Planning Commission

FINAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

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

1. **ROLL CALL:**
   Commissioners Present: Savlan Hauser, Debra Sanderson (alternate), Benjamin Bechtolsheim, Alfred Twu, Christine Oatfield, Charles Kahn, Carole Marasovic (alternate) (arrived 6:55), Angela Wang, Alfred Twu.

   Commissioners Absent: Chair Emily Marthinsen

   Staff Present: Secretary Justin Horner, Planning and Development Deputy Director Alene Pearson, Principal Planner Alisa Shen, and Lisa Gordon; Clerk: Branka Tatarevic

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 (Cho-chen-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. **ORDER OF AGENDA:** No change.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:** 2 speakers

5. **CHAIRPERSON REPORT:**

6. **AD HOC SUBCOMMITTES AND LIASON COMMENTS:** None

7. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

8. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Upcoming PC Meeting Items:

- **Next meeting: November 4. Agenda item(s) anticipated at this time:**
  - Discussion: Efficiency Units referral (tentative)
  - Public Hearing: M-RD Change (Vehicle Repair and Service)
- **December 2. Agenda item(s) anticipated at this time:**
  - Public Hearing: 1130 Oxford St. Tentative Tract Map
  - Public Hearing: AB 812 / Artists' Housing
  - 2027 Planning Commission Calendar
- **January. Agenda item(s) anticipated at this time:**
  - Public Hearing: Safety and Environmental Justice Elements
  - Public Hearing: 1130 Oxford St. Tentative Tract Map

b. City Council Meeting Items:

- **September 29, 2026:**
  - Public Hearing: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan
- **October 13, 2026:**
  - Public Hearing: Undergrounding
- **November 17, 2026:**
  - Public Hearing: Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion/Second (Kahn/Oatfield) to approve the revised Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from the September 16, 2026. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

9. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Public Hearing: Amendments for Hot Tubs, Jacuzzis, and Spas

Principal Planner Justin Horner presented proposed amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning) to update permit requirements for hot tubs, Jacuzzis, and spas. The Commission held a public hearing, asked clarifying questions, and provided comments on topics including, but not limited to, hot tub safety, distinctions among discretionary permit types, and the characteristics of the ES-R zoning district.

Motion/Second (Twu /Kahn) to close the public hearing for item 10A. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Motion/Second (Twu/Kahn) to recommend to the City Council to adopt proposed amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning) Section 23.304.070(D) to update permit requirements for Hot Tubs, Jacuzzis, and Spas. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Public Comments: Two

B. Public Hearing: ADUs - Amendments to BMC to Conform to State Law

Associate Planner Branka Tatarevic presented proposed amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning) to update the City's accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) regulations for consistency with state law and California Department of Housing and Community Development requirements. The Commission held a public hearing, asked clarifying questions, and provided comments on topics including, but not limited to, ADU size limits within the Hillside Overlay, distinctions between state and local ADU standards, and fire, seismic, and landslide safety.

Motion/Second (Oatfield /Kahn) to close the public hearing for item 10B. Ayes:Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Motion/Second (Twu/Kahn) to recommend to the City Council to adopt proposed amendments to BMC Title 23 (Zoning) to update the City's accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) regulations for consistency with state law and California Department of Housing and Community Development requirements.. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Public Comments: Two

C. Report: 600 Bancroft Way Research and Development Project and Development Agreement

Contract Planner Lisa Gordon presented an informational report on a potential development agreement that may come before Planning Commission in 2027. The developer that is pursuing the development agreement presented on a proposed research and development project at 600 Bancroft Way that would be facilitated by the Development Agreement. The Commission received public comment, asked clarifying questions, and provided preliminary feedback on

topics including, but not limited to, the purpose and terms of the development agreement, the relationship between proposed City-property concessions and public benefits, building height and massing, parking and transportation impacts, integration with Aquatic Park and Dreamland for Kids playground, public access and amenities, environmental considerations, and the need for additional information regarding proposed uses and future tenants. No formal action was taken.

Public Comments: Four.

D. Planning Commission Subcommittee Report Ashby BART Objective Design Standards (ODS)

The Planning Commission subcommittee presented additional recommendations for the Ashby BART West Lot Objective Design Standards (ODS), focusing on landscaping, mature trees, seating, children's play space, pedestrian-oriented emergency-access areas, and publicly accessible open space. The Commission received public comment, and the commissioners asked subcommittee members Commissioners Twu and Wang clarifying questions. The third subcommittee member, Commissioner Merker, was absent. The Commission discussed topics including, but not limited to, noise mitigation, minimum green-space requirements, and community input. Principal Planner Alisa Shen explained that the recommendations must be specific, objective, legally enforceable, and consistent with the City-BART Exchange Agreement and required development capacity.

Motion/Second (Kahn/ Twu) to forward the subcommittee letter to the City Council as recommendations of the full Planning Commission, and request that staff, in consultation with the City Attorney's Office and relevant City departments, review recommendations and make any necessary revisions to ensure they qualify as objective design standards, are written in objective terms, and are consistent with the City-BART Exchange Agreement. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Public Comments: 5

11. CORRESPONDENCE

12. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:

- Wednesday November 4, 2026

13. ADJOURN

Motion/Second (Kahn/Twu) to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm. Ayes: Hauser, Sanderson, Bechtolsheim, Marasovic, Oatfield, Kahn, Twu, Wang. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Marthinsen (8-0-0-1). Motion passed.

Members of the public in attendance: 12 in person, 6 on Zoom
Length of the meeting: 2 hours 46 min



Justin Horner, Planning Commission Secretary