



Planning Commission

FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING March 18, 2026

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

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

1. ROLL CALL:

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

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

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

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

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

5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

- None.

6. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIASON COMMENTS

- None

7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Upcoming PC Meeting Items:**

- **April 15**

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

- **May**

- 1. Corridors Rezoning

- **June**

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

- **Upcoming City Council Items:**

- April 14: Landmarks Preservation Ordinance Amendments
 - April 28: SLTE 2026, 5th Street Rezoning

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

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

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

10. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Public Hearing: State Law and Technical Edits 2026

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

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

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

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

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

Public Comments: 2

B. San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

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

Public Comments: 9

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

12. CORRESPONDENCE

13. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:

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

14. ADJOURN

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

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

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

Public Speakers: 10

Length of the meeting: 2 hours 35 min



Justin Horner, Planning Commission Secretary