



TRANSPORTATION and INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

Thursday, February 20th, 2025, 6:15 pm

North Berkeley Senior Center
1901 Hearst Avenue
Berkeley, CA, 94709

A. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1. Call to order

6:15 pm: Chair Zaro called the meeting to order.

2. Roll call

6:15 pm:

Commissioners Present: Arsh Singh Hothi, Adrian Leung, Liza Lutzker, Julia Moss,
Karen Parolek, Holly Scheider (arrived at 6:33 pm), Kim Walton
(arrived at 6:33 pm), Ren Zaro

Staff Present: Wahid Amiri, Ron Nevels, Noah Budnick, Elmar Kapfer, Uriel
Gonzalez, Selam Mehari, Elaine Hargraves, Charmine Solla
(consultant)

6:17 pm: Eleven members of the public present.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

6:17 pm: Four public comments.

4. Approval of minutes from the January 16th, 2025 meeting

6:24 pm Action: It was Moved / Seconded (Moss / Hothi) to approve the minutes.

6:26 pm: Vote:

Ayes: Hothi, Leung, Lutzker, Moss, Zaro

Noes: None

Abstain: Parolek

Absent: Scheider, Walton

Excused: None

Recused: None

6:26 pm Motion passed 5-0-1-2-0-0

5. Approval and Order of Agenda

6:25 pm: No changes.

6. Update on administration and staff

6:25 pm: Deputy Director Wahid Amiri provided updates and answered Commissioner questions about the Transportation Division hiring two staff to work on the Traffic

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Calming program, an increase from one to two staff for this program, which has accumulated forty-eight requests over the two years the program has not been staffed; Public Works is working with an executive recruiting firm to hire a new Transportation Manager, with the first round of interviews scheduled for March; the Transportation Division is advancing an offer for an Associate Transportation Engineer to work on development review and other transportation engineering tasks.

Engineering Division Manager Ron Nevels provided updates and answered Commissioner questions about the departure of the division's Supervising Civil Engineer who oversaw the Paving program; making an offer to an Associate Civil Engineer for development, inspections, utilities and land use; recruiting a Junior Public Works Engineer for Sewers; the retirement of an Engineering Inspector for Sewers.

6:29 pm: Thirteen members of the public present.

Deputy Director Amiri provided an update and answered Commissioner questions about Measure FF planning.

7. Announcements

7 pm: New commissioners Arsh Singh Hothi and Holly Schieder introduced themselves; Chair Zaro announced that two Berkeleyites were killed in traffic in the last month: Elise Lusk and Michael Burawoy.

B. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

1. Chair and Vice Chair elections

7:04 pm: Commissioners acted on the nominations for Chair and Vice Chair that were approved at the January 16, 2025 Transportation and Infrastructure Commission meeting.

7:06 pm Action: It was Moved / Seconded (Parolek / Walton) to elect Ren Zaro as Commission Chair and Adrian Leung as Vice Chair.

7:06 pm: Vote:

Ayes: Hothi, Leung, Lutzker, Moss, Parolek, Scheider, Walton, Zaro

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Excused: None

Recused: None

7:06 pm Motion passed 8-0-0-0-0-0

2. Informational presentation on Restrooms in the Public Right of Way

7:07 pm: Public Works staff presented on the design and construction of three new public restrooms in the public right of way at the following locations: 1. Telegraph-Channing, 2. Alcatraz-Adeline and 3. San Pablo-University.

7:07 pm: Fifteen members of the public present.

7:20 pm: Commissioners asked clarifying questions and staff responded on the following topics: how UV light deters drug use; maintenance at each location; vandalism and graffiti; whether the City owns or leases the restrooms; replacement units and parts; and, ADA accessibility.

7:31 pm: Members of the public commented on the economic condition of the intersection of University and San Pablo avenues; local business owners, including Metro Lighting, the Berkeley Design Loop and the University Merchants Association, do not want the restroom at University and San Pablo; the City's Homeless Services Panel of Experts supports all three restroom locations; concerns about homeless people making a mess and attacking people at University and San Pablo; not having an unsupervised restroom at University and San Pablo; delaying the decision to install a restroom at University and San Pablo in order to develop a plan for everyone in the community; the unwelcoming nature of University and San Pablo for people coming into Berkeley from the I-80/580 University Avenue exit.

7:45 pm: Commissioners asked questions and made comments on the need for Public Works to liaise with other departments on safety, public health and related issues; the need to coordinate with the Planning and Building Department on the San Pablo Avenue Corridor Specific Plan; the positive benefits of public infrastructure; the need for key performance indicators (KPIs) for the restrooms to measure success and build support for more; learning from other cities that have installed public restrooms in the public right-of-way; need for more City funding for public restrooms; the business vacancy problem in the neighborhood around the University and San Pablo intersection is separate from the homelessness problem; the need for the market to lower rents there; the public outreach process for this restroom project; whether or not there's data showing that public restrooms hurt local economies or increase crime; if the restrooms will limit the amount of time people can spend in them; whether or not the City can do a trial; bus operators needs bathrooms; connecting with Urban Alchemy and BART transit ambassadors about supervision.

3. 2025 Transportation and Infrastructure Commission Work Plan Discussion

8:31 pm: Commissioners reviewed the process for developing past work plans and the 2025 work plan.

8:31 pm: Three members of the public present.

8:37 pm: Members of the public commented on including the Stormwater Management Plan; safety for women; using escorts to prevent crime; the expansiveness of Public

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Works' outreach for the public restrooms in the public right-of-way; sex trafficking takes place "inside," not on the street.

8:41 pm: Commissioners discussed revisiting the paving policy in relation to the new City Council and Measure FF; reviewing the Bike Plan update.

8:44 pm Action: It was Moved / Seconded (Zaro / Parolek) to extend the meeting to 9 pm.

8:44 pm: Vote:

Ayes: Hothi, Leung, Lutzker, Moss, Parolek, Scheider, Walton, Zaro

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Excused: None

Recused: None

8:45 pm Motion passed 8-0-0-0-0

8:45 pm: Commissioners continued discussing the Bike Plan update; adding Commissioner Scheider to the Bike Plan Ad Hoc Subcommittee; making Commissioner Walton the BART liaison.

8:54 pm: Two members of the public present.

C. INFORMATION ITEMS AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

D. COMMUNICATIONS

8:58 pm: Commissioner Parolek reported that she went to the last Commission on Disability meeting.

E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

F. ADJOURNMENT

8:59 pm: Chair Zaro adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting of the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission is scheduled for Thursday, March 27th, 2025 at 6:15 pm, at the North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709.

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Administrative Procedures

From the City of Berkeley Commissioners' Manual, 2019 Edition, page 70 regarding minutes:

Although the Brown Act does not require minutes, except for closed sessions, the Commissioners' Manual does require minutes of commission meetings but not for subcommittee meetings. When required, minutes are limited to action minutes only. Minutes are unofficial until approved by the commission. The minutes are converted to PDF and posted on the City's website.

The secretary shall keep an accurate record of the commission's proceedings and transactions. The secretary shall provide action minutes similar to those provided to the Council by the City Clerk. Action minutes list the date, time, and place of the meetings; the staff in attendance; the commissioners present and absent; and a clear and concise description of final actions taken. Approved motions are indicated by "moved, seconded, and carried" and include a breakdown of the vote. The vote breakdown includes the commissioners voting yes, no, abstain, absent, recused, and reason for recusal. Reasons for making a motion, debate, content of public comments, and audience reaction are not to be included.

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