



Ben Bartlett
City Council District 3

TIME CRITICAL AGENDA MATERIAL

Agenda Committee Meeting Date: June 29, 2026
Council Meeting Date: July 14, 2026

Item Description:

Bertha Brown Community Memorial Gathering and Hunger Program Recognition -
Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such
Funds.

In recognition of Bertha's years of public service, South Berkeley Community Church's
Hunger Program will host a community gathering and memorial celebration on July 25,
2026. The July 14, 2026, Council Meeting is the last meeting to approve funds before
the event.

Time Critical Items. A Time Critical item is defined as a matter that is considered
urgent by the sponsor and that has a deadline for action that is prior to the next meeting
of the Council and for which a report prepared by the City Manager, Auditor, Mayor or
council member is received by the City Clerk after established deadlines and is not
included on the Agenda Committee's published agenda.

The author of the report shall bring any reports submitted as Time Critical to the meeting
of the Agenda Committee. If the Agenda Committee finds the matter to meet the
definition of Time Critical, the Agenda Committee may place the matter on the Agenda
on either the Consent or Action Calendar



CONSENT CALENDAR

July 14, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett (Author)
Subject: Bertha Brown Community Memorial Gathering and Hunger Program
Recognition – Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General
Fund and Grant of Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of funds, including \$1,000 from the discretionary Council Office Budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett for the South Berkeley Community Church Hunger Program Community Memorial Gathering honoring Bertha Brown and associated accessibility services. The funds will be relinquished to the City's General Fund from the Discretionary Council Office Budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett and the Discretionary Council Office Budgets of any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

BACKGROUND:

Bertha Brown was a lifelong Berkeley resident who dedicated decades of service to the Berkeley community. She lived in Berkeley for more than 65 years and worked for the City of Berkeley Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department for over 30 years. During her career, she developed and expanded youth, recreation, and early childhood programs that continue to serve Berkeley families today.

As Recreation Coordinator at Frances Albrier Community Center, Bertha Brown helped create programs for young children and families and secured grant funding to support them. She dedicated her career to improving the lives of Berkeley residents. Following her retirement in 2019, she continued serving the community through volunteer work, including supporting the Hunger Program at South Berkeley Community Church.

Sadly on June 4, 2026, Bertha Brown passed away.

In recognition of Bertha's years of public service, South Berkeley Community Church's Hunger Program will host a community gathering and memorial celebration on July 25, 2026.

The D13 funds will help offset the cost of facility and accessibility services, specifically American Sign Language interpretation, to ensure community members can participate in honoring her life and legacy.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

No negative impact.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

There is no impact on the General Fund; \$1,000 is available from Councilmember Ben Bartlett's discretionary council office budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett.

CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Ben Bartlett
James Chang

bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info
jchang@cityofberkeley.info

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Bertha Brown Obituary

Attachment 1:

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE
EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR A
DONATION TO THE SOUTH BERKELEY COMMUNITY CHURCH HUNGER
PROGRAM COMMUNITY MEMORIAL GATHERING HONORING BERTHA BROWN

WHEREAS, Councilmember Ben Bartlett has funds in his office expenditure account,
and

WHEREAS, South Berkeley Community Church Hunger Program will receive funds
from Councilmember Ben Bartlett's office expenditure account; and

WHEREAS, Bertha Brown was a longtime Berkeley resident and public servant who
worked for the City of Berkeley for more than 30 years serving youth, families, and
community members through recreation, education, and volunteer programs; and

WHEREAS, Bertha Brown served her community through volunteering with the South
Berkeley Community Church Hunger Program by supporting residents experiencing
food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, the South Berkeley Community Church Hunger Program Community
Memorial Gathering will bring together Berkeley residents, City staff, family members,
and volunteers to celebrate Bertha Brown's legacy of public service, plus providing
accessibility through American Sign Language interpretation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that
funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their office budgets, of an
amount to be determined by each Councilmember, shall be granted to the South
Berkeley Community Church Hunger Program Community Memorial Gathering honoring
Bertha Brown.

Attachment 2:



Bertha Brown, age 76, of Berkeley, CA, passed away peacefully on June 4, 2026 surrounded by her loving family. She was born in San Diego on January 24, 1950, she was the beloved and only daughter of Wilma Brown.

As a young girl the family moved to Berkeley, CA, a place she loved and lived for over 65 years. Graduating from Berkeley High and attending some college, Bertha went on to work for the City of Berkeley, Parks & Recreation for over 30 years. She was initially recruited to put on a talent show at the Young Adult Project and this is how her career with the City of Berkeley started.

As the dance coordinator for the B-Town dancers, what started out as a dance group progressed into performances and positive messaging around South Berkeley. She wrote and recorded a song encouraging anti-violence and health safety performed throughout Berkeley schools. The B-Town dancers ended every performance with this message, "Don't be stupid, don't be ill, remember it's simple drugs and AIDS kill, peace."

As a Recreation Activities Leader, she worked with the Teen Club taking them to Friday Night Live events including New Year's Eve lock-in's and boat ride dances. She was promoted to Recreation Coordinator and excelled in this position at Frances Albrier Community Center at San Pablo Park. Becoming a first time grandmother, she saw that while the kids and teenagers had programs targeted towards them, there weren't any programs for the toddlers. An idea was born, cultivated and executed and Tot's Around Town and Pre-K programs were developed for the different Parks & Recreation sites around Berkeley. She wrote a grant to secure funding for these programs which are still thriving to this day. This accomplishment is one that she was truly proud of. She eventually retired in 2019, faithfully dedicating her time providing treats to the dogs in the community and strengthening her relationship with God.

Bertha was a lover of the arts, she enjoyed dancing, plays, movies, and music. Anyone who knows her, knows how much she loved Michael Jackson. She put on a dance extravaganza to raise money to take the B-Town dancers to a Diana Ross concert, where she encouraged everyone to stand up and dance, eventually being noticed, the B-Town dancers were called on stage and asked to perform with Diana Ross. This was a full circle moment for Bertha. Throughout the years, she would coordinate the staff dances for the end of the summer program. Something that everyone looked forward to seeing. With this same spirit, she would teach her granddaughters the dance routines to Michael Jackson's songs.

Bertha leaves to cherish her memory her three daughters, Ayanna Durio, Larez Davenport, and Deonna Sayles. Her son's in-law, Tarik and Darrell Brown. Her two brothers, Homer (Kermit) Gordon, and Paul Brown; one sister in law Cathy Gordon. She was a phenomenal grandmother to her four beloved grandchildren Laila, Aquila, Zahra, and Tarik Muwakkil who affectionately called her Grammy. Her cherished cat Jacob, and a host of family and friends. She was preceded in death by her mother, Wilma Brown and two brothers, Tony and Michael Brown.