



□□
□□

PARKS, RECREATION, AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting

Wednesday, June 10, 2026, 7:00 P.M.
Frances Albrier Community Center – auditorium
2800 Park St, Berkeley, CA 94702

Minutes- Draft

1. **Call to Order** (chair): 7:10pm.
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary). Present: Abshez; Muszynski; Stewart; Absent: Rybczynski; Nash (LOA); Philip (LOA); Samelson (LOA).
3. **City of Berkeley Land Acknowledgement**
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda.** (chair) (M/S/C: Muszynski/Stewart/U) Ayes: Stewart; Muszynski; Abshez; Noes: none; Absent: Rybczynski; Nash (LOA); Philip (LOA); Samelson (LOA).
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for Wednesday, April 8, 2026 (chair).* (M/S/C: Muszynski/Stewart/U) Ayes: Stewart; Muszynski; Abshez; Noes: none; Absent: Rybczynski; Nash (LOA); Philip (LOA); Samelson (LOA).
6. **Public Comment** (2 min each). a) Kelly Hammargren, Savannah Sparrows; b) Mary Carleton, median native garden; c) Korean War Memorial: 1) Christina Franco, 2) Judy Zia, 3) Larry Polos, 4) Patsy Espinoza, 5) Clementine Duror; 6) Henry Vega; d) Edward Kazniski, annual reports for nonprofits; f) Erin Diehm, Santa Fe Park Coast Live Oak; g) Martin Nicolaus, air quality at park; h) Paul Kamen, Pier-Ferry MOU; i) Laurel H, Civic events, drones; j) Jose Don, Golden Gate Fields.
7. **Chair's Report/Discussion.** No update.
8. **Director's Report:** Update on special events, community engagement, capital and maintenance projects, forestry, recreation, budget, fees (Ferris). Update was provided.
9. **Discussion/Action:** Potential New Name for former Cesar Chavez Park per Council referral to PRW Commission (Ferris).* Presentation: Natasha Beery, Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Santiago Casal, Lupe Gallegos-Diaz, Alexis Adorador. Public Comment: a) Martin Nicolaus. Commission M/S/C to bring item back in July, hold a public hearing, and forward a recommendation to Council (Muszynski/Abshez/U) Ayes: Stewart; Muszynski; Abshez; Noes: none; Absent: Rybczynski; Nash (LOA); Philip (LOA); Samelson (LOA).
10. **Discussion:** Aquatic Park - Update on Union Pacific Railroad / ACTC Project at Aquatic Park and City plans for restoration (Ferris). Update was provided by Ian Kesterson. Public Comment: a) Erin Diehm; b) Kelly Hammargren.
11. **Presentation:** Aquatic Park - Dreamland and Bioretention Projects (Ferris). Presentations were provided by Csilla Kenny and Ricardo Salcedo.
12. **Presentation/Commission Feedback:** Aquatic Park - 600 Bancroft Development Project (Woodstock, Inc). Presentation and feedback were provided. Public Comment: a) Kelly Hammargren; b) Erin Diehm; c) Paul Kamen; d) Laurel H.
13. **Discussion/Action:** Rename the Gymnasium at Martin Luther King, Jr. (Young Adult Project (YAP) Community Center after Philip Harper-Cotton (Ferris). Item was held over to July.
14. **Discussion/Action:** Draft Pier-Ferry Parking Management Plan at the Berkeley Marina (McNulty).* Item was held over to July.
15. **Discussion/Action:** Update on PRW FY2027-28 Proposed Budget and CIP Plan (Ferris). Update was provided.
16. **Discussion/Action:** Update from Commission Subcommittee studying the need for increased parks facilities in Berkeley's Southeast Quadrant (Abshez). Item was

held over to July.

17. Information Reports.

18. Recent PRW Council Reports.*

19. Future Agenda Items: Pier-Ferry Project; Workplan; Nexus Study; Public Art in Aq Park; Fitness Courts Project.

20. Communications.* LatinosUnidos, Korean War Monument, 05-25-2026.

21. Next PRW Commission meeting: Wed, July 8, 2026 (Regular).

22. Adjournment. 10:00pm.

* document is attached to agenda packet and on the commission website.

** document will be provided at the meeting.

- Commissioners in attendance: 3 of 4 appointed
- Public in attendance: 32
- Public speakers: 22

No# 1 Choice



Welcome! ¡Bienvenidos!

Sí Se Puede Park

Berkeley, CA

Handout - PRW Commission
06-10-2026
[From: Mary Carleton]

Letter to the Berkeley Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

In support of the proposed Sacramento St. median garden listed in the GO Bond Measure planned for the November ballot, my neighbors and I are creating and maintaining a demonstration native plant garden on the southern section of the median between Allston Way and Bancroft Way.

We recognize that the bond measure median garden projects are in the planning stage, and hope that our efforts will contribute to the plan. We intend our experiment to be congruent with city policy, address safety concerns for pedestrians & traffic, enhance the local environment & neighbourhood, and demonstrate efficient use of resources.

We hope to demonstrate that soil replacement will not be required in **all** areas listed in the bond measure, because alternate, less expensive, methods of removing weed seeds are effective.

We also hope to demonstrate that irrigation will not always be needed, where neighbors are available with watering carts to help get new perennial plants established. Irrigation of native annuals will not be needed, if the seeding is timed to the rainy season.

Description of our demonstration neighborhood median garden plan:

A) Safety:

We consider visual safety for drivers on Sacramento Street, and neighbor safety, to be vital.

- 1) Any plantings within 50 feet of Bancroft Way will conform to the "Adopt a Spot" guidelines, to maintain good visibility of the pedestrian crosswalk.
- 2) In addition, we believe it is important that drivers not be startled or distracted by people on the median close to the curb. Therefore we will do the following to maintain safety of the people working on the garden experiment, and pedestrians walking through the garden:
 - a) Gentle berms next to the curb, to delineate a "no go" area, so drivers are not worried by people standing or walking near the curb. (These will also help with rain retention, see item C.)
 - b) Dense low plantings that cover the first 5 feet next to the curb (on the berms). These can shade out weeds and require minimal upkeep. They will also be a visual barrier to pedestrians who cross the median mid-block, directing them to the pedestrian crossing at Bancroft Way.
 - c) Weeding of the area within 5' of the curb can be done with long handle hoes..

d) Wearing reflective safety vests will alert drivers to the presence of neighbors tending the garden, so absent minded drivers are not startled by movement by someone whose clothing blended into the background.

B) Rainwater retention/storm drain flow reduction:

The median is currently crowned, so heavy rainfall drains to the street. We will gently reshape the ground in this area to provide a shallow central swale. Specifically we will create gentle berms near the curbs with soil from inner areas of the median. The swale will retain rainfall, allowing more to soak deep into the ground, reducing the load on the local storm drains, and providing more water to median trees and other plants.

C) Tree protection, and small trash removal is more easily done by hand weeders:

Volunteers will be on foot, and often kneeling, so they can easily remove lots of small (tiny) trash that City gardeners do not have time for..

Volunteers can also weed next to trees, without danger of scarring the bark. Cutting into the bark of trees can shorten the life of a tree.

D) Leaves & Logs - trash to treasure:

Autumn leaves are currently an expensive nuisance. They can instead be a valuable resource as mulch for the median. We will collect leaves from the neighborhood and use them to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

Similarly, tree limbs and trunks will be used to delineate pathways and no-go areas, further reinforcing the focus on staying well away from the traffic.

We believe that the City should not incur any additional expense from this neighborhood experiment. Therefore we are prepared to remove any wood that we place on the median, **before** the City-led project begins.

Since no mowing will be needed in the smallish demonstration area, there will be no obstruction for City workers. We do not want to create any difficulty for any City workers, who we very much appreciate!

We look forward to keeping the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department staff informed, with pictures and information about our activities.

Mary Carleton

510-703-9553 2220 Sacramento St. Unit B, Berkeley, CA 94702