



**BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL HEALTH, LIFE ENRICHMENT, EQUITY &
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 23, 2025
3:45 PM**

Redwood Room – 2180 Milvia Street, 6th Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704
Teleconference Location - 9175 Lark Street, Elk Grove, CA 95624

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Ben Bartlett, Igor Tregub, and Shoshana O’Keefe
Alternate: Councilmember Terry Taplin

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid model with both in-person attendance and virtual participation. All Committee meetings are recorded.

Use this URL <https://cityofberkeley-info.zoomgov.com/j/1619202556> to access the meeting remotely. To request to speak, use the “raise hand” function in Zoom. To join by phone: Dial **1-669-254-5252** or **1-833-568-8864 (Toll Free)** and Enter **Meeting ID: 161 920 2556**. To provide public comment, press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair. To submit a written communication for the Committee’s consideration and inclusion in the public record, email policycommittee@berkeleyca.gov.

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting, however, if you are feeling sick, please do not attend the meeting in person.

Pursuant to the City Council Rules of Procedure and State Law, the presiding officer may remove, or cause the removal of, an individual for disrupting the meeting. Prior to removing an individual, the presiding officer shall warn the individual that their behavior is disrupting the meeting and that their failure to cease their behavior may result in their removal. The presiding officer may then remove the individual if they do not promptly cease their disruptive behavior. “Disrupting” means engaging in behavior during a meeting of a legislative body that actually disrupts, disturbs, impedes, or renders infeasible the orderly conduct of the meeting and includes, but is not limited to, a failure to comply with reasonable and lawful regulations adopted by a legislative body, or engaging in behavior that constitutes use of force or a true threat of force.

California Government Code Section 84308 (Levine Act) Parties to a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use are required to disclose if they made contributions over \$500 within the prior 12 months to any City employee or officer. Parties and participants with a financial interest are prohibited from making more than \$500 in contributions to a decisionmaker for the 12 months after the final decision is rendered on the proceeding. The above contribution disclosures and restrictions do not apply when the proceeding is competitively bid, or involves a personnel or labor contract. For more information, see Government Code Section 84308.

MINUTES

Roll Call: 3:55 p.m.

Present: Bartlett, Tregub, O'Keefe

Absent: None

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.

1. **Minutes - March 19, 2025**

Action: M/S/C (Bartlett/O'Keefe) to approve the March 19, 2025 minutes.

Vote: All Ayes.

Committee Action Items

The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. The Chair will determine the number of persons interested in speaking on each item. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak for two minutes. If there are more than ten persons interested in speaking, the Chair may limit the public comment for all speakers to one minute per speaker.

Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Committee may continue an item to a future committee meeting, or refer the item to the City Council.

Committee Action Items

2. **Alternative Housing Options for People Experiencing Homelessness**
From: Councilmember O'Keefe (Author), Mayor Ishii (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Blackaby (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor)

Referred: April 1, 2025

Due: September 22, 2025

Recommendation: Refer to the City Manager a request for staff to identify a list of potential locations of City properties (such as parking lots, buildings, and other sites) and private properties (to be leased or acquired) – for the purpose of establishing alternative housing options including but not limited to indoor/outdoor camping areas, safe RV and car park zones, and/or congregate or non-congregate shelters for people experiencing homelessness based on the model used at Grayson Street.

Financial Implications: Staff time

Contact: Shoshana O'Keefe, Councilmember, District 5, (510) 981-7150

Action: 40 speakers. M/S/C (Tregub/Bartlett) to send item to Council with a qualified positive recommendation which include the following proposed amendments:

Refer to the City Manager a request for staff to identify a list of potential locations of City properties and private properties (to be leased or acquired) – for the purpose of establishing 24/7 staffed shelter sites, including but not limited to indoor/outdoor camping areas, safe RV and car park zones, and/or congregate or non-congregate shelters for people experiencing homelessness based on the model used at Grayson Street and other models deemed by the City Manager to be successful.

Further, direct the City Manager to provide a report to the City Council of ongoing efforts to address the homelessness and mental health crisis within Berkeley's jurisdiction, including efforts by non-governmental organizations the city is relying upon, where possible, including the costs thereof, and a gap analysis between the resources required by the City to fully address homelessness and its current financial position.

As part of this report, direct the City Manager:

- 1) Conduct a feasibility and cost analysis of Berkeley's ability to support additional shelter or service sites, including staffing and operational constraints*
 - 2) Include a geographic equity assessment of where homeless services, shelters, and encampments have historically and currently been located in Berkeley;*
 - 3) Identify opportunities to partner with Alameda County and other public agencies to utilize County, other governing jurisdictions – or state-owned land for temporary shelter and services outside of Berkeley's most heavily impacted neighborhoods*
- Direct the City Manager to identify any additional funding opportunities available through 2024 Measure W and affirm the City Council's position that local jurisdictions such as Berkeley that are heavily impacted by the housing and mental health crisis should be considered for an equitable share and speedy receipt of 2024 Proposition 1 funding from Alameda County. Further, direct the City Manager to affirm that the City Council's position is that, to the extent possible, Measure W and any other locally sourced funds should be used to support Berkeley-specific homelessness services needs.*

Committee Action Items

Support the City Manager in collaborating with Alameda County and other neighboring jurisdictions to identify potential sites outside of Berkeley city limits that may be suitable and more cost-effective than additional sites within Berkeley.

Further, affirm support for the following principles:

- 1. County resource investment in homelessness across the region should be commensurate with where homelessness occurs and targeted for racially equitable outcomes*
- 2. Measure W and other funding for homelessness guided by Home Together 2030: Should be a Local City decision on the split between prevention, interim, and permanent housing*
- 3. Local (City level) priority for referrals into interim and permanent solutions (including everything from safe parking to shelter to permanent supportive housing/HomeKey projects), commensurate with local funding.*
- 4. Sustaining Nonprofit Capacity*
 - o The homelessness response system relies heavily on nonprofit partners, many of whom face challenges in retaining staff due to funding constraints, salary limitations, and administrative burdens.*
 - o Measure W funding presents an opportunity to support not just direct services but also nonprofit infrastructure, helping organizations improve long-term sustainability.*
 - o Considerations include ensuring competitive wages, investing in staff retention strategies, and providing operational support.*
 - o Bonus funding consideration could be given to organizations that prioritize workforce sustainability through:*
 - Competitive salaries and benefits for frontline staff.*
 - Efforts to retain high-performing, low-turnover teams.*
 - Investments in administrative capacity that enhance service quality and long-term viability.*

Vote: All Ayes.

Unscheduled Items

These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Committee may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Committee meeting.

3. **Small Business Support Act**

From: Councilmember Bartlett (Author)

Recommendation: That the City Manager and Finance Department amend the City of Berkeley business license process and requirements to promote transparency between the City and small business owners and lower burdensome barriers to entry for new business owners. Such amendments shall include the following:

1. Establish a business license amnesty program
2. Establish a Small Business Support and Retention Emergency Grant
3. Create a Small Business Ombudsman
4. Promote greater transparency about the business licensing process.

These actions will support small business creation and retention. The close relationship between the people of Berkeley, our small businesses, and the City is essential to making our community thrive.

Financial Implications: See Report

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

4. **Discussion Item: Impact Bond**

From: Councilmember Bartlett (Author)

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

5. **Discussion Item: Sutter Health East Bay Expansion**

From: Councilmember Tregub

Contact: Igor Tregub, Councilmember, District 4, (510) 981-7140

6. **Discussion Item: Specialized Care Unit**

From: Councilmember Bartlett

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

7. **Discussion Item: Mental Health Services in Berkeley**

From: Councilmember Bartlett

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

Items for Future Agendas

- None

Adjournment

Action: M/S/C (O'Keefe/Bartlett) to adjourn the meeting

Vote: All Ayes.

Adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct record of the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee meeting held on April 23, 2025.

Wendy Sorensen, Assistant City Clerk

Communications

Communications submitted to City Council Policy Committees are on file in the City Clerk Department at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley, CA, and are available upon request by contacting the City Clerk Department at (510) 981-6908 or policycommittee@berkeleyca.gov.