.8. Property Address: 199 Seawall Dr, Berkeley CA
URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/city-council-closed-meeting-eagenda-october-21-2024>

October 29, 2024 (regular)

11.-Contract: American Debris Box Service Inc. for Portable Toilet Service

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10-29%20Item%2011%20Contract%20American%20Debris%20Box%20Service%20Inc.%20for%20Portable%20Toilet%20Service.pdf>

12.-Contract: Redwood Engineering Construction for Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park - Upper Plaza Improvements Project

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10-29%20Item%2012%20Contract%20Redwood%20Engineering%20Construction%20for%20Martin%20Luther%20King%20Jr.%20Civic%20Center%20Park%20-%20Upper%20Plaza%20Improvements%20Project.pdf>

13.-Donation from Berkeley Echo Lake Camp Association for Echo Lake Camp Youth Scholarships and Programming

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10-29%20Item%2013%20Donation%20from%20Berkeley%20Echo%20Lake%20Camp%20Association%20for%20Echo%20Lake%20Camp%20Youth%20Scholarships%20and%20Programming.pdf>

14.-Council Referral and Contract: Green Pocket Forest for Miyawaki Forest Design and Installation

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10-29%20Item%2014%20Council%20Referral%20and%20Contract%20%20Green%20Pocket%20Forest%20for%20Miyawaki%20Forest%20Design%20and%20Installation%281%29.pdf>

November 12, 2024 (regular)

13.-Budget Referral: Create a City park at Parkside Drive terminus median

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-11-12%20Item%2013%20Budget%20Referral%20Create%20a%20City%20park.pdf>

Oct. 18, 2024

Dear City of Berkeley Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department:

Greetings. I attended your Sept. 1, 2024 Draft Waterfront Specific Plan zoom meeting. Additionally, I attended at least two other planning meetings/zooms. At the bottom of this note I have included a summary of comments I made at the breakout session regarding parking. I just plain forgot to send this before a week-long trip—apologies on lateness.

I grew up in Berkeley and attended Berkeley High School. I visit the waterfront almost every other week for birdwatching, nature bathing, and walking. I have led approximately four Golden Gate Bird alliance field trips to the Berkeley waterfront/Eastshore State Park. The Berkeley waterfront is important!

We need to protect one of our most precious local resources. Berkeley is becoming much denser. Berkeley residents need every scrap of unpaved open space we can get. I have participated in many T-1 Bond Park planning meetings. I am frankly sorry that I voted for this measure. I believe the current waterfront plan is still too oriented around commercial development.

Herein are preliminary comments on the Draft Specific Plan dated 10/30/23, viewed online during the last week of September 2024.

I focused my reading on Section 2.2 (Parks and Nature). The key goal (Goal #1) is recreation. I disagree. The key goal should be preserving biodiversity. Goal #6 mentions planting trees but this section should also discuss conservation of established trees (which is indeed discussed elsewhere in the document). A version of the plan I reviewed in 2023 included creation of “Shorebird Nature Hill” –this would be situated at a fabulous willow ticket west of Shorebird Park where I have seen many neotropical migrants take shelter. These willows need to be preserved.

The document mentions Figure 2-8 ("depicts one possibility for programming the undeveloped area of Shorebird Park in a way that preserves many of its wild elements")--where is this figure?

I was pleased to see that there is mention of protecting existing urban forest (page 100). Although some of the species are non-native, and others are technically not native to the Bay Area (e.g. Monterey pine) they provide critical habitat that would not be replaceable within my lifetime with all-new plantings. Here is an excerpt from my 2023 email:

The waterfront should include willow tickets/shrubs/habitat that do NOT allow for human access. There was massive tree loss during the March 2023 windstorm. As it is difficult to come up with a tree plant pallet for species that can tolerate salt spray and drought, I would recommend replanting with somewhat native Monterey Cypress and Monterey pine. The Berkeley waterfront conifers are home to fantastic flocks of chickadees, red-breasted nuthatch, and other species.

The Draft Specific Plan mentions creation of a pollinator garden. I live near Ohlone Park and in theory I should be pleased that there is pollinator garden recently installed around the Ohlone mural. However, I have yet to see any pollinator (bee, butterfly, hummingbird) use any of those plants. I realize the garden is young but it has many flowers. Much of what is planted around California as pollinator-friendly has absolutely no nectar or pollen and has been bred for its appearance. It is sold as a native but is in reality grown from several generations of natives that have been line-bred for bigger brighter flowers. Pollen and nectar have been often been bred out of them. Alas. I think it is inappropriate to promote pollinator-friendly gardens at this point in time unless someone is willing to do research to find appropriate horticultural material that actually provides resources. Nectar gardens generally require a fair amount of water to keep healthy. What is the best use of our water? In my personal pollinator garden, I install only those plants to which I have observed pollinators utilizing them in the nursery. Even then, I have had mixed success. It's a shame. This should not be so hard.

As I've stated in earlier emails, creating a wide bike path all around the waterfront is dangerous, disturbs wildlife, and not fun. It definitely detracts from my ability to birdwatchers/nature bath. I remind staff that besides the comments on migrant use of trees discussed above, the rocky shoreline is important for Spotted Sandpiper, Black Oystercatcher, and other rocky shoreline birds. Additionally, the waterfront *in toto* functions as a massive dog park as off-lease dogs are not restricted to the off-leash area. My ears are listening for natural sounds like waves and bird vocalizations. Instead, I am bombarded with people yelling at dogs. Berkeley residents have gotten better at cleaning up after dogs in recent decades but it is still gross. Dogs flush birds thus reducing avian fitness and decreasing the numbers on diversity available for viewing by birdwatchers. Lastly, few people seem to have the courtesy to leash their dogs when I am obviously trying to observe or photograph discrete groups of birds. There should be enforcement of the only off-leash the area (the small portion of Cesar Chavez park that is dedicated to this). There should be no dogs allowed around the rest of the waterfront.

Other avian resources of importance include California burrowing owl (shortly to be reviewed as a potential state endangered or state threatened species by California Department of Fish and Wildlife commission), foraging California Least Terns (federally endangered) and nesting White-Tailed Kites (state species of special concern).

Alas, we absolutely do not need a ferry and pier. The ferry does not garner sufficient usage to mandate implementation.

Any net increase in paving should be mitigated by removing paving elsewhere at the Berkeley waterfront. Consider installing an offshore platform for harbor seals as a "haul out". This was done in the City of Alameda. Plans proposed by other entities to enhance nesting seabird habitat on the historic Berkeley fishing pier should be instituted.

The ferry, parking, hotel, etc. would create a significant impact and would require an EIR. These projects cannot be piecemealed. Cumulative impacts to wildlife, viewshed, runoff/water quality, congestion, fossil fuel, etc must be evaluated.

Parking comments/meeting held September 30, 2024.

I found the meeting disappointing because I thought it would be focused on addressing the Specific Plan rather than parking. I always access the waterfront via car and almost never have trouble parking. I cannot ride a bike due to disabilities. I do my best to use public transportation. If there were a shuttle from North Berkeley Bart I would likely take that on occasion. Although I can see having West Berkeley or 4th Street shuttle would help with the lack of parks in West Berkeley, it seems like good planning to have one that is connected to BART.

Thank you,

Emilie Strauss