



# City of Berkeley

## Health, Housing, and Community Services

**DRAFT**

**2026/2027**

## **Community Needs Assessment**

*Berkeley Community Action Agency*

### **Data Collection Method**

The Berkeley Community Action Agency's (BCAA) Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is informed by the City of Berkeley (City) 2025 Community Health Assessment, the City FY 2025-28 Community Agency Request for Proposal (RFP), the City 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan for United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City 2025 Annual Action Plan for HUD, the City 2023 HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP) Allocation Plan community consultations and public hearings, and the 2024 Alameda County Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of individuals, youth, and families experiencing homelessness.

The City of Berkeley 2025 Community Health Assessment (CHA) includes both qualitative and quantitative data metrics to paint a picture of the current state of health of the Berkeley community. Data from a series of community focus groups, a community survey, and key informant interviews with community partners and leaders helped to inform the qualitative data components.

In 2023, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for community agencies covering Fiscal Years 2025 through 2028. This RFP prioritized applications for programs that provide services to Berkeley residents who are at or below the poverty line. Proposals included programs related to healthcare, including geriatric primary care health services; access to delivery of integrated primary care and behavioral health services to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents; and, supportive services and housing to the chronically homeless population in Berkeley, most of whom have active mental health and substance use issues as well as poor physical health. Community agencies who were awarded in 2024 are submitting program reports detailing demographic data and

client service outcomes on a bi-annual/quarterly basis. This data allows the City to monitor the highest need communities, performance outcomes, community impact, and provides additional guidance for the contract allocation decisions in the next funding cycle.

The City organized several public hearings and community surveys to help guide funding decisions and identify the areas with greatest need. A public hearing focused on community needs took place on January 25, 2024, in front of the Housing Advisory Commission (HAC). The purpose of this hearing was to gather input from Berkeley residents regarding the most essential services and housing opportunities. Additional public meetings were held with the Human Welfare Community Action Commission (HWCAC), Homeless Services Panel of Experts (HSPOE), and the Commission on Labor (COL) to review subject area priorities and funding opportunities for community agency grants. Each commission represents the Berkeley community and advises City Council on decisions related to their focus area. In these public meetings, the Commissions evaluated community agency applications for funding on their program design, organizational capacity, prior performance and/or experience in the community, and overall budget. Community members and representatives from the community-based organizations were notified of the meetings via email and through the commission webpages on the City website.

In 2023, the City also sent an online survey to agencies and service providers whose clientele include the HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP) qualifying populations to identify unmet needs and gaps in housing or service delivery systems, and to determine the HOME-ARP eligible activities currently taking place within the City to identify potential areas of collaboration. The survey requested that agencies and service providers upload data that would help the City better understand the needs and gaps in services of the qualifying populations. The survey was emailed to 44 agencies and service providers on January 18, 2023, and the collection period ended on January 25, 2023. Fourteen responses were received from agencies serving all four qualifying populations, including eight respondents serving Veterans. The City gained a greater understanding of the unmet needs and gaps in services, with respect to the qualifying populations, by meeting with individuals from agencies and service providers. Responses included the need for supportive services to help unhoused people meet their essential needs, more peer-led programs, flexible and low barrier short-term motel stays and liaison services between landlords and eligible program participants, and resources for severe mental health illness and substance abuse.

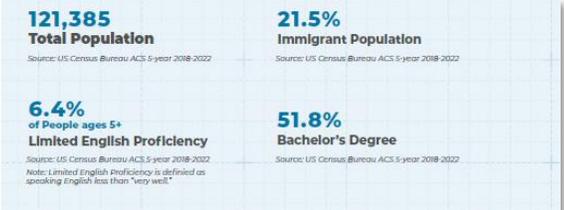
The City’s Consolidated Plan for HUD, along with its Annual Action Plan, includes both a Housing Market Analysis and a Needs Assessment. These reports offer detailed insights into the City’s specific needs regarding affordable housing, special needs housing, community development, and homelessness. They also provide a clear understanding of the environment in which the City will implement its federally funded programs.

The 2024 Point In Time (PIT) Count for Alameda County provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of individuals, youth, and families experiencing homelessness, providing specific data about their demographics and characteristics. This report provided key data on the intersection of homelessness, race, ethnicity, gender identity, and age.

### City of Berkeley Demographics

*U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, ACS, 2023*

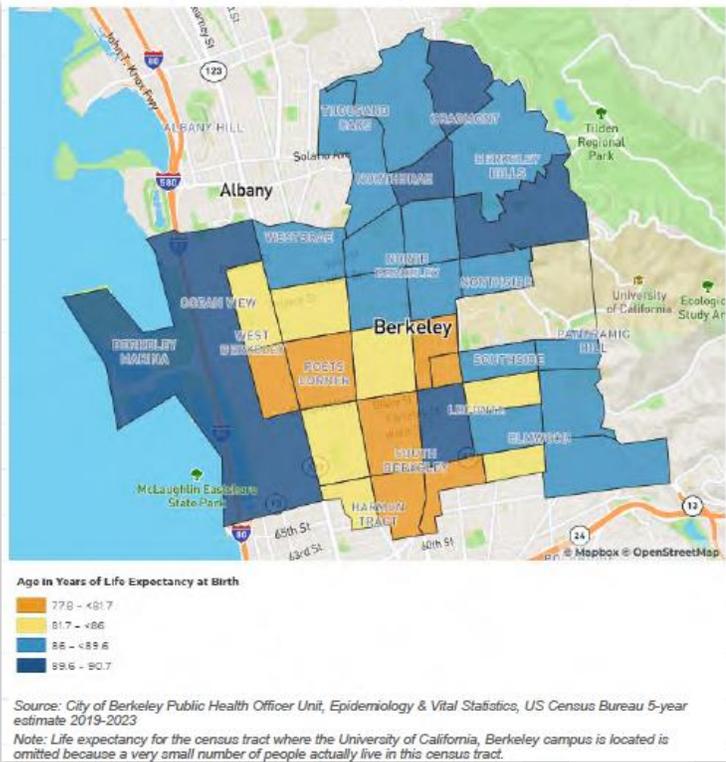
	<b>City of Berkeley</b>	<b>Alameda County</b>	<b>California</b>
<b>Age</b>			
<i>Under 5 years</i>	5%	5%	5%
<i>5 to 19 years</i>	18%	17%	19%
<i>20 to 64 years</i>	60%	62%	59%
<i>65 years and over</i>	17%	16%	17%
<b>Race</b>			
<i>White</i>	54.8%	47.1%	70.4%
<i>African American</i>	7.4%	10.5%	6.5%
<i>American Indian</i>	0.7%	1.2%	1.7%
<i>Asian</i>	20.7%	34.5%	16.5%
<i>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</i>	0.2%	0.9%	0.5%
<i>Other Race</i>	5%	0.1%	0.1%
<i>Two or more races</i>	11.2%	5.7%	4.3%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	12.1%	23.3%	40.4%
<i>White alone, Non-Hispanic/Latino</i>	51.7%	27.9%	34.3%
<b>People with Disabilities (&lt;65 years)</b>	7%	6%	7%
<b>People Without Health Insurance (&lt;65 years)</b>	3%	5%	7%



# Key Findings

## Health Inequities in Berkeley

While many residents of Berkeley benefit from good health, education, employment, and income, some groups face challenges. In certain neighborhoods, and among individuals experiencing specific health and social difficulties, health outcomes can be significantly worse. In 2024, the Berkeley poverty rate was 17%, nearly double that of Alameda County and five points higher than California as a whole<sup>1</sup>. There are multiple intersectional challenges for individuals living in poverty in Berkeley, which include health inequities related to disability, race, housing, and age.



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2023

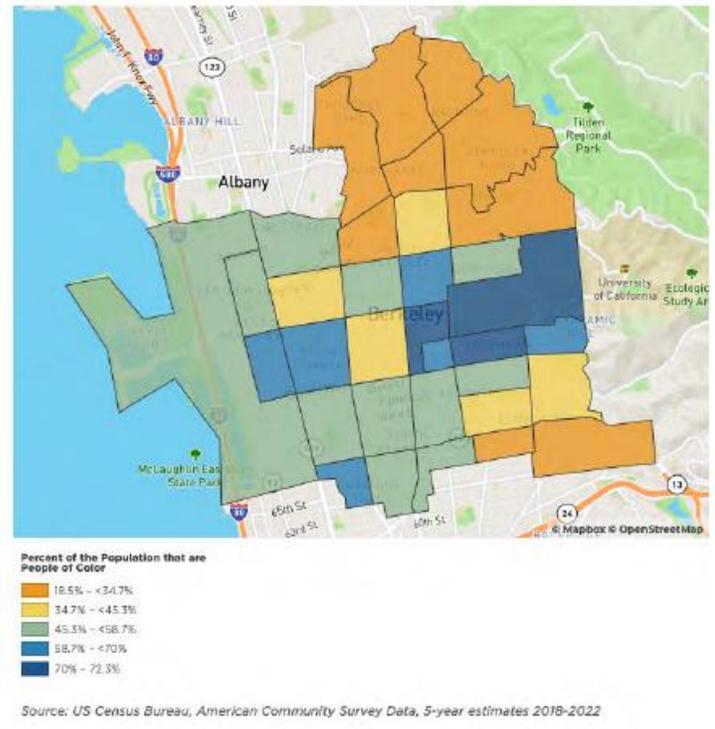
## Income and Poverty

The median household income for Berkeley is just under \$105,000, with African American household income at \$52,000, less than half of the citywide average<sup>2</sup>. The median for Hispanic households (\$67,000) is also much lower than the average<sup>3</sup>. Much like life expectancy, median household income in Berkeley varies significantly by geography. Census tracts in the Berkeley Hills report the highest median household income levels (more than \$200,000) while census tracts in South Berkeley and West Berkeley report the lowest levels (less than \$100,000).<sup>4</sup>

The average Berkeley resident can expect to live to the age of 86<sup>5</sup>. However, this longevity is not evenly distributed. Residents in the Berkeley Hills, where resources are more abundant, have the highest life expectancy in the City, with one census tract averaging 91 years<sup>6</sup>. In contrast, residents in South and West Berkeley face significantly shorter life expectancies; one tract averages just 78 years – a 13-year gap.<sup>7</sup>

There are significant economic disparities for the disabled population. Twenty percent of people over the age of 16 with disabilities live in poverty in Alameda County, while 8% without disabilities live in poverty. Additionally, people over the age of 16 with disabilities are nearly six times more likely to be unemployed in Alameda County when compared to people without disabilities. People with disabilities tend to have higher rates of high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and psychological distress than those living without disabilities<sup>8</sup>. The majority of the disabled population in

Higher Concentrations of People of Color in West, Central, and South Berkeley



<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Berkeley Wellness Blueprint: Community Health Assessment," Berkeley. Health, Housing, and Community Services Department, & JSI Research & Training Institute, pg. 21. 2025

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Davis, Muntu, and Sandi Soliday. *Persons with Disabilities in Alameda County*. Alameda County Public Health Department. County Board of Supervisors' Health Committee. April 23, 2017. [http://www.acgov.org/board/bos\\_calendar/documents/DocsAgendaReg\\_4\\_23\\_18/HEALTH CARE SERVICES/Regular Calendar/Persons\\_with\\_disabilities\\_Alameda\\_County\\_H\\_4\\_23\\_18.pdf](http://www.acgov.org/board/bos_calendar/documents/DocsAgendaReg_4_23_18/HEALTH CARE SERVICES/Regular Calendar/Persons_with_disabilities_Alameda_County_H_4_23_18.pdf).

Alameda County are older ( $\geq 65$  years of age), with more women with any disability than men<sup>9</sup>, and African American and Hispanic/Latino people being the highest percentages of people with a disability. Additionally, during the Alameda County 2024 Point In Time (PIT) count, 60% of all people who were homeless reported a disabling condition.

## Community Health

The City of Berkeley has a Public Health Division that is made up of public health nurses, community outreach workers, health educators, health care providers, and other public health professionals. Berkeley is one of only three cities in the State of California with the distinction of being its own health jurisdiction, while most health jurisdictions are the responsibility of the county. Having a City health jurisdiction means more individualized, higher quality services for residents and more resources for better programs and services to meet their needs. Some of the services that the Public Health Division provides include:

- Giving vaccines to babies and children to prevent diseases such as polio, diphtheria, measles, and hepatitis B.
- Joining with merchants, parents, and school officials to reduce teenage smoking by not selling cigarettes to minors.
- Providing women with a safe place to make decisions about family planning and providing pregnancy prevention services.
- Helping residents understand how to protect children from lead poisoning.
- Providing people in physically abusive relationships with information, referrals and assistance with getting help.
- Providing a nurse for residents to call when they have health related questions.
- Helping residents understand how to reduce the risk of getting a sexually transmitted disease.
- Educating children and teenagers about how wearing a bicycle helmet can protect them from injury.
- Giving pregnant women and their babies nutrition information and access to healthy foods.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## Recommendations

The need for healthcare and affordable housing for Berkeley residents is clearly supported by the data in this community needs assessment. With limited funding available, and a strong existing partnership with LifeLong Medical Care, the City chose to continue to support the delivery of integrated primary care and behavioral health services to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents of Berkeley at the LifeLong West Berkeley and Berkeley TRUST Health Centers. LifeLong services are designed to remove barriers to care and reduce health disparities for typically underserved populations who are at the greatest risk for poor health outcomes. Funding will also support the provision of acupuncture detox services for Berkeley residents living with substance use disorders. Berkeley voters concerned about the welfare of disabled Berkeley residents continue to support funding for emergency services and case management, attendant care, accessible transportation, wheelchair repair, and assistive device repair for severely physically disabled persons in Berkeley.