

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

**Wednesday, February 11, 2026
2:00 PM**

Cypress Room – 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704

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 and virtual attendance. Attend this meeting remotely using [Zoom](#). 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: 161 108 5043**. 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. All Committee meetings are recorded.

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: 2:06 p.m.

Present: O'Keefe, Taplin (for Bartlett), Tregub

Councilmember Taplin participated in the meeting remotely under the "just cause" exception in the Brown Act due to illness.

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.

1. **Minutes - January 28, 2026**

Action: M/S/C (O'Keefe/Tregub) to approve the January 28, 2026 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. Large Vehicle Parking Regulations in the Public Right-of-Way

From: Councilmember Taplin (Author)

Referred: August 25, 2025

Due: February 23, 2026

Recommendation: That the City Council:

1. Refer to the City Attorney and City Manager Amendments to the Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) 12.98 to authorize the abatement of abandoned vehicles creating public health and safety nuisances in the public right-of-way, clarify the definition of "abandoned" vehicle, and increase the City Manager's discretion in the establishment of abatement timelines
2. Refer to the City Manager and City Attorney the study of recently adopted legislation across the nine-county Bay Area regarding the management of long-term large vehicle parking in the public right-of-way. Based on this study, staff shall return to the City Council with draft policy and enforcement recommendations that are:
 - Regionally consistent and legally defensible;
 - Aligned with the City of Berkeley's environmental, housing, and transportation priorities; and
 - Operationally feasible given available outreach, enforcement, and site capacity capacity.
3. As part of this policy development process, the City Council requests that the City Manager and City Attorney examine the feasibility of geographically targeted parking restrictions in high-sensitivity areas, including but not limited to:
 - Manufacturing and industrial zones designated by an "M" zoning classification; and
 - Environmentally sensitive water resources, including but not limited to open lagoons, riparian corridors, and critical stormwater infrastructure,as well as examine to what extent, given the city's financial constraints and operational capacity, the city may enhance the impact and scale of its coordinated alternative housing initiatives via participation in a county-wide RV parking program or joining a comparable program maintained in a neighboring jurisdiction.
4. Additionally, the City Council requests that the City Attorney and City Manager provide clarity and guidance on how the city's encampment resolution policy intersects with the Berkeley Municipal Code in the absence of shelter availability.
5. Further that the City Council authorizes the City Manager to waive non-voter-approved purchasing and bid requirements and waive the City Manager's expenditure authority up to \$250,000 to enter into contracts pursuant to BMC 12.98.040(A).

(This item contains revised material)

Financial Implications: See report.

Contact: Terry Taplin, Councilmember, District 2, (510) 981-7120

Action: 6 speakers. M/S/C (O'Keefe/Taplin) to send item to Council with a qualified positive recommendation to more clearly articulate guidance on the intersection of the proposed amendments with applicable State law.

Vote: All Ayes.

Committee Action Items

3. Entertainment Zone Ordinance

From: Councilmember Taplin (Author), Councilmember Kesarwani (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Blackaby (Co-Sponsor)

Referred: January 5, 2026

Due: June 8 2026

Recommendation: Refer for drafting to the City Attorney an ordinance enabling entertainment zones in Berkeley:

Refer to the City Manager for the initiation of a merchant stakeholder engagement process and develop entertainment zone management plans for potential zones in the vicinity of the following locations and organizational leads:

1. Downtown Downtown Business Association
2. Gilman Gilman District Merchants Association
3. South Side Telegraph Business Improvement District
4. San Pablo University Avenue Association

Financial Implications: See report

Contact: Terry Taplin, Councilmember, District 2, (510) 981-7120

Action: 0 speakers. M/S/C (Tregub/O'Keefe) to send item to Council with a qualified positive recommendation to encourage staff discretion in determining additional zones for entertainment.

Vote: All Ayes.

Committee Action Items

4. Citywide Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence

From: Councilmember O'Keefe (Author), Councilmember Blackaby (Co-Sponsor)

Referred: January 5, 2026

Due: June 8, 2026

Recommendation: Refer to the City Manager to develop official, citywide guidelines for the secure, ethical, and effective use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools by City of Berkeley employees. The policy should align with Berkeley's values, promote innovation and progress, and safeguard privacy and public trust.

The City Manager should review policies adopted by other California cities and develop Berkeley-specific principles to guide staff usage of AI. The following principles should form the foundation of Berkeley's policy:

1. Create safeguards against introduction of bias through use of AI systems
2. Protect data privacy and ensure cybersecurity compliance
3. Maintain human oversight and accountability
4. Explore opportunities to integrate AI into operations management
5. Foster collaboration and cross-departmental exchange of AI knowledge
6. Ensure transparency and compliance with Public Records Laws
7. Periodic review and improvement

Developing a clear and responsible AI policy will help the City of Berkeley harness emerging technologies to better serve the community while upholding equity, integrity, and public confidence in city operations and services.

Financial Implications: Staff time

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

Action: 0 speakers. M/S/C (Taplin/Tregub) to send item to Council with a positive recommendation.

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.

5. Discussion Item: Children's Hospital of Oakland Labor Matter

From: Councilmember Tregub

Financial Implications:

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

Unscheduled Items

- 6. Discussion Item: 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
- 7. Discussion Item: Impact Bond**
From: Councilmember Bartlett (Author)
Financial Implications: See Report
Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130
- 8. Discussion Item: Sutter Health East Bay Expansion**
From: Councilmember Tregub
Financial Implications:
Contact: Igor Tregub, Councilmember, District 4, (510) 981-7140
- 9. Discussion Item: Specialized Care Unit**
From: Councilmember Bartlett
Financial Implications:
Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130
- 10. Discussion Item: Mental Health Services in Berkeley**
From: Councilmember Bartlett
Financial Implications: See Report
Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130
- 11. Discussion Item: Alternative Housing Options Report**
From: Councilmember O'Keefe
Financial Implications: See Report
Contact: Shoshana O'Keefe, Councilmember, District 5, (510) 981-7150

Items for Future Agendas

- None

Adjournment

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

Vote: All Ayes.

Adjourned at 3:31 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 February 11, 2026.

Keith Nesbit, 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.