



Peace and Justice  
Commission

## PEACE & JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING

**Monday, May 5, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

South Berkeley Senior Center  
2939 Ellis St. Berkeley Ca, 94703

### AGENDA

**Mayor Adena Ishii:**  
Andrea Cassidy

**Rashi Kersarwani:**  
Selim Yasavul

**Terry Taplin:**  
Adam Weisberg

**Ben Bartlett:**  
Carole Marasovic

**Igor Tregub:**  
Deborah Fink

**Shoshana O'Keefe:**  
Nimrod Pitsker Elias

**Brent Blackaby:**  
Robin Mencher

**Cecilia Lunaparra:**  
Luke Taylor

**Mark Humbert:**  
Ilene Lee

**BUSD:**

**Appel-** Grace Morizawa

**Shanoski-** Jeannette McNeil

**Chang-** Sandy Park- **Vice Chair**

**Vasudeo-** Sheela Jivan

**Babitt-** Dwayne Phillips- **Chair**

**Clark-** Sonali Mascarenhas-Swan

### SECTION A. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Announcements
4. Review and approval of Agenda
5. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items. Public Comment is subject to time limits applicable to all speakers as necessary
6. Review and approval of meeting minutes from previous meeting
7. Commission Updates & Chairperson's Report  
The Chair reports on activities.

8. Secretary's Report (including status of passed items from previous meetings)  
Secretary updates on matters referred to City Clerk, continued orientation to procedures for recommendations, and other items.

## **SECTION B. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

1. Proposed draft resolution calling for the city to denounce the invocation of the Enemies Alien Act and endorse the Neighbors Not Enemies Act. Discussion and possible action. Public Comment.
  - a. Carl Takei with the Asian Law Caucus-- Community Safety Program Director at Asian Law Caucus.
  - b. Satsuki Ina -- father was imprisoned through AEA- WW2
  - c. Grace Shimizu--Father taken from Peru imprisoned during WW@
  - d. Rebecca Gerny East Bay Sanctuary Covenant--report on how the AEA is affecting Berkeley immigrants
2. Staff update on federal cuts to the City of Berkeley based on DEI, City of Berkeley budgetary deficit and City hiring freeze. Discussion and possible action.
3. Discussion on possible authorization of Commission to make statement to Council at May 6, 2025 Council meeting on COSOW SB1343 recommendation. Discussion and possible action.
4. Discussion as to how the commission could be part of the public education and advocacy work on Berkeley as an Immigrant welcoming sanctuary city and what may be needed now to renew our commitment to care for immigrants in our city and in our county. Discussion only. Public Comment.
5. Discuss Meeting start time and location. Discussion and possible action. Public Comment.

## **SECTION D. COMMUNICATIONS**

A member of the public has requested a copy of the recommendation as edited by Commissioner Taylor and discussed with public comment and voted on -- with the changes -- during the 4/7/25 meeting. Please see attached that was provided in accordance with the Brown Act and other transparency laws.

## **SECTION E. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **SECTION F. ADJOURNMENT**



**Meeting Access:** 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 (3) business days before the meeting date.

**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.** 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.*

**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 Old City Hall located at 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704.*

**Commission Contact Information**

*Rex Brown, Secretary  
Peace and Justice Commission  
City of Berkeley  
2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704*



Peace and Justice  
Commission

## PEACE & JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, April 7, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

South Berkeley Senior Center

2939 Ellis St. Berkeley Ca, 94703

### Commissioners

**Mayor Adena Ishii**  
Andrea Cassidy

**Rashi Kersarwani:**  
Selim Yasavul

**Terry Taplin:**  
Adam Weisberg

**Ben Bartlett:**  
Carole Marasovic

**Igor Tregub**  
Deborah Fink

**Shoshana O'Keefe:**  
Nimrod Pitskar Elias

**Brent Blackaby:**  
Robin Mencher

**Cecilia Lunaparra:**  
Luke Taylor

**Mark Humbert**  
Anna Mantell

#### **BUSD:**

**Appel-** Grace Morizawa

**Shanoski-** Jeannette McNeil

**Chang-** Sandy Park- Vice Chair

**Vasudeo-** Sheela Jivan

**Babitt-** Ptr. Dwayne Phillips- Chair

**Clark-** Sonali Mascarenhas-Swan

### Minutes

#### SECTION A. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Roll Call at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

- Commissioner Ptr. Dwayne Phillips (Chair)
- Commissioner Sandy Park (Vice Chair)
- Commissioner Andrea Cassidy
- Commissioner Selim Yasavul
- Commissioner Adam Weisberg
- Commissioner Carole Marasovic
- Commissioner Nimrod Pitskar Elias
- Commissioner Robin Mencher
- Commissioner Luke Taylor

Commissioner Ilene Lee  
Commissioner Grace Morizawa  
Commissioner Jeannette McNeil  
Commissioner Sheela Jivan  
Commissioner Sonali Mascarenhas-Swan  
Absent/Excused: Commissioner Deborah Fink  
CMO Staff: Okeya Vance-Dozier  
Rex Brown

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Announcements

A moment to recognize Okeya Vance-Dozier's years of service and dedication to the Peace and Justice Commission

M/S/F Jivan/Macneil to change the order of the items on the agenda to move Section B items 4, 5 to items 1 and 2.

**Ayes:** Park, Taylor, Morizawa, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** Phillips, Lee, Cassidy, Yasavul, Weisberg, Marasovic, Pitsker Elias, Mencher

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

Motion by Marasovic to move item B3 beneath items 4 and 5 withdrawn.

M/S/C Marasovic/Taylor to approve the agenda.

**Ayes:** Phillips, Park, Cassidy, Yasavul, Weisberg, Marasovic, Pitsker Elias, Mencher, Taylor, Lee, Morizawa, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

4. Comments from the Public (*subject to time limits applicable to all speakers as necessary*)

Chair explains Non-agenda public comment prior to Review and approval of the minutes, a period of public comment following each agenda item for discussion and action in Section B of the Agenda, one minute per speaker allowed.

5. Review and approval of meeting minutes.

M/S/C Mascarenhas-Swan/Jivan to approve the minutes from the last meeting with the amendment to remove language in Section B.3 "No reason was given. No author was listed on the item."

**Ayes:** Phillips, Park, Cassidy, Weisberg, Marasovic, Mencher, Taylor, Morizawa, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** Yasavul, Pitsker Elias, Lee

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

6. Commission Updates & Chairperson's Report:
  - a. The Chair reports on activities, protocol for media inquiries, matters impacting work on current referrals, and other items.
7. Secretary's Report (including status of passed items from previous meetings)  
Secretary updates on matters referred to City Clerk, appointments, stipends, orientation to procedures for recommendations, and other items.
  - a. Discussion of full commission as to how ad hoc subcommittees would operate.  
Discussion only.

## **SECTION B. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

1. Presentation by Oasis Legal Services on providing services to the immigrant LGBTQ community. Discussion. Public Comment. No action taken.
2. Examining material changes that can support Trans safety in Berkeley including at Discussion and possible action. Public Comment.
  - a. Discussion on AJ Stone Jonathan presentation and elements of a recommendation on transgender rights.
  - b. Discussion on SB1343.
  - c. Discussion on legislative support/opposition.
  - d. Discussion on Establishing Berkeley as a Sanctuary City for Trans and Gender Expansive People.

M/S/C Taylor/Marasovic motion to accept letter opposing AB89 and accepting the support of the Equality California legislative package and moved remaining items to another meeting time (June) in light of excused absence of Commissioner Taylor in May 2025.

**Ayes:** Phillips, Park, Marasovic, Taylor, Morizawa, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** Cassidy

**Abstain:** Yasavul, Weisberg, Pitsker Elias, Mencher, Lee

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

3. Proposed draft resolution calling for the city to denounce the invocation of the Enemies Alien Act and endorse the Neighbors Not Enemies Act. Discussion on format and moved to another meeting time. No action taken.

M/S/C:

**Ayes:**  
**Noes:**  
**Abstain:**  
**Absent:**  
**Excused:**

Motion to extend time to 10:45pm.

M/S/C Marasovic/Taylor. The meeting was extended by unanimous consent.

4. Discussion whether resolutions must have a declared author as an item for discussion by the whole Commission to be voted on. Discussion and action. Public Comment.

M/S/F Pitsker Elias/Morizawa as to state whether all authors must be listed on a resolution

**Ayes:** Cassidy, Yasavul, Weisberg, Pitsker Elias, Mencher, Lee

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** Marasovic, Taylor, Morizawa, McNeil, Park, Jivan, Philips, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

M/S/C Marasovic/Mascharenhas-Swan to defer question as to whether resolutions must have a declared author to establishment of Bylaws indicating how to do so.

**Ayes:** Phillips, Park, Cassidy, Yasavul, Weisberg, Marasovic, Mencher, Lee, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** Morizawa

**Abstain:** Pitsker Elias, Taylor

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

5. Recommendation re-affirming the People of Berkeley's Commitment to free speech and opposition to political persecution. Discussion and action. Public Comment.

M/S/C McNeil/Mencher to amend by inserting language with respect to honoring the rights of immigrants placed within the recommendation with respect to due process and removing the draft resolution and adopting the recommendation as edited by Commissioner Taylor during the meeting.

**Ayes:** Phillips, Park, Cassidy, Weisberg, Marasovic, Mencher, Taylor, Morizawa, McNeil, Bhatt Jivan, Mascarenhas-Swan

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** Yasavul, Pitsker Elias, Lee

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** Fink

6. Discussion as to how the commission could be part of the public education and advocacy work on Berkeley as an Immigrant welcoming sanctuary city and what may be needed now to renew our commitment to care for immigrants in our city and in our county. Discussion only. Public Comment.

Moved to another meeting time. No action taken.

**M/S/C:**  
**Ayes:**  
**Noes:**  
**Abstain:**  
**Absent:**  
**Excused:**

7. Discuss Meeting start time and location. Discussion and possible action. Public Comment

Moved to another meeting time. No action taken.

**M/S/C:**  
**Ayes:**  
**Noes:**  
**Abstain:**  
**Absent:**  
**Excused:**

## **SECTION D. COMMUNICATIONS**

1. No communications received.

## **SECTION E. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **SECTION F. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn.

M/S/C Marasovic/Jivan. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted,

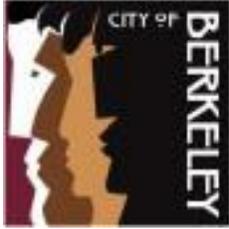
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Rex Brown, Secretary

Peace and Justice Commission

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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 (Chochen-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.



Peace and Justice  
Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR  
May 12, 2025

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of  
the City Council  
**From:** Peace and Justice Commission

**Submitted by:** Dwayne Phillips, Chairperson, Peace and Justice Commission

**Subject:**  
RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution to denounce the invocation of the Alien Enemies Act and to endorse the passage of the Congressional Neighbors Not Enemies Act.

SUMMARY *[This section is included only if report exceeds three pages.]*

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Since the beginning of his second administration, President Trump has begun a systematic dismantling of due process rights that threaten the safety of both American citizens and those legally in the United States.

BACKGROUND

President Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 on March 15, 2025, targeting the alleged members of Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan criminal organization, and authorizing expedited removal of all Venezuelan citizens ages 14 and older deemed members of the group and who are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. Although the expedited removal was blocked by a federal judge who ordered all planes carrying alleged members to turn around, the planes continued on route and landed in El Salvador, where the alleged members were processed and imprisoned. Additionally, Kilmar Abego Garcia, whom the Trump administration acknowledged was deported to El Salvador in error, remains imprisoned in El Salvador. This removal and the deployment of the Alien Enemies Act are in litigation in the federal courts. Many scholars suggest Trump's overreach may cause a constitutional crisis.

The Alien Enemies Act of 1798 allows the president to detain, relocate, or deport non-citizens from a country considered an enemy of the U.S. during wartime, yet **Congress has not declared war.**

Even during wartime, the deployment of the Alien Enemies Act was deeply flawed. Franklin D. Roosevelt invoked this act during World War II, noncitizen people of Japanese ancestry, Germans, and Italians, including residents of Berkeley, were immediately rounded up on December 7, 1941, and disappeared. Very quickly, ten percent of the adult Japanese “alien” men (Japan-born persons being ineligible for citizenship) were picked up by the FBI as potentially dangerous and interned by the Justice Department, effectively robbing the community of leadership. These internees suffered from poor treatment and living conditions. They were separated from their families and, at the very least, temporarily “disappeared.”

The Alien Enemies Act, which enabled the government to imprison noncitizens on the basis of their ancestry or race opened the door for President Roosevelt to sign Executive Order 9066. This resulted in the federal government forcibly removing and incarcerating an additional 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, including 75,000 United States citizens and 1,300 Berkeley residents, solely because of their Japanese ancestry during World War II without due process. It made it possible for the US government to institute an extraordinary rendition program during World War II whereby over 6,500 people of Japanese, German, and Italian ancestry were seized from 13 Latin American countries, transported to the US, and interned in Department of Justice camps.

German and Italian noncitizens were declared enemy aliens. Those who were not detained. Were restricted in where they lived and where they could travel. They were restricted from living or traveling to areas near arsenals, airports, electric or power plants, docks, piers, railroad terminals, depots, or yards. They were required to carry identification certificates and register with the Department of Justice if they changed jobs or their residence. Their homes were searched and they were not allowed to have instruments such as cameras and short-wave radios. They lived under a curfew.

Eventually, in 1983 the federal government found that the detention of all people of Japanese ancestry, citizens and noncitizens, internees, and those incarcerated in the mass incarceration was not justified, but based on “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.” Later, the government also acknowledged that the internment of noncitizens of Italian and German descent was not just but based on their identity, not their conduct.

The best way to prevent the abuse of the Alien Enemies Act is to pass the Neighbors Not Enemies Act, which was reintroduced by U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN). This law would repeal the Alien Enemies Act (AEA) of 1798.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley has a history as a city that stands for civil liberties and as a Sanctuary City. Residents of Berkeley were deeply impacted by the Alien Enemies Act in 1941 and may be targeted today by Trump's invocation. It is morally right for us to stand up and oppose practices that threaten all of us.

### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

### CITY MANAGER

The City Manager [TYPE ONE] concurs with / takes no position on the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report. [OR] Refer to the budget process.

**Note: If the City Manager does not (a) concur, (b) takes any other position, or (c) refer to the budget process, a council action report must be prepared. Indicate under the CITY MANAGER heading, "See companion report."**

### CONTACT PERSON

[Name], [Title], [Department], [Phone Number]

Attachments: Possible Resolution to Consider

1: **RESOLUTION TO DENOUNCE THE INVOCATION OF THE ALIEN ENEMIES ACT AND TO ENDORSE THE PASSAGE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL NEIGHBORS NOT ENEMIES ACT**

### **Guidance for Referenced Materials and Attachments**

Attached is a template resolution the Council may consider adopting for this recommendation.

**RESOLUTION link**

DRAFT RESOLUTION TO DENOUNCE THE INVOCATION OF THE ALIEN ENEMIES ACT AND TO  
ENDORSE THE PASSAGE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL NEIGHBORS NOT ENEMIES ACT

WHEREAS, the Peace and Justice Commission advises the City Council on all matters relating to the City of Berkeley's role in issues of peace and social justice (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 3.68.070); and

WHEREAS, after careful consideration the Berkeley City Council finds it proper to offer its views regarding the loss of civil liberties and potential violence for residents of Berkeley, the disregard by the executive branch for the authority of the judicial branch, and the challenge to Berkeley's sanctuary city status; and,

WHEREAS, President Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 on March 15, 2025, targeting the alleged members of Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan prison gang and authorizing expedited removal of all Venezuelan citizens ages 14 and older deemed members of the group and who are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents, and

Whereas, the expedited removal was blocked by a federal judge who ordered all planes carrying alleged members to turn around, and the planes continued on route, landed in El Salvador, where the alleged members were processed and imprisoned. and this removal and the invocation of the Alien Enemies Act are in litigation in the federal courts, which many scholars are claiming is a constitutional crisis.<sup>i</sup> and

Whereas, the extent of Trump's power regarding the Alien Enemies Act is being challenged and may result in a constitutional crisis given that on April 7, 2025, the Supreme Court overturned a lower court's order blocking the Trump administration from deporting Venezuelan nationals under the Alien Enemies Act. At the same time the Court, "confirm that the detainees subject to removal orders under the AEA are entitled to notice and an opportunity to challenge their removal."<sup>ii</sup>

Whereas the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 allows the president to detain, relocate, or deport non-citizens from a country considered an enemy of the U.S. during wartime, yet Congress has not declared war.<sup>iii</sup>

WHEREAS Franklin D. Roosevelt invoked this act during World War II, noncitizen people of Japanese ancestry, Germans, and Italians, including residents of Berkeley, were immediately rounded up on December 7, 1941, and disappeared. Very quickly, ten percent of the adult Japanese "alien" men (Japan-born persons being ineligible for citizenship) were picked up by the FBI as potentially dangerous and interned by the Justice Department, effectively robbing the community of leadership and separating families. And

WHEREAS an estimated 2500 arrestees people of Japanese descent were detained in Sharp Park, Pacifica. Sharp Park was one of the three detention centers for the Bay Area and 664 on Angel Island. According to Tetsuden Kashima 31,899 people were held nationally by the Justice Department’s Alien Enemy Control Program during World War II: 17,477 of Japanese ancestry, 11,507 of German ancestry, 2,730 of Italian ancestry, and 185 of other ancestry.<sup>iv</sup> And

WHEREAS, the Alien Enemies Act opened the door for President Roosevelt to sign Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the federal government forcibly removing and incarcerating an additional 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, including 75,000 United States citizens and 1,300 Berkeley residents, solely because of their Japanese ancestry during World War II.<sup>v</sup> And

WHEREAS, this Executive Order 9066 violated United States Constitutional rights and human rights by removing and incarcerating an entire ethnicity, claiming it was on the grounds of national security and military necessity; And

WHEREAS, the Alien Enemies Act, made it possible for the US government to institute an extraordinary rendition program during World War II whereby over 6,500 people of Japanese, German, and Italian ancestry were seized from 13 Latin American countries, transported to the US and interned in Department of Justice camps.<sup>vi</sup> And

WHEREAS, in 1983, the federal Executive Order 9066 Commission found that the incarceration of Japanese Americans, including those was not justified by military necessity and was not based on military analysis; instead, the unjust incarceration was based on “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership;”<sup>vii</sup> And

WHEREAS, [Congress](#)<sup>viii</sup> apologized for Japanese internment and mass incarceration , and recognized that immigrants had been targeted, regulated, and interned under the Alien Enemies Act based on their ancestry.

WHEREAS, the U.S. government also acknowledged that the internment of noncitizens of Italian and Germans was not just and based on their identity, not their conduct.<sup>ix</sup>

WHEREAS, U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) re-introduced the [Neighbors Not Enemies Act](#) which would repeal the Alien Enemies Act (AEA) of 1798 on January 22, 2025<sup>x</sup>. And

WHEREAS, the city of Berkeley, on January 21, 2025, updated the sanctuary city resolution with new language to protect immigrants in places like schools, hospitals, and churches and from potential raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).<sup>xi</sup>

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley denounce the 2025 invocation of the Alien Enemies of 1798 and endorse the passage of the Neighbors Not Enemies Act introduced on February 17, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to President Donald Trump, Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth, Vice President JD Vance, Senator Alex Padilla, Senator Eric Swalwell, Representative Lateefah Simon, U Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Representative, Ilhan Omar (D-MN)

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<sup>i</sup> Treisman, R. (2025, March 18). *4 things to know about the alien enemies act and Trump's efforts to use it*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2025/03/18/nx-s1-5331857/alien-enemies-act-trump-deportations>

<sup>ii</sup> 241931 Trump v. J.G.G.(04/07/2024). [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/24a931\\_2c83.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/24a931_2c83.pdf).

<sup>iii</sup> Kunzelman, M., & Cano, A. R. G. (2025, March 21). *A timeline of the legal wrangling and deportation flights after Trump invoked the alien enemies act*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/trump-deportation-courts-aclu-venezuelan-gang-timeline-43e1deafd66fc1ed4e934ad108ead529>.

<sup>iv</sup> Kashima, Tetsuden, *Judgement Without Trial*, 2003.

<sup>v</sup> *Executive order 9066*. Executive Order 9066 | Densho Encyclopedia. (n.d.). <https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Executive%20Order%209066>.

<sup>vi</sup> "Latin American Internment Program." <https://gaic.info/history/the-world-war-ii-latin-american-internment-program/>

<sup>vii</sup> Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982. Foreword by Tetsuden Kashima. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.

<sup>viii</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/100/statute/STATUTE-102/STATUTE-102-Pg903.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> "The Alien Enemies Act" <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/policy-solutions/alien-enemies-act>

<sup>x</sup> H.R.630 - Neighbors Not Enemies Act. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/630>

<sup>xi</sup> Reaffirming Berkeley as a Sanctuary City. <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-01-21%20Item%2027%20Reaffirming%20Berkeley%20as%20Sanctuary%20City.pdf>

# With \$27M deficit looming, Berkeley adopts hiring freeze

On Thursday, Mayor Ishii lauded the city's focus on systemic change, saying, "We can't continue to use one-time measures to solve these problems."



*From right, Mayor Adena Ishii and Rashi Kesarwani during Thursday's budget meeting. Emilie Raguso/The Berkeley Scanner*

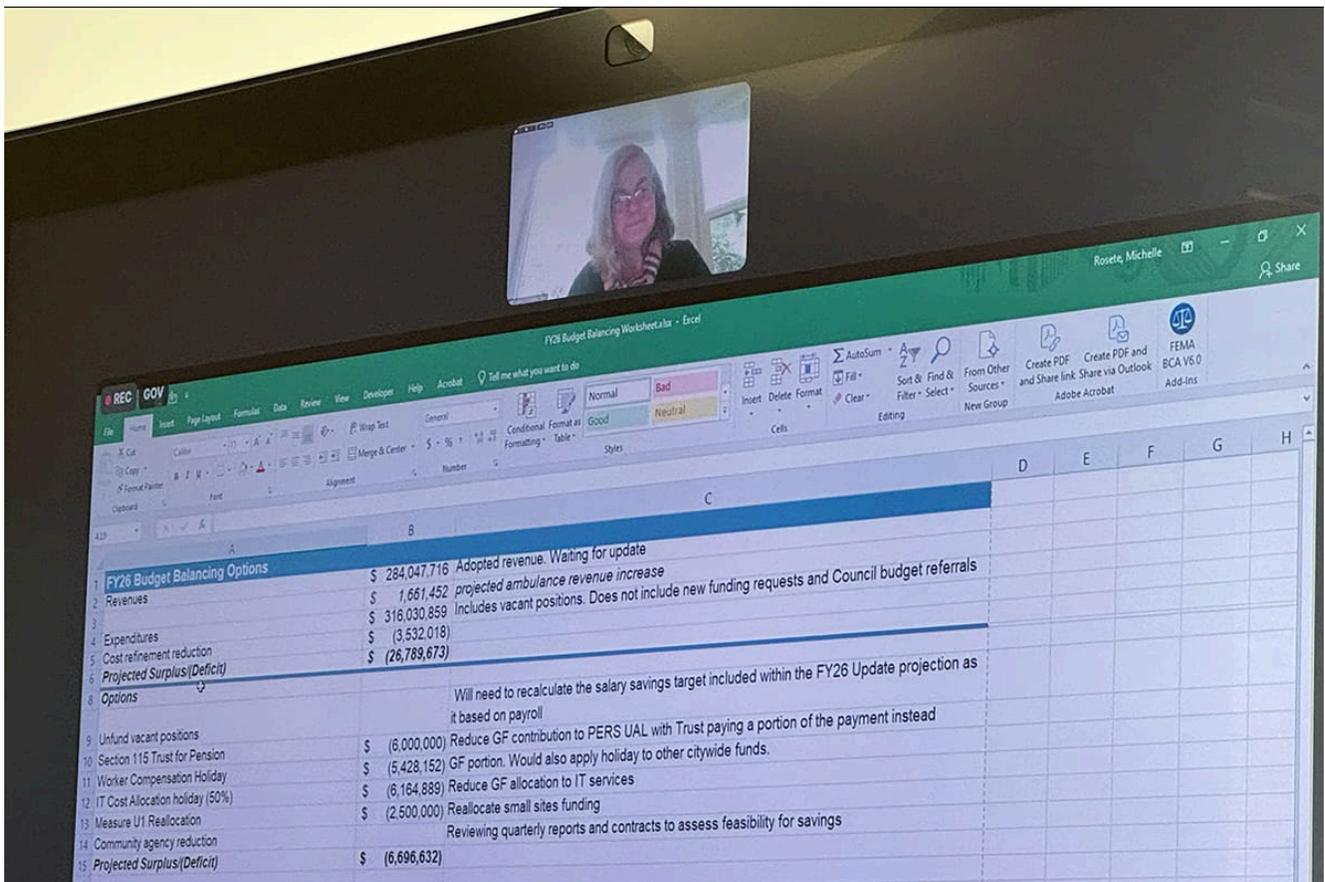
Faced with a \$27 million general fund deficit in the coming fiscal year, the city of Berkeley has suspended most hiring through mid-2026.

On Thursday, city officials received a sobering report about the budget and the new hiring freeze, which went into effect this week.

The meeting, of the City Council's [Budget & Finance](#) policy committee, marked the official kickoff to Berkeley's budget season, which runs through June 30.

Between now and then, [Berkeley City Council](#) members will have a series of public meetings and then vote on what steps to take to tackle the budget gap.

On Thursday, Berkeley budget manager Sharon Friedrichsen suggested several possible balancing strategies, from a worker compensation holiday to borrowing from the city's pension trust fund to continued salary savings through vacancies.



*Suggested budget balancing strategies were projected on a screen during Thursday's presentation by budget manager Sharon Friedrichsen. Emilie Raguso/TBS*

Friedrichsen also suggested taking a closer look at the city's upcoming Measure U1 allocations, related to affordable housing projects, to review whether any of them might be reconsidered in light of current fiscal conditions.

Staff said Berkeley may also be able to save money by curtailing IT spending and shifting Specialized Care Unit costs to Alameda County; reviewing the money the city gives to community agencies, particularly in light of performance; and taking another look at some of the projects planned for the coming fiscal year, among other ideas.

In her public remarks Thursday, budget chair Rashi Kesarwani, who serves on the committee along with [Mayor Adena Ishii](#) and Councilman Brent Blackaby, described the budget report as "a lot to take in."

"Berkeley isn't the only city in a very difficult budget," she said. "We're seeing similar headlines from San Francisco and LA. Obviously Oakland. This is a difficult time and a time of economic and fiscal uncertainty with federal actions or threats."

Blackaby said he wanted to make it "crystal clear" to the public what services community members will continue to get, such as miles of streets paved and response times for police, to help set their expectations.

"Even with the reduced goals," he said, "what are the departments actually gonna be providing?"

Mayor Ishii said she appreciated staff's emphasis on finding longer-term solutions to create a more stable budget in the years ahead.

"We can't continue to use one-time measures to solve these problems," the mayor said. "We need to be making real systemic changes."

## Berkeley now has a hiring freeze



*Berkeley City Manager Paul Buddenhagen during a community meeting earlier this year. Emilie Raguso/TBS*

Berkeley's new hiring freeze came up repeatedly during Thursday's meeting.

City Manager [Paul Buddenhagen](#) had announced it Friday in an email to staff. The new policy went into effect Monday.

Under the freeze, for the most part, no new city positions can be posted and conditional job offers can be rescinded.

The policy does allow for exceptions — including jobs related to mandated and essential services such as public health and safety — which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

"The limited exceptions will focus on preserving critical organizational functions to protect the general welfare and safety of our constituents and employees, compliance, risk exposure, revenue generation, and alternative funding sources," according to the guidelines.

In his email, Buddenhagen wrote that the city's senior leadership team had decided to suspend hiring in the face of projected deficits in several key areas: Berkeley's general fund — used for daily operations — as well as its marina, camps and parking meter funds, all of which had relied on "[one-time resources that are no longer available.](#)"

"This action is meant to immediately slow down deficit spending as we work hard to thoughtfully address the budget challenges in these uncertain times," Buddenhagen wrote, due to shifting "federal resources, a challenging economic environment, and the prospects of a recession."

In the email, he said the hiring freeze had not been an easy call to make, particularly as some Berkeley departments already have high vacancies, which has taken a toll on staff.

"We are often working hard to serve the community with limited resources," he wrote, "and I recognize this hiring freeze exacerbates these challenges."

While the freeze is in place, the city intends to focus on "essential functions" and take a closer look at structural deficits, where expenses outpace revenues, to put city finances "on a long-term sustainable path."

On Thursday, Buddenhagen told officials he wanted to be very careful in relation to public safety hiring, particularly as far as police officers and public safety dispatchers, given the city's years-long battle to address ongoing vacancies.

"We have made... quite a lot of headway in getting this machine moving towards hiring people," he said. "We want to be really mindful of ... just not shutting it down. Because it takes a long time to start it back up and get that process going."

Under the new policy, Berkeley plans to reassess the hiring freeze "once a list of vacant positions for FY 25-26 [through June 2026] has been determined."

Also worth noting: The hiring freeze only covers staff "under the purview of the City Manager."

It does not affect charter offices, such as the city attorney's office, auditor, Office of the Director of Police Accountability and the offices of the mayor and City Council.

## **What comes next for the Berkeley city budget?**

The city operates on a two-year budget cycle and has already [adopted a projected budget for FY26](#), which runs from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

But, as per the normal budget process, officials are now reviewing the numbers and refining the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

In the coming weeks and months, the Berkeley City Council is expected to take a closer look at the projected salary savings through vacancies while the hiring freeze is in place and vote on one-time measures to address the deficit.

The [budget committee's](#) next meeting is set for May 15 with a full [City Council meeting](#) on the budget set for May 20.

## **City of Berkeley budget snapshot**

Berkeley's overall adopted budget for FY26 has roughly \$700 million in projected revenues and \$830 million in expenses, according to recent documents.

Of that, general fund revenue is expected to be about \$280 million with expenses estimated at \$310 million.

"As in prior fiscal years, revenues are not keeping up with expenditures citywide," staff wrote. "Options include increasing revenue, using depleted fund balance/reserves and/or reducing expenses."

Nearly 70% of general fund expenses are due to personnel costs, the city said.

The police and fire departments make up about half of the general fund costs.

In Thursday's report, staff attributed much of the increase in general fund expenses to pension plan and salary-related costs, including increased wages from labor agreements.

*See Thursday's [budget presentation](#) and the full [budget committee agenda](#). Read more about the [city of Berkeley budget](#).*

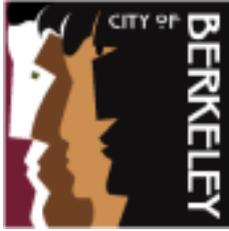
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Peace and Justice  
Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR  
April 7th, 2025

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Peace and Justice Commission  
**Submitted by:** Pastor Dwayne Phillips, Chairperson, Peace and Justice Commission  
**Subject:** [Click **Here** and Type the Title. (No underline and not all caps.)]

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt ~~a this recommendation resolution~~ re-affirming the City of Berkeley's commitment to Free Speech and Assembly and its opposition to the detainment and deportation of immigrants without due process, violating their constitutionally protected speech of international students on the basis of constitutionally protected speech.

**SUMMARY [This section is included only if report exceeds three pages.]**

### FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

MinimalNone

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Since the beginning of his second administration, President Trump has begun a systematic dismantling of due process rights that threaten the safety of both American citizens and those legally in the United States.

[Add comment on the targeting of immigrant communities?]

### BACKGROUND

On March 8th, Federal Immigration officers dressed in plain clothes illegally detained Mahmoud Khalil, a legal green card holder married to an American citizen, and former Columbia University student, sending him to an ICE detention facility in Louisiana without charge. He faces deportation for his political activism.

The following week, Badar Khan Suri, a visiting scholar at Georgetown University married to an American citizen, was detained and his visa revoked by ICE in retaliation for his wife's political activism. He similarly has not been charged with a crime and is slated for deportation.

In late March, Rumeza Ozturk, a Tufts Ph.D. student, was also detained by plain clothes ICE agents over an op-ed article she wrote for her school newspaper objecting to the University's response to the war in Gaza in early 2024. She has not been charged with a crime and slated for deportation.

State Department Secretary Marco Rubio recently said he had revoked "300 visas" on similar grounds, having used AI and other surveillance technologies to identify students who took part in protests.

In 2024, UC Berkeley was the site of numerous peaceful demonstrations that included both domestic and international students. The Trump administration's current posture of detaining and deporting without charge students who are in the country legally on the basis of their constitutionally protected right to free speech and assembly threatens the fabric of the Berkeley community. It has created a culture of extreme fear reminiscent of the McCarthy era when countless individuals were targeted without evidence over speculation around their political beliefs.

While the Trump administration has said that these detentions are a part of a wider effort to combat anti-semitism on college campuses, 100 Jewish faculty from UC Berkeley signed a letter in March and called on all members of the community to denounce the practice<sup>1</sup>.

Student activists are far from the only population being targeted. The Trump administration is also targeting people for a wide range of non-criminal behavior including union organizing. There have even been instances of green card holders being detained at their routine immigration check-ins. As a part of their crack-down, there have already been a number of erroneous detentions and deportations, including of Kilmar Abrego Garcia who was deported to El Salvador's CECOT prison due to "an administrative error" despite having been granted protection from deportation. Jeanette Vizguera, an immigrant rights activist, was detained by ICE at work, again without charge. Julio Noriego, an American Citizen, was also detained in an ICE sweep.

**At least six UC Berkeley students have had their visas revoked as a part of the Trump administration's sweeps.**

On March 25th, 2025, Alfredo Juarez, a community activist and Farm Worker, was driving his wife to work when he was randomly stopped by ICE Agents. When he attempted to get his ID, after being asked for it, ICE Agents smashed his window and detained him. He currently faces no charges, but is detained in the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w6bTVUMmUvW\\_HQZ-1T7vZc82spx25k0b/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w6bTVUMmUvW_HQZ-1T7vZc82spx25k0b/view)

Lewelyn Dixon, a Green Card holder who has lived in the US for 50 years was returning from an international trip and was detained while going through customs to come home. She was detained because of an embezzlement charge that was resolved 20 years ago. She has travelled internationally many times, but this time when she tried to come home she was detained, and is being held at the Northwest ICE Processing Center.

The Trump Administration has promised that this is just the beginning of their detention and deportation plan.

The First Amendment's position at the top of the Bill of Rights enshrines it as one of the most important protections anyone residing in the United States –citizen or non-citizen – is entitled to. Erosion of this protection for any reason is a threat to one of American democracy's central pillars. This erosion moves us dangerously close to an autocratic state that threatens everyone regardless of political creed or citizenship status.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley's history as the epicenter of the 1960s Free Speech movement is a core part of our City's identity. It is morally right for us to stand up and oppose practices that threaten all of us.

### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The commission considered not commenting on the rise of disappearances and visa/green card revocations. ~~None~~

The commission considered take no stance against the egregious violations of our constitutional protections, including in Berkeley.

### CITY MANAGER

~~The City Manager [TYPE ONE] concurs with / takes no position on the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report. [OR] Refer to the budget process. ¶~~

~~**Note: If the City Manager does not (a) concur, (b) takes any other position, or (c) refer to the budget process, a council action report must be prepared. Indicate under the CITY MANAGER heading, "See companion report."**~~

### CONTACT PERSON

[Name], [Title], [Department], [Phone Number]

Attachments: [Delete if there are NO Attachments]

1: [Title or Description of Attachment]

2: [Title or Description of Attachment]

## Guidance for Referenced Materials and Attachments

~~Attached is a template resolution the Council may wish to consider adopting for this recommendation.~~