



Planning Commission

1                   **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

2   **March 18, 2026**

3    The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

4    **Location:** North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

5    **1. ROLL CALL:**

6       **Commissioners Present:** Emily Marthinsen, Savlan Hauser (Arrived 6:37), Jeff Vincent,  
7       Blaine Merker, Christina Oatfield, Charles Kahn, Angela Wangm, Alfred Twu, Darrell Owens,  
8       **Commissioners Absent:** None.

9       **Staff Present:** Secretary Justin Horner, Clerk Faye Messner, Ashley James

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11   **2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

12    The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of  
13    xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-  
14    chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the  
15    sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great  
16    importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin  
17    our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the  
18    documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound,  
19    and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's  
20    residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen  
21    land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating  
22    the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also  
23    recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay  
24    communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan  
25    Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land  
26    acknowledgement.

27   **3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: 2**

28   **4. ORDER OF AGENDA:** No change

29   **5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:**

- 30    • None.

31  
32   **6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS**

- 33    • None

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35   **7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 36 • Commissioner Merker announced his participation in the Telegraph Avenue BID Working  
37 Group and offered to hear recommendations from the Commissioners.

38

## 39 **8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### 40 • **Upcoming PC Meeting Items:**

#### 41 • **April 15**

- 42 1. SB 79 and AB 893  
43 2. Objective Design Standards

#### 44 • **May**

- 45 1. Corridors Rezoning

#### 46 • **June**

- 47 1. San Pablo Specific Plan Public Hearing  
48 2. Safety/Environmental Justice Elements

49

### 50 • **Upcoming City Council Items:**

- 51 • April 14: Landmarks Preservation Ordinance Amendments  
52 • April 28: SLTE 2026, 5<sup>th</sup> Street Rezoning

## 53 **9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

54 Motion/Second (Vincent/Hauser) to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from  
55 the March 4, 2026.

56

57 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
58 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

59

## 60 **10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 61 **A. Public Hearing: State Law and Technical Edits 2026**

62 Principal Planner Justin Horner presented State Law and Technical edits to the Zoning  
63 Ordinance for 2026. Commissioners took public comments, asked questions and made  
64 comments including but not limited to: JADU short term rental limitations and updates to the  
65 Middle Housing zoning standards.

66 Motion/Second (Merker/Kahn) to close the public hearing.

67

68 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
69 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

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71 Motion/Second (Kahn/Vincent) to recommend staff's proposed Zoning Ordinance edits to City  
72 Council for adoption.

73

74 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
75 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

76 **Public Comments: 2**

77 **B. San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan**

78 Senior Planner Ashley James presented proposed revisions for Commission input to the Public  
79 Review Draft San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan as part of the process to create a Final Draft,  
80 which the Commission will make a recommendation on at their June meeting. The  
81 Commissioners took public comment, asked questions and made comments including but not  
82 limited to: a voluntary commercial in lieu fee program, a local density bonus program, maximum  
83 height options, ensuring the importance of commercial vitality in the nodes, depth of commercial  
84 spaces in the nodes, data relating to commercial vacancy in West Berkeley, the importance of  
85 public open space and incentives for creating them on San Pablo Avenue, Business  
86 Improvement Districts, and the need to study and encourage increased multi-modal  
87 transportation options along the corridor.

88 **Public Comments: 9**

89 **11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

90 **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

91  
92 **13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:**

- 93 • Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission: Wednesday April 15, 2026 at 6:30pm.

94 **14. ADJOURN**

95 Motions/Second (Hauser/Merker) to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm.

96  
97 Ayes: Marthinsen, Hauser, Vincent, Twu, Owens, Wang, Kahn, Oatfield and Merker. Noes:  
98 None. Abstain: None. Absent: (9-0-0-0). Motion passed.

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100 **Members of the public in attendance: 20 in person, 11 on Zoom**

101 **Public Speakers: 10**

102 **Length of the meeting: 2 hours 35 min**