

Office of the City Manager

REVISED AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 3

Meeting Date: **October 27, 2020**

Item Number: **24**

Item Description: **Referral Response: Lessons Learned in Organizational Management During Crisis and COVID-19 Response 2020 Summary Report**

Submitted by: **Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager**

Footnote 13 on page 36 of the attachment 1, "COVID-19 Response 2020 Summary Report" has been revised to read:

“Staff Mobilized” is the number of employees that reported working at least one hour on COVID response between January and the end of July 2020. For City Auditor, Library, and Rent Stabilization Board, employees include elected officials.



**COVID-19
RESPONSE**

2020 Summary Report

October 2020 | Prepared by the Emergency Operations Center



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INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the City of Berkeley has been monitoring and responding to COVID-19. Unlike many other emergencies that the City has encountered, the COVID-19 pandemic is unique due to its lengthy and on-going nature, as well as the new practices the City has adopted to respond to the crisis.

Purpose

Instead of a typical “after-action report” detailing lessons learned for emergency response professionals, this document has a broader scope. It not only examines what the City did, why it did it, and how this can influence future emergency responses, but it also serves as a record for the community of this extraordinary event and the City’s extraordinary response. My hope is this will help people understand the arc of the City’s response and guide leadership and decision-making moving forward.

Report Dedication

I would like to extend my gratitude, for early and ongoing support throughout this pandemic, to our City Council:

Mayor Jesse Arreguín

Vice Mayor Sophie Hahn, District 5

Rashi Kesarwani, District 1

Cheryl Davila, District 2

Ben Bartlett, District 3

Kate Harrison, District 4

Susan Wengraf, District 6

Rigel Robinson, District 7

Lori Droste, District 8

Berkeley’s City Council has shown vision and leadership from the beginning of the emergency, including creating the Berkeley Relief Fund to provide gap funding to our local businesses and arts organizations, providing crucial protections to renters, and seeking to employ special strategies to help our most vulnerable populations (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, the elderly, and people with disabilities). Many City Council members have helped communicate what the City is doing in terms of our COVID-19 response and continue to keep our community updated with regular newsletters. The Mayor launched a series of

regular virtual town halls to share information and provide a forum for the community to hear from our leadership, including our Health Officer. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the sacrifice, flexibility, and hard work of our City staff, in particular our first responders and essential service workers who from the start of the pandemic were on the ground making a difference. First responders, both police and fire, have continued to respond to calls and maintain critical services to keep our community safe. Essential service workers continued to maintain our infrastructure and facilities and collect refuse and recycling. Finally, I would like to thank all of the people both within the City's Logistics operations and the generous volunteers and members of our community who donated their time and resources, including over 300 individual donations (e.g., homemade face coverings, N-95s, hand sanitizer, etc), ensuring that much needed supplies were quickly procured and rapidly distributed to those most in need.

Dee Williams-Ridley
City Manager
October 12, 2020

BERKELEY READY

Overview

Two units in the City take the lead in preparing our organization and the community for disaster response, and in particular pandemic response: the Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services (OES), and the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Unit of the Department of Health, Housing and Community Services.

What is the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)?

The EOC is a coordination and support structure helping City departments during an emergency by:

- Providing a flexible organization structure to adapt to quickly changing needs,
- Supporting decision-making and resource management, and
- Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information.

OES coordinates a suite of programs to build disaster resilience in the whole Berkeley community. These programs support personal preparedness, community connections, and government efforts that will help Berkeley respond to and recover from our next earthquake, fire, or other disaster. For our organization, this includes response plan development and other activities to ensure that the City's Disaster Service Workers are ready to serve in emergencies. OES staff provide key leadership, support and guidance when the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. They also coordinate training and exercise opportunities for City employees to learn skills and test plans.

Berkeley Ready

Under the Berkeley Ready program, OES and PHEP staff work together to engage with the community on disaster readiness. Berkeley Ready coordinates multiple disaster readiness efforts via community partner organizations in the Community Resilience Center (CRC) program, multi-family apartment complexes in the Apartment Resilience Center (ARC) program, business districts, childcare centers, and individuals through their neighborhood groups.

Berkeley Ready fosters strong community partnerships with twelve Community Resilience Centers (CRCs), to identify needs during a disaster as well as provide up to date information for these organizations to disseminate to their communities. CRCs include faith-based, youth

advocacy, ecological, and disability activist organizations. ARCs are a similar community hub to prepare apartment complexes for disasters, determine disaster mitigation measures building-wide, and foster strong community connections among residents. Currently, there are six ARCs, all of which are Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) homes. The CRCs, ARCs, and neighborhood groups receive multiple types of disaster preparedness trainings ranging from basic preparedness to preparedness for specific disasters, such as wildfires. Often, trainings are coordinated through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program for groups who are interested in specific disaster response activities.

Emergency Operations Plan

City Council's adoption in April 2017 of the [2016 Emergency Operations Plan \(EOP\)](#) established the City of Berkeley Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as a body for coordination and support of departments and policymakers when responding to an emergency. The EOP's clear response framework and authorities provide a structural basis for Berkeley's COVID-19 response.

The EOP enhances the City's capabilities to respond to emergencies and disasters by encouraging quick, collaborative, cross-departmental responses to smaller scale incidents as well as strengthening department-specific operations. For example, the EOP lowered the threshold for EOC activations to include Situation Monitoring, and this change has been resoundingly positive. In late 2017, the Fire Chief began to request activation of the EOC whenever two or more departments were working on the same incident. This has resulted in more frequent EOC activations at lower levels, providing the opportunity to use, test, and constantly improve the EOC capability for a wide variety of events, including civil unrest, disease outbreak, and, more recently, Public Safety Power Shutoff and Fire Weather Monitoring. These lower-level activations position the organization to quickly mobilize and staff the EOC and provide support for incidents that grow unexpectedly. Two departments in particular, Public Works and Health, Housing & Community Services, have very well-established Department Operations Centers (DOCs)¹ that coordinate with the EOC in preparedness (including training and exercise) as well as emergency activations.

¹ A Department Operations Center (DOC) is a response organization that a department may choose to activate in an emergency in order to maintain essential functions, share status of staff and resources, and contribute to a citywide response.

Emergency Operations Center

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) provides coordination and structure during an emergency, by bringing together staff expertise from across departments in a flexible and responsive organization structure to gather and analyze information and to support decision-making and resource management. All City employees serve as Disaster Service Workers which means that during an emergency, they must stay at work until released, if not at work must return to work unless instructed otherwise, and may have to perform tasks (e.g., in the EOC) that differ from their “normal” job. In the EOC many employees perform work analogous to their typical role, such as a City Attorney serving as a Legal Officer or the Public Information Officer leading the Joint Information Center. Others may be serving in roles that do not directly correspond to their regular work, such as Library Staff assisting with Food and Supply Distribution. An organization chart of the EOC from earlier this year is depicted on the following page (Figure 1 EOC Organization Chart, May 2020). Typically, the EOC consists of five major sections:

- **Management** is responsible for managing the workflow of the EOC, coordinating with outside agency representatives (e.g., Berkeley Unified School District, Alameda County, University of California), monitoring the safety of EOC activities, advising on legal matters, representing the EOC to the City Manager, and coordinating all external-facing communications via the **Joint Information Center (JIC)**. The JIC’s central role in communications focuses on information gathering and coordination, information dissemination, and direct response to queries.
- **Operations Support** holds different responsibilities depending on the nature of the emergency. With COVID-19, much of Operations Support is staffed with public health professionals and is focused on things like medical health, disease containment, and mass care.

Logistics: Behind the Scenes

The Logistics Section helps implement various activities of the EOC including quickly procuring and distributing needed items as well as providing transportation resources. During the response to COVID-19, some of this work included:

20+ supply pickups from Alameda County for healthcare providers and front-line staff.

Site support for multiple testing sites and respite sites.

Facilitating transport of vulnerable persons experiencing homelessness from shelters to the County’s Safer Ground and Operation Comfort programs.

- **Logistics** handles coordination and supports implementation of EOC objectives, for example, by quickly identifying and procuring resources.
- **Finance** is charged with tracking and reporting on the costs of response activities and coordinates the documentation required for cost recovery.
- **Plans and Intelligence** acts as the project managers for the emergency response, serves as a conduit to the departments, collects information, and produces Situation Reports. Situation Reports (also commonly referred to as Sit-Stats) document what the EOC has accomplished in a given period and provide for all branches a more detailed picture of operational activities and progress on objectives. For the COVID-19 response, to date, over 100 Situation Reports have been produced.

The work of the EOC also involves multiple collaborations with other Bay Area jurisdictions, and the State, as well as with U.C. Berkeley. For example, there are weekly meetings with U.C. Berkeley's Department of Emergency Management to share updates and discuss Health Officer Orders. Another example is "First 8". First 8 is a collaborative group consisting of U.C. Berkeley student leaders and staff, and City representatives from the City Manager's Office, Fire Department and Police Department. Traditionally, First 8 meets at the beginning of each fall semester to discuss any off campus issues and provide supportive materials to help students make safe and healthy decisions on and off campus. This year, because of the pandemic, the EOC and the 311 Customer Service joined with First 8 to discuss compliance with Health Officer Orders and answer questions about COVID-19 policies and best practices.

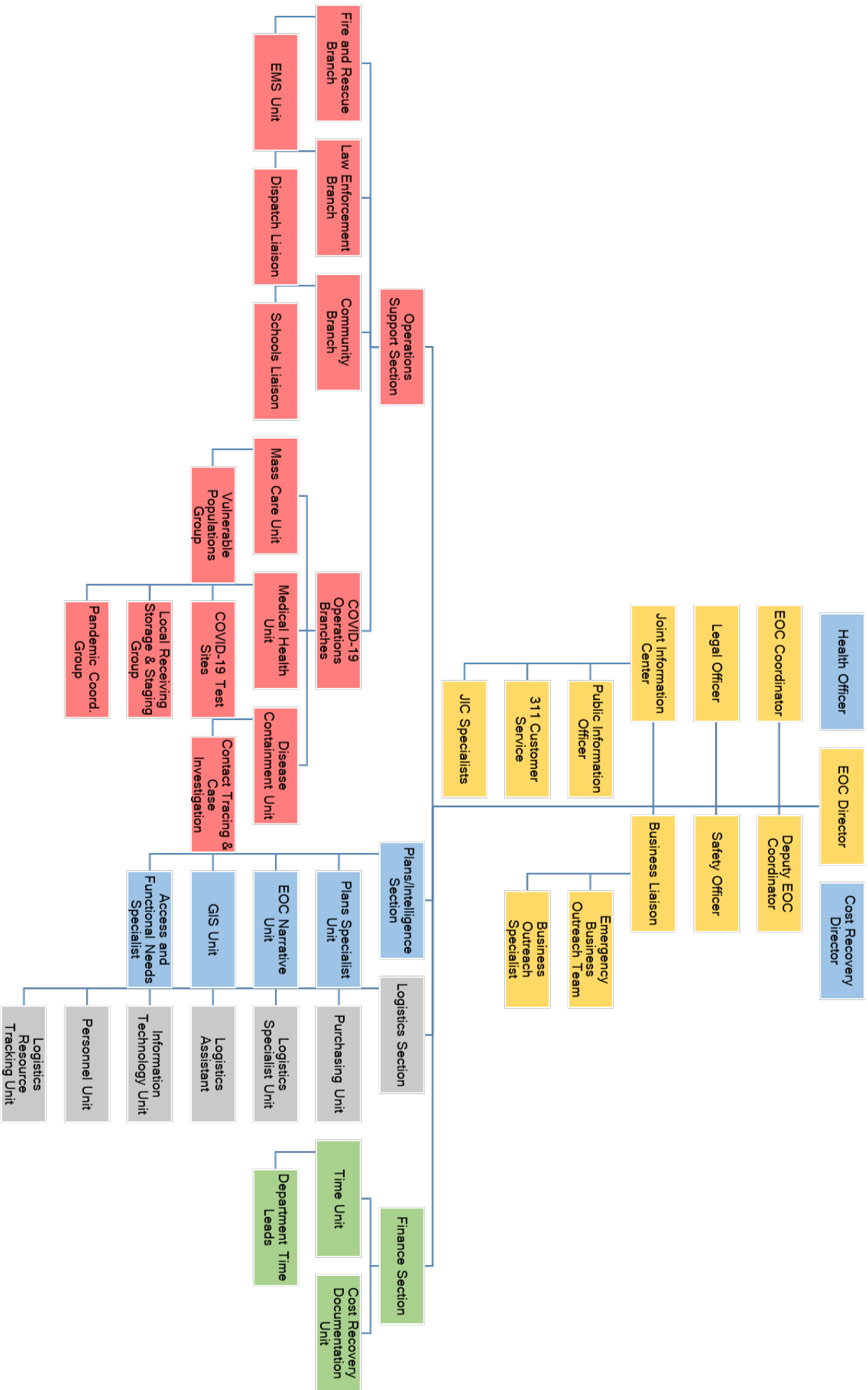


Figure 1 EOC Organization Chart, May 2020

Exercises, Trainings and Activations

Since its adoption, the City has used the EOP to perform exercises and trainings, and ultimately, engage in EOC/DOC activations as outlined below. By continuously modeling different scenarios, engaging in rigorous trainings, and participating in a variety of EOC activations, the City was well prepared to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City performed 27 EOC/DOC exercises in the two years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic as shown in the table below.

| EXERCISES | |
|---|--|
| Title | Date(s) |
| Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (LBNL) Emergency Management Team Exercise | 07/25/19 08/21/19 |
| Shelter Drill (Urban Shield) | 08/30/18 |
| EOC Earthquake Exercise (Urban Shield) | 09/06/18 |
| EOC Activation Training (Urban Shield) | 09/08/18 |
| Haywired: Berkeley Fire Department Initial Response | 04/15/18 04/16/18 04/18/18 |
| Wildfire Evacuation Exercise | 07/11/19 08/04/19 08/11/19 08/25/19 |
| Moraga Country Club Evacuation Exercise | 12/15/18 |
| HHCS DOC- Chevron Point of Distribution (POD) Exercise with Contra Costa County | 6/4/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Pick List Drill (Resupply POD boxes) | 6/6/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Tabletop Exercise (TTX) Team A & B | 6/13/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Local Receiving, Storage, and Staging (LRSS) Site Activation Drill | 6/29/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Shelter Drill (Med/Health Side) | 8/30/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Urban Shield Yellow Command* | 9/6/2018 |

| EXERCISES | |
|---|------------|
| Title | Date(s) |
| HHCS DOC-Alameda County Statewide Medical and Health Exercise (SWMHE) TTX Exercise | 10/2/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Marin County POD Exercise | 10/11/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- Pick List Drill (gather POD supplies) | 11/9/2018 |
| HHCS DOC-- SWMHE Mass Vaccination (Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency [BOSS]-Multiagency Service Center [MASC])* | 11/14/2018 |
| HHCS DOC-- SWMHE Mass Vaccination (Good Shepard)* | 11/16/2018 |
| HHCS DOC- "Shaken Not Stirred" TTX (Team A & B) | 5/15/2019 |
| HHCS DOC-Alameda County SWMHE TTX Exercise | 10/1/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Mass Vaccination Clinic Exercise (Harrison House) | 10/16/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Mass Vaccination Clinic Exercise (Good Shepard Church) | 10/18/2019 |
| PW DOC - Information Flow within the DOC | 2/1/18 |
| PW DOC - Haywired Exercise | 4/18/18 |
| PW DOC - Earthquake Scenario | 4/25/2019 |

In addition to performing and participating in the exercises listed above, the City offered EOC/DOC trainings to employees 56 times in the two years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic. The table below lists those trainings. The Office of Emergency Services had planned comprehensive ongoing training for 2020, but these trainings are on hold due to the COVID-19 EOC activation. However, the activation itself is providing excellent, hands-on learning opportunities for staff from every department.

| TRAININGS | |
|---|--------------------|
| Training Name | Date(s) Offered |
| Emergency Operations Plan Seminar | 7/27/18 2/15/19 |
| EOC Action Planning Essentials | 8/23/18-8/24/18 |
| Application of Advanced Individual Concepts in Emergency Management | 10/29/18-11/2/18 |

| TRAININGS | |
|---|-----------------|
| Training Name | Date(s) Offered |
| Assessment of Teams in Professional Emergency Management | 1/7/19-1/11/19 |
| Contemporary Issues in the Emergency Management Organization | 4/1/19-4/5/19 |
| Advanced Concepts and Policy in the Emergency Management Profession | 6/10/19-6/14/19 |
| Mental Health Operations Center Support Activities | 5/8/18-5/18/18 |
| Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents Incident Command System (ICS) - 400 | 8/28/18-8/29/18 |
| National Incident Management System (NIMS) Intrastate Mutual Aid Independent Study (IS) - 706 | 2/15/19 |
| An Introduction to Exercises IS-120 | 11/9/18 |
| Leadership and Influence IS-240 | 11/9/18 |
| Effective Communication IS-242 | 2/14/19 |
| Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams IS-317 | 11/4/19 |
| Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response IS-200 | 11/4/19 |
| Fundamentals of Emergency Management IS-230 | 11/5/19 |
| National Response Framework, an Introduction IS-800 | 11/7/19 |
| NIMS Intrastate Mutual Aid - An Introduction IS-706 | 11/7/19 |
| Emergency Planning IS-235 | 11/14/19 |
| Developing and Managing Volunteers IS-244 | 11/22/19 |
| Overview of Mass Care/Emergency Assistance IS-405 | 11/25/19 |
| Natural Hazards Workshop | 7/8/18-7/11/18 |
| Mass Care-Emergency Assistance Planning & Operations | 7/11/18-7/12/18 |
| DOC Section Coordinators Debris Management | 10/2/18 |
| Disaster Response - EOC Communication Workshop | 1/15/19 |
| 2 nd Annual Bay Area Mass Notification Seminar | 5/2/19-5/4/19 |
| HHCS DOC-- DOC Action Planning Workshop (Team A & B) | 6/27/18 |
| HHCS DOC Training Command, Ops, Logs, Plans, and Fin Staff | 3/28/18 |
| HHCS DOC- ICS 300 | 4/27/18 |

| TRAININGS | |
|--|-----------------|
| Training Name | Date(s) Offered |
| HHCS DOC- Medical Health Operations Center Course | 5/7/18-5/8/18 |
| HHCS DOC- Connecting Operations, Logistics, and Finance & Connection Operations and Plans | 5/24/18 |
| HHCS DOC-Marin County POD training | 6/21/18 |
| HHCS DOC-Bay Area- Supporting Medical Needs in Shelters #2 | 7/23/18 |
| HHCS DOC- Disaster Healthcare Volunteer System Administration Training (webinar) | 11/20/18 |
| HHCS DOC- ICS 400 | 2/27/19 |
| HHCS DOC- ICS 120 | 3/8/19 |
| HHCS DOC-Hazard Vulnerability Analysis and Mitigation Workshop | 6/6/19 |
| HHCS DOC- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Workshop | 6/10/19-6/11/19 |
| HHCS DOC- DOC 101 Training | 7/15/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Mass Vaccination Just-in-Time Training (JITT) for POD Workers | 10/2/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Mass Vaccination JITT for POD Workers | 10/4/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- DOC 201 Training | 12/12/2019 |
| HHCS DOC- Biowatch Workshop | 11/6/2019 |
| PW DOC Section Chiefs Training | 9/18/18 |
| PW DOC Section Chiefs Debris Management | 10/2/18 |
| PW DOC Orientation, Section Specific Training | 10/16/18 |
| PW DOC Operations Section, Planning Section, Finance/Logistics Section specific training | 11/6/18 |
| PW DOC Forms Training | 12/18/18 |
| PW DOC Disaster Service Worker Training | 1/15/19 |
| Table Top Exercise Team B, Team A | 1/29/19 |
| Table Top Exercise - Team A transition to Team B Table Top Exercise - Team B transition to Team A | 2/28/19 |

| TRAININGS | |
|--|-----------------|
| Training Name | Date(s) Offered |
| Table Top Section Training | 4/11/19 |
| DOC Orientation for new Staff | 9/12/19 |
| DOC New Plan Review | 9/12/19 |
| DOC - Section Coordinator Action Planning Training | 10/24/19 |

Besides engaging in exercises and attending trainings, the City also gained hands-on experience with emergency operations in recent years. The City activated its EOC and/or a DOC twelve times in the two years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic as shown in the following table.

| ACTIVATIONS | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| Event Name | Activation Date | Level ² |
| HHCS DOC- 2018 Hepatitis A* | 9/28/17- 5/7/18 | Full |
| Hepatitis A | Oct 2017-Feb 2018 | Situation Monitoring |
| August 5, 2018 Rally | 8/5/18 | Partial |
| McGee Trees | 8/24/18 | Partial |
| HHCS DOC- Salmonella | 10/12/18-10/29/18 | Full |
| Extreme Fire Weather | 11/8/18 | Situation Monitoring |
| HHCS DOC - Camp Fire | 11/10/18-11/26/18 | Situation Monitoring |
| HHCS DOC- Skilled Nursing Facility Flu Outbreak | 2/1/19-2/11/19 | Partial |
| Malcom X Mass Casualty Incident | 4/18/19 | Partial |
| HHCS DOC- 2019 Malcolm X 041819* | 4/18/19-4/29/19 | Partial |
| HHCS DOC- Measles 2019 | 5/13/19-5/23/19 | Partial |
| PG&E PSPS | 10/26/19 | Partial |

² Full/Partial/Situation Monitoring as defined in the EOP.

| ACTIVATIONS | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| Event Name | Activation Date | Level ² |
| Fire Weather Monitoring and PG&E Pubic Safety Power Shut Off (PSPS) | 11/12/19 | Situation Monitoring |
| PG&E PSPS | 11/20/19 | Partial |
| *Concurrent with EOC activation. | | |

BERKELEY SAFER-AT-HOME

Overview

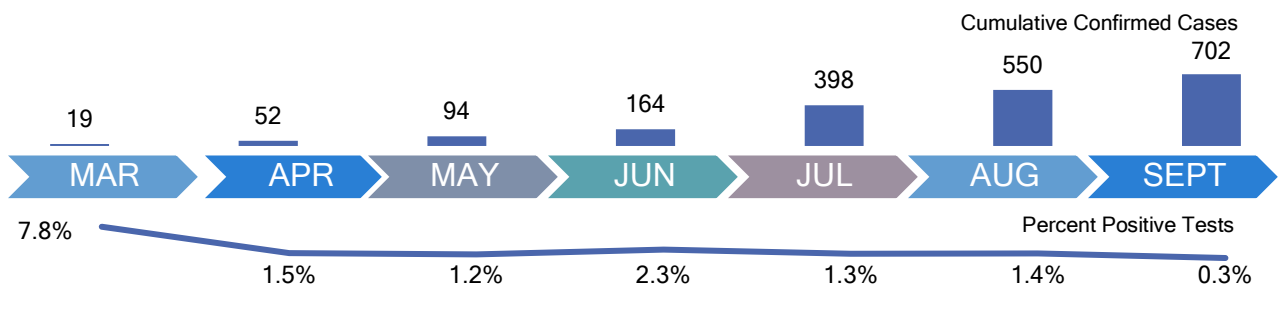
Aware of COVID-19 in late 2019, the City began monitoring the disease early. By March 2020, and the issuance of our Shelter in Place Order, the City had already activated the EOC and done much preparatory work. This section of the report highlights some of the excellent work of the EOC, focusing on major themes in the City's response to COVID-19. It also summarizes how our City departments engaged in COVID-19 related work, the effects on regular City operations, and the benefits and challenges that arose.

Major Themes of the Response

Throughout 2020 the City mobilized over 550 employees from every department, including the City Auditor's Office, the Library and the Rent Stabilization Board, to address the myriad impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to public health and safety, our small businesses and economy, and our social well-being. Some particular efforts stand out as major themes of the response:

- COVID-19 Testing,
- Work with Vulnerable Populations,
- Public Information and Outreach,
- Business & Arts Support, and
- Cost Recovery.

The deep work of the City throughout this response, of course, goes beyond these major themes and is ongoing. The below timeline depicts Berkeley cumulative confirmed cases for the last day of each month and percent positive tests³ for the last week of each month to provide context to key decisions and milestones described in the following sections.⁴



³ Percent positive helps us understand how widespread COVID is in our community, as well as whether our testing is aligned with the level of transmission.

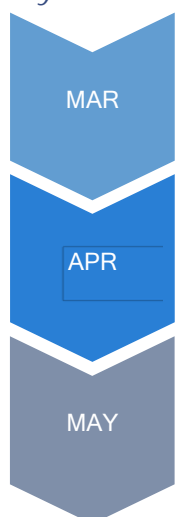
⁴ Case counts and percent positive test information from <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/covid19-data/>; source material <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/CaIREDIE.aspx>, <https://data.cityofberkeley.info/Health/COVID-19-Confirmed-Cases/xn6j-b766>, and <https://data.cityofberkeley.info/Health/COVID-19-All-Tests-Resulted-Weekly/mc9x-5kpz>.

COVID-19 Testing

Overview

Widely available, reliable COVID-19 testing with fast results is an important tool to constrain disease spread and open schools, businesses and public spaces. At the disease outset, testing was not widely available. The City partnered with U.C. Berkeley, which had quickly developed a COVID-19 diagnostic lab test. The City established one of the first dedicated COVID-19 test sites in the Bay Area in partnership with Lifelong Medical and U.C. Berkeley's Innovative Genomics Institute (IGI) Lab. Initially the site's focus was to provide immediate testing for first responders and essential services workers, so these groups would be able to continue their work to support the community. Expanding testing availability to people with symptoms, vulnerable populations, and then the general public followed. Testing, together with case investigation and contact tracing, has helped reduce disease transmission and understand more about how the disease is transmitted. Widespread testing that indicates a low percent positive rate informs our policies and allows us to relax some of our Health Officer Order restrictions when it is safe to do so. Following provision of a State-sponsored test site in early April 2020, the City developed a mobile testing unit, to increase equity and deploy tests to the most vulnerable (e.g., people in homeless shelters, in long term care and skilled nursing facilities, monolingual Latinx people). As the pandemic progressed and circumstances changed, private providers helped increase testing capacity. While City staff still support some testing, the partnerships forged by the City have allowed for fewer city staff to be deployed to support COVID-19 testing sites, freeing them to return to other critical tasks.

Key Activities & Decisions



- Determining how first responders, if exposed, could receive quick turnaround testing, which was not widely available at the time from private healthcare providers.
- Setting up a test site, staffed by City and Lifelong Medical employees with U.C. Berkeley providing test kits and lab analysis.
- Advocating strongly at the State level to locate an Optum test site in Berkeley to increase testing capacity.

When looking at reports of Berkeley tests, note that they include tests of any person who lives in Berkeley, even those tests conducted by a health care provider at a facility outside of Berkeley.

The **last week of April** 2020 there were **391 tests** reported on Berkeley residents with a **1.5% positivity rate**.

By the **last week of July** 2020 there were **3,077 tests** administered and a **1.3% positivity rate**.

- Working on increasing the number of contact tracers.



JUN-JUL

- Receiving confirmation of new State-sponsored testing site through Optum and beginning to test asymptomatic people.
- Bringing City mobile testing site to people with disabilities and to long term care and skilled nursing facilities.
- Meeting daily testing goals.
- Providing enforcement tools for Health Officer Orders, with the understanding that disease containment relies on compliance with public health recommendations and the City's ability to enforce those recommendations when necessary.
- Collaborating with Curative, Inc., to provide testing at a pop-up site, resulting in 500 people tested in ten hours.



AUG-SEP

- Partnering with Curative to further add testing capacity at the Berkeley Adult School.
- Developing a drive-through testing model, in partnership with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and Curative to continue testing during days with poor Air Quality Index (AQI).⁵
- Discussing how to maintain equity during enforcement activities.

⁵ Wildfires created poor AQI throughout much of the western United States for a portion of the late summer and fall.

Work with Vulnerable Populations

Overview

With many unknowns about COVID-19, the public health response focused on strategies to limit transmission, such as staying at home, washing hands, minimizing interactions with people outside the household, and wearing face masks. For our vulnerable populations including people that are unhoused and for people living in “congregate” settings, such as long-term care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, or shelters, our goal was to provide public health guidelines, COVID-19 testing and supplies such as sanitizer and personal protective equipment (PPE) to make them as safe as possible. Additionally, those living in encampments suddenly did not have access to previously available hygiene opportunities when libraries, businesses and other facilities closed in late March 2020. Community donations of food and water to encampments ceased or dramatically dropped in many cases. Our response identified these gaps and sought to address them quickly. This included working to prevent COVID-19 transmission as well as redefining the City’s community support activities in the context of COVID-19.

Key Activities & Decisions



- Researching trailers and identifying protocols for using hotels as respite sites⁶, particularly since no State or county resource was available at the time.



- Issuing the first Shelter-in-Place Order, coordinated with the other nine Bay Area local health jurisdictions, triggering service changes to comply with the order, such as:
 - No longer utilizing community volunteers,
 - Closing public counters, recreation and senior centers, and
 - Transferring from in-person to on-phone senior wellness checks.
- Expanding Meals-on-Wheels delivery to accommodate more seniors staying at home and needing meal support.
- Providing guidance to community agency meal programs to shift to to-go meals.

⁶ A respite site is a place where people needing to isolate or quarantine can go and be in a non-congregate setting. Initially this was explored for first responders as well as those living in congregate settings and the unhoused.

- Extending shelter hours to 24/7 to minimize potential disease transmission associated with people going in and out of shelters at opening and closing.
 - Deploying handwashing stations and porta-potties throughout the community, to provide access to hygiene for people who are unhoused.
 - Distributing COVID-19 information and kits with sanitizer and face masks to encampments to increase awareness and compliance with COVID-19 health recommendations.
 - Pivoting from direct procurement of hotel rooms to partnering with Alameda County to use new State-provided Project Roomkey⁷ rooms to provide respite for vulnerable people unable to otherwise safely isolate or quarantine.
 - Purchasing eight trailers and procuring ten trailers from the State⁸ for vulnerable people unable to otherwise safely isolate.
 - Preparing a City-owned home at 1654 5th Street for use by vulnerable unhoused people unable to safely isolate.
 - Beginning decompression⁹ of shelters, focusing on those most vulnerable to significant health impacts from COVID-19, to create adequate physical distancing.
- By **March 7, 2020** the City distributed **250 COVID-19 kits to encampments**.
- On a typical day in **September 2020**, over **50 unhoused people** participated in the **shower program**.
- There are **77 port-a-potties** (48 are ADA-accessible) and **64 hand-washing stations** around the city.
- Conducting general wellness checks of persons who are unhoused to help support their health and connect them with services as needed.



APR

⁷ Project Roomkey is a statewide program to secure hotel rooms to provide isolation housing for those experiencing homelessness. In Alameda County, this consists of two programs: Operation Comfort (serving those who are homeless and have been exposed to, are experiencing symptoms of, or have COVID-19) and Operation Safer Ground (serving those who are homeless and over 65 years old or otherwise at high risk for COVID-19).

⁸ The City procured trailers free from the state as well as through grant funding. Trailer set-up and provision of services required mobilization of substantial time and staff resources.

⁹ Decompression is reducing the number of individuals in a facility like a shelter to ensure a facility can maintain physical distancing between beds. Initially, the City prepared the Young Adult Project (YAP) facility to act as additional shelter space to accommodate those displaced from other shelters due to decompression. Ultimately, YAP was not used as a shelter because the state set up Project Roomkey and the CDC updated guidance on isolation for the unhoused population.

- For our unhoused, delivering food and drinking water and installing spigots to address gaps in donated/available food and water.
- Pivoting to allow people to isolate at encampments instead of encouraging movement to a shelter, in response to updated CDC guidelines.
- Expanding the shower program to include a mobile shower program, adding hours of operation (Willard) and an additional location (West Campus), to increase access to hygiene for people who are unhoused.
- Continuing shelter decompression efforts, resulting in shelter testing and transporting individuals from Berkeley shelters to Alameda County's Safer Ground and Operation Comfort sites.

MAY

- Partnering with the Downtown Business Association (DBA) and local restaurants to provide meals to the unhoused population through Double Helping Hands. Double Helping Hands provided up to 4,000 meals from May 2020 through July 2020. The partnership has been extended through the end of October 2020.
- Verifying a staging site for pallet shelters and receiving pallet shelters.
- Partnering with Kaiser Permanente and Lifelong Medical on a pilot program for testing every resident and staff member in a skilled nursing facility.¹⁰
- Managing a COVID-19 outbreak at a Berkeley skilled nursing facility (Note: One positive case at a skilled nursing facility is considered an outbreak due to congregate conditions).

JUN-JUL

- Contracting with Berkeley Food and Housing Project to provide case management and other support services at locations established to provide housing to the unhoused:
 - Eight trailers at 1281 University Ave,
 - Ten trailers at 701 Harrison Street, and the
 - Single-family home at 1654 Fifth Street.

¹⁰ Per state requirements, the City has been working with each skilled nursing and long term care facility to build their internal testing capacity and readiness in order for them to provide their own testing capabilities at each facility as needed, using a third-party vendor. While these facilities built out and stood up their internal testing structure and operations, the City temporarily has provided the needed testing. As of October 1, 2020, all Berkeley skilled nursing and long term care facilities are completing in-house COVID testing and are self-sufficient in regards to on-going staff COVID testing and testing residents if/when there is an outbreak at their facility.

- Adding new respite sites through participation of Berkeley hotels in Operation Safer Ground.



AUG-SEP

- Working on strategies to help persons experiencing homelessness that are utilizing Operation Safer Ground to exit to longer term housing.
- Confirmation of new COVID-19 census at Berkeley shelters to ensure maximum occupancy while maintaining six foot distancing requirements and establishing enrollment timeline to reach new maximum census.
- Ongoing distribution of face coverings and hand sanitizer to unhoused populations by outreach teams.

Public Information and Outreach

Overview

After the initial Shelter in Place Health Officer Order, our lives dramatically changed. This included how we transmit and receive information. For the most part, public interaction and meetings went online. An important component of slowing the spread of COVID-19 and keeping our community safe is communicating how to do so. The City has been doing this in every way it can: working with our community-based organizations and the media; putting up posters, banners, and signs; and delivering messages online, in English and Spanish, through our website, social media, and news releases. These communications reinforce public health best practices and explain how they reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Key Activities & Decisions



JAN-FEB

- Procuring translation services to create translations of public information messages, outreach materials, and Health Officer Orders, among other things.
- Establishing communications coordination with other Bay Area jurisdictions' public information officers and Berkeley Unified School District.
- Creating Persons Under Investigation¹¹ (PUI) handouts, describing when isolation is needed and protocols for close contacts.
- Issuing the first COVID-19 related news release, reaching approximately 30,000 contacts.
- Sending the first COVID-19 related health alert and guidance to schools.



MAR

- Establishing regular connections with the business community, with efforts to survey conditions on-the-ground and provide support services, as well as hosting regular calls and producing bi-weekly newsletters.
- Holding the City's first Town Hall, on Twitter, with the Health Officer about COVID-19.
- Developing an outreach plan and protocols for populations particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 (i.e., seniors, the unhoused).
- Setting up a COVID-19 webpage to consolidate all COVID-related information in a central and visible place.

¹¹ A person under investigation (PUI) is someone who has been in close contact with a person confirmed as having an infection and/or may have been to a place where there is an outbreak.

- Providing information on changes in services, policies, and event cancellations in relation to Health Officer Orders.

MAY

- Launching a COVID-19 dashboard to publicly provide information on case numbers, hospitalizations, and tests. The initial data and measures displayed grew over time as more information became available and reliable.
- Creating guidance documents relating to Health Officer Orders (e.g., protocols for groceries, restaurants and essential retail) and messages for particular groups, such as resources for seniors.
- Creating a COVID-19 email address to funnel, track, and quickly answer community questions and address concern.

APR

- Holding a Virtual Town Hall with Mayor Jesse Arreguín, City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley, and Health Officer Dr. Lisa Hernandez to answer questions related to Health Officer Orders.
- Launching new web-based COVID-19 data dashboard.

COVID-19 Communications By the Numbers

34 Webpages
 250 Service Alerts (on department webpages)
 52 Community Messages
 500+ Social Media Messages
 58 Council Updates
 200+ Outreach Materials (flyers, signage)

The reach of the City's public information and outreach has been substantial:

1.3 million views on community messages
 1.5 million visits to webpages
 2.7 million impressions on social media messages
 250,000 visits to the COVID-19 dashboard
 14,000 downloads of business signage
 2,000+ new social media followers
 45% increase in visits to the website

JUN-JUL

- Deploying COVID-19 signage in parks.
- Providing COVID-19 information to Latinx and African American populations.
- Holding Spanish-language Town Hall meeting with Latinx Unidos and Health Officer Dr. Lisa Hernandez.



- Publishing new Spanish-language webpage with COVID-19 resources.
- Deploying Public Works light-up sign near Willard Pool on Telegraph Avenue with COVID-19 messaging, including, “Wear a mask, keep 6 feet apart, avoid large groups.”
- Holding Latinx webinar and launching radio message campaign focusing on Latinx community.
- Working with the Mayor’s Office to support the “Mask-On to Move On” campaign with posters and banners.

Community messages are distributed through multiple platforms, including email, website, social media, media releases. Since January 2020 there have been close to 100 COVID-19 related community messages, with the first sent on January 28, 2020. To demonstrate the breadth of this work, the follow table shows community messages distributed in March 2020 and April 2020.

| COMMUNITY MESSAGE | DATE |
|--|------|
| First COVID-19 Case in Berkeley is a Reminder to Prepare. | 3/3 |
| Prepare Your Household for Increased COVID-19 Spread | 3/5 |
| Prepare Your Business for a Potential COVID-19 Outbreak | 3/9 |
| As COVID-19 Cases Increase in Region, Health Officer Recommends Limiting Mass Gatherings | 3/10 |
| Increased “Community Spread” of COVID-19 Heightens Need for Social Distancing | 3/13 |
| With Berkeley Public Schools Closing, Social Distancing Remains Important to Limit Spread of COVID-19 | 3/13 |
| Recreation Facilities, Programs Closed to Limit Spread of COVID-19 | 3/15 |
| Seven Bay Area Jurisdictions Order Residents to Stay Home | 3/16 |
| Stay Home to Protect Our Community, Especially the Vulnerable | 3/19 |
| Some Parking Enforcement Suspended through April 7 | 3/20 |
| Prepare Now to Care for Yourself, Family If Infected with COVID-19 | 3/23 |
| Play Structures, Athletic Courts and Fields Closed to Enforce Social Distancing | 3/24 |
| Seven Bay Area Jurisdictions Order Laboratories Testing for COVID-19 to Report Testing Data to State and Local Authorities | 3/24 |
| Construction and Development During Shelter in Place | 3/26 |

| COMMUNITY MESSAGE | DATE |
|---|------|
| Firefighter with COVID-19, Reminder of Urgency to Shelter in Place | 3/26 |
| Donate Masks, Gloves, and Other Protective Equipment | 3/27 |
| COVID-19 Hardship Grants for Renters, Small Businesses, Arts and Nonprofit Orgs | 3/30 |
| Shelter-in-Place Order to Be Extended to May 1, 2020 | 3/30 |
| Health Officers Extend, Update Stay-at-Home Order with New Restrictions through May 3, 2020 | 3/31 |
| When Leaving Home, Cover Face to Limit COVID-19 Spread | 4/2 |
| New Restrictions on Allowed Construction | 4/3 |
| COVID-19 Renter Protections, Resources | 4/6 |
| City of Berkeley Opens COVID-19 Testing Site for Vulnerable Populations | 4/7 |
| Prepare Now to Care for Your Pets If You Become Ill | 4/8 |
| COVID-19 Kills Berkeley Resident | 4/9 |
| Extra Precautions, Local Resources to Help Keep Older Adults Safe | 4/9 |
| Access Land Use and Building Permit Services Remotely During Shelter in Place | 4/10 |
| Volunteer, Donate, and Share Your Stories to Make a Difference | 4/13 |
| Protect Your Mental Health: Managing Anxiety and Stress During COVID-19 | 4/14 |
| Masks, Symptom Checks, and Temperature Screenings Now Required at Skilled Nursing and Residential Care Facilities | 4/16 |
| Face Coverings Now Required for Customers and Workers in Essential Businesses | 4/17 |
| Face Covering and Social Distancing Requirements for Businesses | 4/20 |
| Face Covering Requirements Start Wednesday | 4/21 |
| Help Protect Refuse and Recycling Workers | 4/22 |
| As Shelter-in-Place Continues, Some Parking Rules Remain | 4/23 |
| Seven Bay Area Health Officers Will Extend Shelter-in-Place Orders | 4/27 |
| Regional Shelter-in-Place Orders Extended as Some Rules Ease | 4/29 |

Business & Arts Support

Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic immediately and dramatically impacted businesses and arts organizations throughout our community. Many businesses and arts organizations have closed; businesses that have been able to operate during the pandemic are struggling as they try and adapt to current conditions and comply with new regulations to keep customers and employees safe. From the outset of the pandemic, the City has provided support to businesses and arts organizations, connecting them to information, funding opportunities, and developing new regulatory pathways to do business outdoors along with delivering effective technical assistance to implement site specific protection plans and deploy functional outdoor commerce.

Early in the pandemic, the City helped connect businesses to financial assistance. This included the EOC's work to demonstrate widespread need for and coordinate access to federal Small Business Administration (SBA) loans and local Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) lenders. The Office of Economic Development also developed and managed the implementation of direct monetary grants to Berkeley's business and arts organizations; including the disbursement of [399 arts and business continuity grant awards](#) (see Office of Economic Development for additional details) in less than six weeks. Additionally, the City published reams of technical assistance in the [OED](#) and [Civic Arts newsletters](#) and consolidated and [published information germane to businesses](#) on the City's COVID -19 website, including resources for [commercial tenants](#).

In order to demonstrate local businesses' unmet financial needs to State and federal funders, the EOC coordinated an intensive information-gathering effort to assess COVID-19 impacts on local business operations. Research included observing conditions on the ground in the City's nine larger commercial districts and smaller neighborhood commercial districts; direct phone outreach to over 800 businesses without an email address on file; and facilitating Berkeley's strong participation in a [regional survey regarding business impacts](#).

Many businesses have had to alter their operations to stay open during the pandemic. In support, city agencies worked through the EOC structure to quickly establish a regulatory pathway and technical assistance to help businesses pivot to an [outdoor commerce](#) model.

Key Activities & Decisions



MAR

- Staffing an EOC Business Liaison to work with, support, and communicate information to and from the business community, in close coordination with the JIC and the Office of Economic Development (OED) throughout the pandemic.
- Providing responsive information and proactive outreach to businesses about available resources, including:
 - Helping businesses to navigate implementation of Health Officer Orders, such as mask compliance and associated ADA issues.
 - Reaching out to individual businesses to provide direct education in response to complaints.
- Collecting and processing over 300 damage inventory forms from businesses to demonstrate the widespread impact from COVID-19; this work made Alameda County one of the first qualified for COVID-19 SBA loans.
- Working with SBA and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) plans to survey local lenders and provide that information to businesses, in conjunction with our partners at the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce and in the business districts.
- Developing the Business Arts and Continuity Grant program after City Council passed an urgency funding ordinance on March 17, 2020.



APR-MAY

- Bolstering business outreach capacity by establishing the COVID-19 Emergency Business Outreach Team (EBOT) staffed with disaster service workers, in order to quickly assess the impact of COVID-19 on business operations.
 - Performing Commercial District Closure surveys in Berkeley's nine commercial districts to directly assess whether businesses were closed, open, or had pivoted operations during the pandemic.
 - Reaching out to 4,000+ holders of Berkeley Businesses Licenses in order to (1) encourage Berkeley businesses to fill out the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) regional business impact survey and (2) to offer OED resources to the business owners. Outreach included direct phone calls to 804 individual Berkeley companies without email addresses.

- This dedicated outreach ensured Berkeley's representation in this regional survey. Berkeley's 561 responses comprised over 29 percent of the total, which included Alameda and Contra Costa counties. This level of response positions our City as a leader in the field for providing technical assistance to businesses and will help Berkeley effectively advocate for regional and State business recovery resources.
 - Assessing whether businesses had requested reduced trash and recycling service as a result of the pandemic, at the request of the City's Zero Waste division.


 JUN

- Partnering with UC Berkeley to use students to analyze Economic Development Association (EDA) Survey data.
- Developing an Urgency Ordinance, approved by Council, to facilitate businesses' pivot to outdoor commerce. The ordinance expanded the range of allowed outdoor activities on both public and private property and streamlined the permitting processes. Additionally, the permitting process temporarily waived fees to make outdoor commerce more accessible to small businesses.
- Preparing immediately-available guidance on how to use an outdoor commerce model, through collaboration across departments and the EOC (Office of Economic Development, Public Works, Planning, City Attorney's Office, and the EOC Business Liaison).
- Providing support for permit applications for outdoor commerce.
- Partnering with local employers and the City's mobile testing unit to develop group testing options for Berkeley businesses and their employees.
- Providing free onsite group testing for employees in high-exposure sectors (e.g., grocery store employees, and daycare/camp staff).
- Developing a Worksite Exposure Toolkit with the EOC's Communicable Disease Unit. The toolkit helps employers prevent and prepare for a worksite COVID-19 exposure by providing tools to create a site-specific protection plan to protect staff and customers from COVID-19, as well as education on the employer's role in the contact investigation and reporting process.

JUL

- Garnering approval for SBA loans for businesses throughout Alameda County that suffered damages due to Civil Unrest. This was made possible by the Berkeley Library, OED, and Police Department, working through the EOC structure. In order to qualify for these funds, Alameda County had to provide damage information. Disaster Service Workers working in the Berkeley EOC worked with the Police Department to identify and gather information from impacted businesses in Berkeley. Without Berkeley's contributions, the entire County would not have qualified, leaving businesses in Berkeley, Oakland, San Leandro and other cities without any access to federal funding assistance.

AUG-SEP

- Publishing technical assistance and providing pathways to pro bono resources for [commercial tenants](#).

Cost Recovery

Overview

Financial management is a crucial effort of any disaster response, and the financial impacts of a disaster are generally felt long after the initial emergency is resolved. When COVID-19 was declared a nationwide emergency on March 13, 2020, the City of Berkeley became eligible to apply for reimbursement of response costs from FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Program. "Cost recovery" refers to the City's work to seek reimbursement through this program.

The City began preparing to use the FEMA PA program in 2016, when the Office of Emergency Services (OES) led a Citywide Cost Recovery training and planning effort to identify necessary policies, tools, and procedures that would help maximize reimbursement. Thanks to that planning, staff understood early on in the COVID-19 response the magnitude of challenges the program presents for applicants.





FEMA PA requires meticulous documentation and navigating a variety of complex regulatory environments. Rules often aren't enforced until post-award audit. Because the COVID-19 pandemic is unlike any disaster that FEMA has experienced, the State and FEMA have been altering many of their normal practices and longstanding rules for reimbursement eligibility and process as the pandemic wears on.

In March 2020, the EOC established a multidisciplinary Cost Recovery team. This group monitored the constantly changing FEMA rules through multiple meetings with State and federal representatives, participation on many webinars hosted by cost recovery experts, reviewing newly-published guidance documents, and consulting with peer agencies to review best practices. The team applied the information it acquired to educate EOC and department staff on processes to ensure that COVID-19 expenditures were tracked throughout the response. Per that team's recommendation given the complexity of the FEMA reimbursement process, in June 2020, the City entered into contract with a cost recovery consulting firm that has helped guide the City's efforts in this ever-changing regulatory landscape.

Currently, the Cost Recovery team is working closely with staff in every department and with its contractor to gather detailed documentation to oversee, monitor, and report on COVID-19

expenses and to develop FEMA PA reimbursement applications. This effort will continue along with the pandemic, and due to the iterative process of FEMA PA applications, is likely to last for a year, if not more, after FEMA considers the pandemic emergency period to be over.

Key Activities & Decisions

- 
- 
 - Establishing special COVID-19 budget codes to track personnel costs and other expenditures in anticipation of FEMA PA Program activation.
 - Up-staffing the Cost Recovery function in two areas:
 - EOC Cost Recovery Unit to strategize approach to using FEMA PA program in concert with CARES Act and other new/existing COVID-19 revenue streams.
 - EOC Time Unit to coordinate the effort to capture, track, and analyze staff time for FEMA PA.
 - Establishing COVID-19 specific time tracking procedures and forms for staff, Department Time Leads, and the EOC Time Unit to coordinate FEMA PA requirements.
 - Providing strategic advice to EOC and department staff regarding which costs may be eligible for FEMA reimbursement, as well as technical support to ensure staff use appropriate procedures and collect necessary documentation to facilitate the reimbursement process.
 - Working with each department to assess COVID-19 related expenditures, ensuring they are tracked and documented in accordance with FEMA PA requirements.
 - 
 - Up-staffing cost recovery function with assigned Time Leads within each department, in order to manage increased documentation needs for time tracking.
 - Finalizing Disaster Purchasing Policy that aligns with federal procurement standards in order to maximize likelihood of FEMA reimbursement for eligible COVID expenditures.
 - 
 - Establishing Disaster Time Coding Policy in order to ensure that disaster-related personnel costs are accurately reflected for FEMA PA.
 - Updating timecard retention policy to ensure that the City retains documentation for FEMA PA Audit.
 - Developed methodology to centrally track all COVID-19 related expenditures; performed a preliminary assessment on potential funding streams/reimbursement sources for each expenditure.

JUN-JUL

- Contracting with a Cost Recovery consulting firm to guide the FEMA PA strategy and reimbursement submittal process.
- Working with cost recovery firm to develop FEMA PA project applications for eligible COVID-19 response costs.
- Receiving significant grant resources from the State and from the CARES Act to address the pandemic, the Cost Recovery Team worked with departments to ensure funds were strategically deployed to support COVID response activities.

AUG-SEP

- Redeploying 3 of 7 Cost Recovery team members to accommodate department and EOC support needs, without reduction in cost recovery workload.
- Developing Coronavirus Relief Fund strategy to allocate funds received from the State to expenses not eligible for reimbursement under FEMA, in order to maximize the City's reimbursement potential.

Organizational Impacts

Mobilizing a response to an emergency is a daunting endeavor as it requires employees to come together and set aside their fears in order to protect the health and welfare of the community. For this emergency, especially in the early days, there has been so much that is unknown and uncertain - How pervasive is the virus? How can it be transmitted? What happens if an employee contracts the virus? Will I get members of my family sick? How do I balance the demands of being a disaster service worker with the challenges faced at home and personal obligations? City employees and community members have grappled with these concerns and challenges. Many people are fearful of the disease, of its impacts on our economy, and what the future holds. This is the context within which all of us are living and working.

Employees in every department have experienced challenges as they work to implement Health Officer Orders and social distancing in their own lives and work. They juggle job duties, providing remote schooling to their children, and caring for ill family members. Many have struggled without sufficient internet bandwidth or not having access to ergonomics when working from home. All are trying to maintain high quality services for the community while also responding to the pandemic and following Health Officer Order protocols.

Even within that context, the City was still able to accomplish many things. In terms of benefits, our organization developed new or enhanced programs and strategies in response to COVID-19. From the start of the pandemic, our departments quickly “pivoted” their operations, often resulting in efficiencies and implementation of protocols to keep employees safe. However, there are also challenges. Departments were challenged to find ways to both address the effects of the pandemic on the services they provide and how they provide those services, as well as how to continue those operations with “fewer” staff (see Figure 2 Reported Hours Worked on COVID-19 Response). Every department deployed employees to support the COVID-19 response as Disaster Service Workers, whether in the EOC or in another COVID-19 response function within their department.

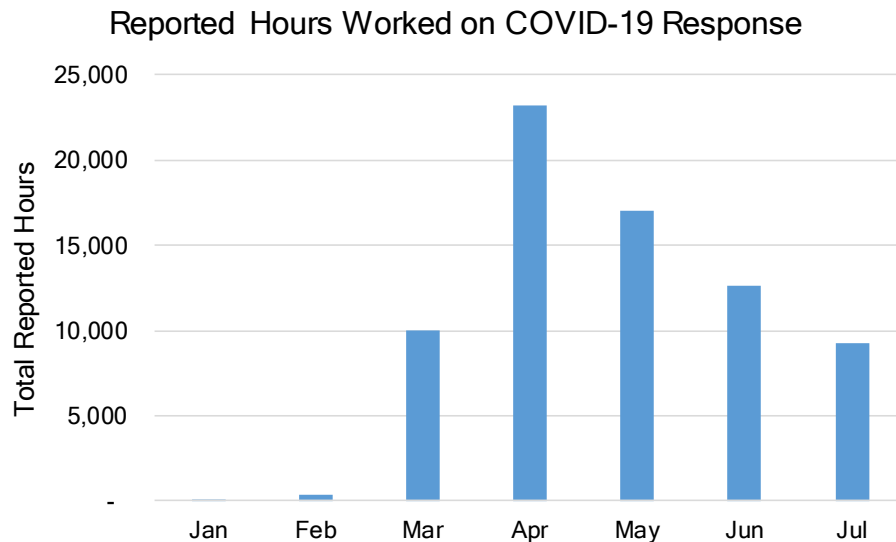


Figure 2 Reported Hours Worked on COVID-19 Response

For the following sections of the report, each department briefly describes some of the various organizational impacts they have experienced during the pandemic. The below table and Figure 2 above illustrate the scale of the staff response, as reported on timesheets.¹² Historically, employees tend to underreport their emergency response efforts as they either forget to appropriately code the time or they don't associate a given activity as being "officially" related to the emergency.

Table 1 Staff Mobilized for COVID-19 Response

| Staff Mobilized for COVID-19 Response | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Department | Staff Mobilized¹³ |
| City Attorney | 8 employees |
| City Auditor | 4 employees |
| City Clerk | 8 employees |
| City Manager | 23 employees |
| Finance | 5 employees |
| Fire | 58 employees |
| Health, Housing, and Community Services | 78 employees |

¹² This data only includes hours coded on timesheets with the project code 20EM08. Instructions to code COVID-19 response hours were not widely disseminated until April, so the hours recorded in early months may be an undercount. Additionally, the data does not include "overtime" hours worked by exempt employees. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime and any "overtime" they work is not tracked.

¹³ "Staff Mobilized" is the number of employees that reported working at least one hour on COVID response between January and the end of July 2020. For City Auditor, Library, and Rent Stabilization Board, employees include elected officials.

| Staff Mobilized for COVID-19 Response | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Department | Staff Mobilized¹³ |
| Human Resources | 5 employees |
| Information Technology | 38 employees |
| Library | 56 employees |
| Parks, Recreation and Waterfront | 96 employees |
| Planning & Development | 45 employees |
| Police | 84 employees |
| Police Review Commission | 1 employee |
| Public Works | 44 employees |
| Rent Stabilization Board | 1 employee |

Lessons Learned

During the emergency response, the City has instituted a number of new or different practices, as highlighted throughout the report. The City may want to consider keeping some of these beneficial practices, even after the emergency has passed:

Accelerating adoption of new technologies. Acquiring and integrating new technologies that enable online transactions and effective information sharing has been key. This pandemic magnified the impacts of having older technology systems. For example, the City's website has been a challenging piece of technology to keep up to date. The pandemic provides a new lens in which to look at our digital strategic plan and incorporate technologies that allow for secure online business transactions.

Supporting telecommuting. Prior to the pandemic, the City allowed limited telecommuting / telework to employees. However, the pandemic has shown that the workforce was able to successfully transition to working remotely. Continuing to support telecommuting would be an effective practice to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide flexibility to our employees, and promote a safe working environment, especially for work groups whose physical work spaces in the City are cramped.

Prioritizing consistent and frequent Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings. In the very early stages of the Shelter-in-Place order, the SLT (i.e., the City Manager, Deputy City Managers, Department Heads, Assistant to the City Managers, City Auditor, Executive Director of the Rent Board, and Executive Director of the Library) met three days per week for many months. This eventually transitioned to a weekly meeting. These meetings have proven invaluable for learning the challenges faced by each department in responding to the pandemic, sharing information about the City's response to the pandemic, and discussing best practices. Over time, these meetings also have been instrumental in providing a forum to discuss new initiatives and projects that impact the community or organization.

Providing diversity, equity, and inclusion training. Over the years, the City has provided diversity, equity, and inclusion training to its employees. The City holds itself to a high standard and strives for a workforce that is diverse. The impact of this training was evidenced by the immediate application of an equity lens to many of the City's COVID-19 responses (e.g., how Berkeley Relief Fund monies were awarded). Additionally, the EOC is an opportunity for employees that may otherwise never work together to collaborate around a unified mission. Despite the common focus, each department has its own culture and ways of getting things done. Also, every individual is unique in how they communicate, receive direction, and work. The organization prepares employees to thrive in the EOC by continuing to provide, value, and reinforce the importance of training centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

City Attorney

The City Attorney's Office continued its routine legal work throughout the past year and contributed substantially to the City's COVID-19 response. The City Attorney's Office routine legal work includes defending cases and claims, processing Public Records Act (PRA) requests, providing services to clients (City Council, City Manager, City Departments, and City Commissions), staffing the Fair Campaign Practices Commission, and addressing election and redistricting issues.

The contributions of the City Attorney's Office are summarized in the following table.

| CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE CONTRIBUTIONS TO COVID-19 RESPONSE |
|--|
| HEALTH OFFICER ORDERS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and reviewing various Health Officer Orders. Every order was initially coordinated with six other jurisdictions, and the City Attorney's Office took the lead for the City, developing language, coordinating, finalizing, reviewing press releases, etc. • Advising staff and members of the public regarding implementation of Health Officer Orders (i.e., answered thousands of questions and reviewed or drafted thousands of emails in response to questions). • Advising staff on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Implications of Health Officer Orders on essential construction projects, and ◦ Enforcement of Health Officer Orders. |
| ORDINANCES |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting in the drafting and revision of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance and subsequent amendments. • Developing a COVID-19 Response Ordinance to halt potential evictions and other adverse actions at the onset of the pandemic. • Developing an ordinance and policy for civil enforcement of Health Officer Orders. • Helping develop an ordinance requiring delivery apps to cap the fees they charge restaurants at 20 percent to help small businesses impacted by COVID-19. • Providing legal review of the outdoor commerce ordinance. |

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE CONTRIBUTIONS TO COVID-19 RESPONSE

- Advising Health, Housing and Community Services Department staff and a City Council Policy Committee regarding AB3088's impacts on the COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance.
- Advising staff regarding the COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance, including related issues of lease termination or renegotiation for small businesses.
- Advising the EOC Joint Information Center (JIC) regarding public communications about the COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance.

FINANCIAL & COST RECOVERY

- Preparing a FEMA-compliant contract boilerplate for the City's Disaster Procurement Policy.
- Reviewing, revising, and drafting various contracts and memorandums of understanding related to COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing and other sources of COVID-19 related funding.
- Developing and working on project spreadsheets for FEMA reimbursement, as well as gathering and organizing details for every COVID-19 related expense from interviews and documentation collected.
- Gathering, centralizing and reviewing COVID-19 documents required for FEMA Reimbursement.
- Advising staff regarding FEMA cost recovery.
- Holding interviews with EOC staff and staff from different departments to help identify FEMA-reimbursable expenses and to obtain justification as to why each expenditure was necessary in relation to the pandemic.
- Providing a detailed review of the City's COVID-19 related expenses.
- Reviewing and verifying 214 FEMA forms.

GENERAL

- Advising EOC staff regarding contracting, privacy, and other legal issues.
- Advising staff on implementation of the Healthy Streets Program.
- Advising staff on the Respite Sites Program.

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE CONTRIBUTIONS TO COVID-19 RESPONSE

- Advising the Health Officer regarding the publication of COVID-19 demographic data.
- Assessing and providing advice regarding best practices for compliance with the Brown Act and Public Records Act during COVID-related City office closures.
- Defending a Harassment Restraining Order Petition against Health Officer (petitioner sought relief from Shelter-in-Place Order).
- Fielding Public Records Act requests related to City's COVID-19 response.
- Providing advice about City Health Officer scope of powers in responding to COVID-19.
- Researching and providing advice for Health Officer regarding genomic tracing of City test specimens.
- Researching emergency proclamation legal authority and requirements and drafting the COVID-19 emergency proclamation and subsequent reauthorization Council resolutions.
- Researching protections for small business owners who personally guaranteed the business' rent obligation.
- Reviewing and providing advice regarding the Governor's orders related to open meetings and other requirements.

City Auditor

The City Auditor's Office houses both performance auditors and the payroll unit ("payroll audit"). The Office was impacted early in the pandemic because there was lag before they were able to telecommute, which in turn slowed down their ability to conduct audits and to process payroll. Despite these early difficulties, the City Auditor's Office was able to innovate and contribute strongly to the City's COVID-19 response.

Payroll Audit

At the start of the pandemic, the City was still using paper time sheets. The Payroll Audit unit worked closely with the Human Resources Department (HR) to design electronic timesheets and leave of absence forms, and communicate the new process to employees. Designing the new timesheet allowed employees to report their hours electronically every two weeks, regardless of where they were working. Additionally, Payroll Audit worked with HR to obtain and install plexiglass at the payroll counter to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 transmission. Payroll auditors have also provided key reports and documentation to support the City's FEMA cost recovery work.

Performance Audit

During the first few months of the emergency, the Auditor paused several audits and follow-up on recommendations to enable staff the flexibility to serve in the EOC Cost Recovery Unit.

Part of their contributions included:

- Drafting or updating policies and procedures to better align City processes with the requirements of federal and State emergency funds, such as FEMA Public Assistance, and
- Obtaining and evaluating supporting documentation for federal and State reimbursement.

While deploying staff to the EOC decreased the unit's capacity to do core performance audits, the City Auditor felt it was important to provide support and expertise to the City's cost recovery effort. At the same time, performance auditors produced a COVID-19 budget report to assist in educating the public and Council about COVID-19's financial impacts on the budget.

City Clerk

COVID-19 did not slow down the legislative process—only one City Council meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. As soon as telecommuting was enabled, the City Clerk’s Office was able to fully function as a department and began to administer the candidate nomination protocols for the November 2020 election. Through strict adherence to public health and safety protocols and expanded use of video-conferencing tools (e.g., Zoom), the City Clerk’s Office was able to successfully accommodate over 80 candidate appointments, as well as 20 appointments for filing ballot measure arguments.

The pandemic created challenges for the City Clerk’s Office to maintain operations. The building where they are located, 2180 Milvia Street, was closed to the public. This means the Clerk’s Office has not been able to fully serve the public in the manner to which the community had become accustomed. As a public-facing department that often fields in-person inquiries, the City Clerk’s Office had to pivot to rely on electronic methods to fill the gap created by COVID-19.

Another challenge the City Clerk’s Office faced was in relation to its redistricting commission work. The City Clerk’s Office had planned a robust person-to-person public outreach campaign to encourage members of the community to submit applications for the new Independent Redistricting Commission. To transform this plan in response to the pandemic, staff quickly moved to an enhanced digital outreach campaign to work through community networks and reassigned outreach dollars to online and print advertising in local media outlets. The campaign proved successful with the City receiving over 140 applications for the commission by the October 9 deadline.

Besides daily operations, the City Clerk’s Office also contributed almost half of its employees to supporting COVID-19 response operations in the EOC. These employees served in roles, including EOC Logistics, Timekeeping, and the Joint Information Center. The City Clerk’s Office was initially able to maintain its operations even with the staff reassignments. However, the City Clerk eventually had to demobilize staff from their Disaster Service Work assignments in order to handle increased workload due to 2020 being an election year.

City Manager's Office

In addition to providing policy and strategic direction to City departments, the City Manager's Office contains a variety of units, including Animal Services, the Budget Office, Neighborhood Services, Code Enforcement, Berkeley's 2020 Vision, and the Office of Economic Development. It also leads the City's work on the 2020 U.S. Census.

Animal Services

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the animal shelter has effectively transitioned to a fostering model rather than housing animals primarily at the shelter. Additionally, the Animal Service Unit has adapted their work to a community-based approach to support the animal-human bond, keep people and pets together, and prevent animals from ever entering the shelter.

Budget Office

The Budget Office is a small, but crucial unit. One of its most senior staff has been fully deployed to the EOC while also maintaining all normal operational work. This employee's role has been to work with a team to develop a system of cost reimbursement for the City's COVID-19 expenditures as well as establishing project codes for tracking employee time and purchases related to COVID-19. In general, while developing the Fiscal Year (FY) 21 budget update in collaboration with all departments, the Budget Office has worked under a more intensive and significantly reduced time line. Budget employees are exempt and throughout this period have routinely been working long days and late nights to update the budget over a very condensed time period. In terms of operational pivots associated with COVID-19, the majority of Budget Office employees were able to rapidly adapt to work from home. Working remotely allowed Budget Office employees with school-aged children the flexibility to address their families' needs and complete work assignments. For example, with 24 hour access to City systems, employees could work, safely from home, even in the middle of the night. Additionally, employees found they could put in more hours because working from home eliminated commute time. The Budget Manager initiated daily team meetings via Zoom to allow all budget employees to keep in contact and quickly address any major concerns.

Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) handles all external City communications, including the website and social media, as well as media inquiries. This role is handled by only two staff,

the PIO and a Digital Communications Coordinator, and both have been fully deployed to the EOC throughout the pandemic. While working in the EOC JIC, as described earlier in this report, they have greatly improved the City's communications in many ways, including:

- Implementing a new communications structure Citywide,
- Maintaining communication standards that prioritize giving people the information they need to take action, using simple language and graphics,
- Creating and maintaining a central COVID-19 webpage,
- Initiating virtual town halls, first on Twitter, then on Zoom, and
- Launching a COVID-19 data dashboard.

However, this focus on COVID-19 related public information has resulted in some challenges, such as a reduced ability to:

- Communicate about important non-emergency City programs and initiatives in a timely manner,
- Provide technical support for digital platforms, including digital accessibility/ADA compliance, website posting, email newsletters, and Berkeley Considers (online public forum), and
- Assist departments in creating communication and public engagement plans.

Neighborhood Services

At the beginning of 2020, Neighborhood Services consisted of only two positions, one of which was vacant at the onset of the pandemic. Due to budget constraints, one position remains unfilled. This staffing gap has significantly impacted the unit's ability to provide baseline services¹⁴ and respond to the community's needs. Despite this, the remaining employee in the unit has contributed to the City's COVID-19 response, responding to Outdoor Commerce permit requests and managing the City's hand-washing stations' and portable toilet locations' service and maintenance. Other work the unit has taken on during the pandemic, includes coordinating multiple weekly citywide encampment clean-ups with the Public Works and Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Departments and working on City policy regarding people experiencing homelessness.

¹⁴ Typical functions of Neighborhood Services include special events permitting (suspended during the pandemic), community response, and 311 call case management.

During the past year, the City's pilot program Homeless Outreach and Treatment Team (HOTT) transitioned to a closed case management model (i.e., maintaining services to people experiencing homelessness in Berkeley only if they already have an assigned case manager). To fill the gap this created, the City transitioned a position from another department into the Neighborhood Services Unit and expanded the unit's work to include citywide homeless outreach services.

Code Enforcement

Through their position in the City Manager's Office, Code Enforcement staff have been coordinating closely with the EOC to implement a new urgency ordinance enforcing public Health Officer Orders. This new area of responsibility has significantly increased the unit's workload, initially in development of this new multi-departmental policy and then in response to added calls for service for an array of Health Officer Order violations. Early estimates are that COVID-19 enforcement has created more than one full-time equivalent (FTE)¹⁵ of work and an estimated five to seven new cases are generated per week. This work is considered high priority and Code Enforcement has established a one business day response time goal. Consequently, the unit's response time has increased for other Code Enforcement work, from three to five business days to seven to ten business days. Additionally, Code Enforcement is assisting the City's Building and Safety inspectors with investigation of reported violations of COVID-19 protocols specific to construction sites, resulting in approximately one to three new cases a week. With these additional responsibilities, some Code Enforcement work has been suspended, including shared sidewalk policy operations.

Berkeley's 2020 Vision

The Berkeley's 2020 Vision unit consists of two employees, both of whom contributed to COVID-19 response work. One employee is filling the EOC role of School/Childcare liaison. While this has significantly impacted the unit's ability to move ahead on previously planned work, serving in this EOC role is an opportunity to deepen the Berkeley's 2020 Vision initiative's relationship with its core partner, Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD). The other employee supported the Office of Economic Development's review process for Small Business Grants (itself a response to COVID-19).

¹⁵ An FTE is a unit used to measure the amount of work of one full-time employee.

In addition to contributing to the COVID-19 response, Berkeley's 2020 Vision continued some of its regular work. The unit partnered with BUSD and Berkeley Community College to present a summer "Accelerate to Berkeley High School!" virtual program. It also partnered with BUSD to host a series of African-American Family/Principal Learning Circles. This year was to be a milestone year for Berkeley's 2020 Vision, involving a number of events, evaluation, and data analysis. With the pandemic, the milestone work has been suspended. At the same time, the many partners involved with Berkeley's 2020 Vision have been significantly impacted by the pandemic. This has caused programming, activities and in-person schooling to be suspended; standardized tests, which produce data to monitor student outcomes, to be canceled; and industries such as the childcare industry to be hobbled because steps to reduce transmission risk create financially unsustainable business models. Community agency partners have had to significantly shift in order to continue to provide services in a virtual environment. Berkeley 2020 Vision staff have worked hard to help agencies to reconceptualize their work in alignment with the initiative's goals.

2020 U.S. Census

The City began its work to support a full Census count in 2019. At the time, part of the plan included hiring two interns to conduct education and outreach. Due to COVID-19 related budget impacts, it was no longer feasible to hire interns. Instead, the City was creative in utilizing existing staff to support the work.

Nationally, the U.S. Census was completely disrupted by the pandemic. Locally, one of our hardest-to-count populations, college students, left Berkeley en-masse in mid-March 2020, when the U.C. Berkeley campus closed and the community began to shelter-in-place. This was at precisely the same time as Census enumeration was beginning. Many of these students still have not returned to Berkeley, with many classes exclusively offered remotely (i.e., online). The Census count remains ongoing until October 31, 2020, but as of early October 2020 campus adjacent census tracts are reporting 20.4 percent lower response rates than non-campus adjacent census tracts in Berkeley.

All traditional methods of in-person outreach (including a Census enumeration celebratory special event), and City-hosted community enumeration locations were canceled for the duration of the enumeration due to shelter-in-place guidance and the closure of public buildings to the public. At the federal level, non-response follow-up was significantly delayed,

then took place in a compressed timeline. Similarly, other methods of enumeration (group quarters, transient non-sheltered outdoor count, etc.) were delayed, compressed, and reduced.

Office of Economic Development

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on the local economy. In response, the Office of Economic Development (OED) both deployed staff to the EOC (i.e., serving as the Business Liaison) and shifted its focus to support businesses and non-profits as they grappled with having to close or transition to new ways of conducting business, an extraordinary loss of income, as well as implementation of Health Officer Orders and new laws and regulations at the federal, state and local level. Having an OED employee serve as Business Liaison helped with coordination of work and ensuring that goals and messages were consistently communicated. It also led to better connections and collaboration with other departments, resulting in

- Expanding OED's program reach with temporary staffing through Disaster Service Workers to create the Emergency Business Outreach Team.
- Addressing businesses' particular questions about compliance with Health Officer Orders by partnering with the City Attorney's Office and the Health, Housing and Community Services Department.
- Reviewing and awarding business and arts continuity grants quickly by receiving assistance from staff in other departments.

Besides strengthening relationships and collaborations across departments, OED was also able to continue its regular operational work, including

- Continuing regular meetings with business district networks and industry clusters.
- Continuing to publish [weekly newsletter](#) for over 2,000 business community subscribers, covering new Health Officer Orders, resources for businesses, City Council agenda items, funding sources and other opportunities.

At the same time, OED developed new and enhanced programs and strategies in response to COVID-19, including:

- Designing and implementing a Business and Arts Continuity Grant program, equitably allocating \$2 million to COVID-19 continuity grants for small business and arts organizations.

- Coordinating with the Mayor’s office and community leaders to supplement the \$2 million City Council allocation with private donations raised through the Berkeley Relief Fund.
- Conducting a robust outreach campaign, with support from Councilmembers’ offices, resulting in 1,100+ Business and Arts Organization Continuity Grant Program applications.
- Within 3 weeks, completing review of all 1,100+ applications and announcing awardees.
- Distributing \$2,624,541 in funds to Berkeley businesses and arts organizations impacted by COVID-19:
 - \$1.7 million went to 700 small businesses including restaurants, retail, and personal services.
 - \$954k went to 63 arts organizations including community arts, literary arts, performing arts, and visual arts.
- Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to develop and offer:
 - Business Education Workshops on topics ranging from e-commerce to stress reduction.
 - Business Forums on Outbreak Responses.
 - An online [COVID-19 Resource Hub](#) with information on a variety of topics (e.g. Financial Resources, Working from Home, Reopening Your Business, Labor & Employment, etc.).
- Partnering with the Vice Mayor to hold nine distinct [listening sessions](#) with industry sectors to inform City staff’s development of plans and protocols for partial and full reopening protocols for all of the following industries: food and beverage, retail, arts and culture, personal services (e.g. hair salons, tattoo artists, and massage therapists), fitness, sustainability (e.g. solar power installers, recyclers), office-based businesses, tech startups, manufacturers, and real estate brokers and developers. Over 300

COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS & ARTS ORGANIZATION EMERGENCY GRANT PROGRAM IMPACT

1,058 Business Continuity applications received

71 Arts Continuity applications received

700 local businesses are awarded \$1,669,999 to

251 restaurants

85 personal services

142 retail establishments

222 other services

63 art organizations are awarded \$954,543

participants, representing all City Council districts, engaged in meetings to share thoughts, ideas and concerns about reopening. In addition to facilitating peer-to-peer sharing, OED now shares relevant [information and resources](#) through tailored communications with these industry-specific groups.

- Increasing the frequency of citywide business communications via its [OED Newsletter](#) to make sure businesses were aware of the latest COVID-19 response and recovery information and resources (e.g. Health Officer Orders, educational workshops, relief programs, marketing opportunities, legal support clinics, etc.).
- Increasing sector-specific outreach and communications, hosting virtual forums with business leaders.
- Adapting its [#DiscoveredinBerkeley](#) business marketing campaign to include a “Local Love” theme to encourage the community to support local businesses and recognize local entrepreneurs pandemic-inspired pivots, innovation and resilience. OED will also be developing a [#Berkeleyholidays](#) campaign to promote citywide holiday-themed events and shopping opportunities during the upcoming holiday season.
- Conducting quarterly financial health surveys of Berkeley’s arts organizations in order to understand in real time the impacts of COVID-19 on the arts sector. The results of the first quarterly survey can be found [here](#).
- Developing a program of temporary public art projects to support community recovery throughout Berkeley. Artwork projects will relate to the themes of public health, economic recovery, social justice, and homelessness. The program will be launched in early 2021.
- Partnering with Kala Art Institute and the City of Berkeley’s Health, Housing & Community Services Department to place two artists in residence to work as cultural strategists on issues related to community well-being and resilience and recovery in response to COVID-19. The launch of this project was covered by [KQED](#).
- Analyzing survey data, in combination with other data sources (e.g., Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, business-related tax revenues, commercially available business data sets), to model the overall economic impacts in the city and the region and, by extension, fiscal impacts to the City of Berkeley.
- Revising the Revolving Loan Fund program in response to funds received by the federal government. Pending City Council approval of amendments to loan guidelines, the program will be made widely available to provide low-cost loans to businesses throughout the community.

OED also experienced operational challenges during the pandemic. The small unit is currently operating with reduced staff because the OED manager is serving as interim director for the Planning Department. At the same time, OED employees work well into the evening and over the weekend to maintain regular operational work in conjunction with a robust COVID-19 response. Moving forward OED anticipates requiring additional resources for data collection and analysis to support the heightened need for accurate forecasting during this unprecedented series of impacts on the economy and our community.

Finance

Since the pandemic and associated public health restrictions began, Finance has focused on ensuring the continuity of its operations, and on making sure it can provide the best information on the City's current and long-term fiscal condition. Keeping staff safe while continuing the procurement of goods and services that enable all city services, as well as the revenues that pay for it all, has involved a great deal of innovation and teamwork from all Finance divisions: General Services, Treasury, and Financial Systems.

Finance also established a Fiscal Analysis Working Group to closely monitor the impacts of the pandemic on City revenues. The group consisted of the Revenue Collections Manager, Treasury Manager, Systems Accountant, and Finance Director. The Working Group closely monitors actual remittances to the City, as well as revenue reports of other regional municipalities, and forecasts from County and State agencies, in order to maintain accurate revenue projections in the unprecedented and evolving economic environment.

General Services

General Services staff participated in daily EOC calls and other ad hoc meetings from the time the EOC was activated in January 2020. They have prioritized EOC requests for assistance, and have designated at least one staff to be dedicated to the EOC any time there was a need to expedite a procurement request, provide guidance on procurement procedures, or assist with sourcing and order placement. General Services staff met weekly to review any outstanding EOC purchases and ensure they were fulfilled as quickly as possible. Staff developed an emergency procurement policy in conjunction with EOC leadership and the City Attorney's Office. Additionally, staff attended FEMA webinars to make sure that emergency procurements were conducted in a manner that maximized potential federal reimbursement. General Services continues to provide EOC support for various special projects (e.g., Respite Sites Program, Mask Up Project; etc.).

To facilitate the continuity of all procurement operations during the pandemic, General Services has modified the request for proposals (RFP) and bidding process to accommodate COVID-19 physical distancing requirements. Bids are currently opened at the back of City hall and contractors and vendors are able to participate with all physical distancing guidelines enforced.

Treasury

The Treasury Division continued to be available to secure and deposit payments received by City departments, and modified its Treasury Counter operations to minimize staff interaction and promote physical distancing. The unit established an appointment scheduling system to eliminate queueing and minimize the amount of time non-Finance staff spend in Treasury offices. Treasury also worked with City Departments to configure ACH¹⁶-enabled deposit accounts to facilitate remote payments by citizens and other City customers. Treasury deployed new credit card acceptance terminals in order to expedite the processing of call-in credit card payments, which were greatly increased due to COVID-19. These terminals enabled faster and less physically taxing manual entry of phone payments. In conjunction with the Department's Financial Systems Group, Treasury continues to work with other City departments to deploy online payment and automatic payment solutions to minimize the impact of COVID-19 closures of public-facing facilities across the City.

Financial Systems

The Financial Systems Group has taken steps to ensure that Finance operations continue efficiently while maintaining employee safety. In response to the pandemic, the City allowed employees to have remote access to email and certain City systems from their home computers, which allowed the unit to continue to conduct its services. The Financial Systems Group also took the initiative to establish procedures for Finance staff to resolve, in-house, many technical problems related to remote working. This reduced the need for assistance from strained IT Department resources. The Financial Systems unit also worked with the Finance Customer Service Counter (CSC) staff to set up a customer triage phone line, so that City customers unable to interact with staff at the CSC could be directed to the correct staff member to assist and accept payments. They also began a project to enable more business license taxes to be paid through an online portal, which has previously been limited to payments for Rental of Real Property licenses.

¹⁶ Automated Clearing House (ACH) is a method for transferring funds electronically.

Fire

The Fire Department includes the Office of Emergency Services (OES). OES staff lead the City's emergency readiness activities as described in the *Berkeley Ready* section of this document. During emergency response, OES staff lead coordination of the EOC.

In addition to OES leadership in the EOC, the Fire Department activated its own Department Operations Center (DOC) in response to COVID-19. Through the DOC structure, Fire was able to:

- Conduct daily, every-other-day, and weekly updates at every level of the department to communicate progress and information about the response and operational changes.
- Acquire and deploy personal protective equipment (PPE) to first responders.
- Develop and implement policy changes, testing protocols and response protocols.
- Redirect multiple staff to work in the EOC and the initial COVID-19 testing site.

Other ways in which the Fire Department contributed to the City's COVID-19 response include:

- Creating the Mobile Integrated Paramedic Unit, an overtime staffed community paramedic unit designed to intercept non-critical COVID-19 related calls and route them to services other than hospital emergency departments.
- Initiating, staffing, and coordinating a COVID-19 testing site in West Berkeley, until the EOC was sufficiently staffed to take over operations.
- Up-staffing the designated infection control officer (DICO) role by training all paramedic supervisors and some Berkeley Police Department officers to serve as infection control officers, coordinate testing, and conduct contact tracing for internal COVID-19 exposures.

Operationally, the Fire Department changed procedures to reduce potential COVID-19 spread, including:

- Implementing strict Personal Protective Gear requirements on all calls, during training, and in fire stations.
- Cancelling all non-essential public interaction.
- Restricting patient contact and exposure on calls to a minimal number of personnel.
- Cancelling non-essential in-person training.
- Conducting frequent post-exposure testing, contact tracing, and monitoring testing.

- Implementing mobile testing of deceased patients when exposure to first responders was suspected.

Health, Housing and Community Services

The Health, Housing and Community Services (HHCS) Department has many different divisions and units and plays a leadership role in the City's COVID-19 response. The below sections describe COVID-19's operational impacts on each part of HHCS.

Office of the Director: Health Officer Unit

The majority of the Health Officer Unit employees are deployed to COVID-19 response activities. Many of these employees, including nurses, epidemiologists, and the Health Officer, are performing their usual roles of disease control and data management and analysis for COVID-19. This work includes critical partnerships with other City Departments, including the City Manager's Office, Library, and Parks, Recreation and Waterfront. Additionally, the Health Officer consistently meets with U.C. Berkeley's Tang Center Director, as well as the Vice Chancellor, to coordinate and discuss a variety of matters including testing and contact tracing.

The Health Officer Unit includes Vital Statistics which issues birth and death certificates and typically operates from a public-facing counter, and the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Program, which typically relies on paper-based responses. Early in the pandemic, when public buildings closed, Vital Statistics staff completely reworked their operations by creating a screening process for customers, scheduling appointments, handling payments, and moving its physical location. The Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Program also changed its operations by moving to an almost completely electronic process.

Besides operational pivots, the Health Officer Unit also developed and implemented a variety of new or enhanced programs and strategies in response to COVID-19, including:

- Utilizing web-based platforms for communication with COVID-19 cases and contacts.
- Implementing Emocha, technology using video in directly observing therapy, to monitor medication adherence of tuberculosis patients, instead of daily in-person home visits.
- Enhancing collaboration with U.C. Berkeley's Tang Center through a memorandum of understanding for case investigation and contact tracing work.
- Strengthening partnerships with long term care facilities and homeless shelters.
- Increasing the visibility of Public Health and its importance in protecting community health.

The extraordinary efforts of the Health Officer Unit to address and respond to COVID-19 have reduced the unit's capacity for some daily operations, with impacts including:

- Staff working extra hours to keep up with day to day disease control work (e.g., active and complex tuberculosis cases).
- Delays in
 - Case investigation work for other communicable diseases.
 - Providing deliverables for STD Prevention and HIV Surveillance grants.
 - Identifying funding and recruiting staff.
 - Processing birth and death certificates.
 - Producing the next Berkeley Health Status Report.

Office of the Director: Administration and Fiscal

Administration and Fiscal Unit employees participated in the EOC in a variety of roles, including serving in the Timekeeping Unit and serving as Schools/Childcare Liaison. These employees forged strong partnerships internally with the Office of Economic Development and 311 Customer Service and established external partnerships throughout Berkeley and the Bay Area to better support schools and childcare. While working directly on the COVID-19 response in the EOC, Unit staff also pivoted daily operational processes in order to approve paper documents remotely. Some of the challenges the Administration and Fiscal Unit faced operationally consisted of deferred work and ongoing overtime work, sometimes contributing to stress and staff “burnout”.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Unit placed much of its routine work on hold until early November 2020, assigning staff to the EOC to support COVID-19 response. Staff participated in many ways, including delivery of food and groceries to the elderly, assisting at the City's COVID-19 testing sites, helping conduct a survey of local businesses on COVID-19 impacts, engaging in citywide COVID-19 Health Officer Order enforcement activities, and supporting COVID-19 contact tracing. One of the Environmental Health Unit's key COVID-19 contributions has been responding to complaints, including Vector Control efforts at encampments and around neighborhoods. In terms of challenges, Environmental Health employees have concerns regarding onsite inspections during the pandemic, particularly at sites with known COVID-19 cases, and offices or workspaces with poor air circulation. Staff have been working on

implementing virtual inspections as an option for facilities that present a COVID-19 safety risk (e.g., where physical distancing is difficult to manage).

Aging Services

Aging Services Unit staff have been actively deployed to the EOC throughout the City's COVID-19 response, with employees serving as Operations Support Section Coordinator, Testing Branch Co-coordinator, and Testing Site Liaison. Employees have also provided services such as transporting unhoused individuals to quarantine housing, packing food for distribution to the unhoused, and directing traffic at a testing site.

Before the pandemic, the Aging Services Meals-on-Wheels program relied heavily on a robust volunteer pool to pack and deliver meals. Once the Shelter-in-Place Order was implemented, volunteers were lost. Program managers scrambled to replace those volunteers and maintain these programs, utilizing a combination of Aging Services staff and Disaster Service Workers from other departments to pack and deliver food for the Senior Center Lunch Program.

Since the start of the pandemic, Aging Services has had to pivot its operations to accommodate Health Officer Orders. Some examples of this include:

- Shifting the Senior Lunch Program to a home-delivery model, paralleling Meals-on-Wheels operations.
- Providing information and assistance by phone rather than in-person at the Senior Center.
- Assessing Meals-on-Wheels referrals (to determine eligibility) by phone.
- Using telehealth for case management.
- Establishing a Grab & Go lunch pick-up program for seniors who prefer to pick-up their lunch in person.

The Aging Services Unit is facing a variety of operational challenges related to the pandemic. Many senior center members have cited concerns about loneliness and isolation, which has prompted staff to increase "well-checks". At the same time, the Social Services Case Management staff have observed an increase in referrals needing case management services.

Mental Health

Throughout the pandemic, the Mental Health unit has coordinated with the EOC on COVID-19 response, particularly in terms of its Homeless Outreach and Treatment Team (HOTT), Mobile Crisis Unit, and ACCESS (Acute Crisis Care and Evaluation for Systemwide Services). Besides coordinating work with the EOC, Mental Health worked closely with the Human Resources Department to develop and implement protocols for staff safety at a variety of sites and to support the safe provision of services in the field. Many Mental Health staff transitioned to working remotely, using phones or Zoom for telehealth, and found it easier to bring stakeholders together virtually. In response to the pandemic, Mental Health:

- Developed and implemented a “warm line” for Berkeley High School students, staff, and families.
- Expanded hours for the crisis phone line.
- Implemented a variety of safety measures for in-person services.

While there have been benefits to the changes in operations outlined above, there have also been challenges, including:

- Reduction in the amount of time clinicians spend with clients, in some cases due to clients with limited access to phones and/or computers.
- Difficulty locating individuals who are homeless, as staff are spending a larger percentage of their time working remotely and clinics have reduced hours for clients to visit.
- Reductions in referrals to Mental Health services. This is likely due to limited hours at clinics, individuals being more isolated and less likely to be referred by community partners, and BUSD operating remotely (leading to less identification of student mental health concerns).

Public Health

The regular work of Public Health has continued through the pandemic, often over the phone or virtually. The Women, Infant, and Children’s (WIC) program is conducting enrollments and nutrition assessments through phone and video conferencing sessions. New mother support groups are continuing through virtual workshops and sessions through WIC and the Black Infant Health programs. Families receiving food assistance through the WIC program are reminded of appointments and resources via text messaging. Smoking cessation and oral health workshops have transitioned to virtual sessions as well. Reproductive health services

transitioned to telehealth for existing patients for birth control refills soon after the Shelter-in-Place Order went into effect, and the Berkeley High School Health Center has opened with the new school year using telehealth services where possible.

At the same time, close to half of the Public Health unit has been deployed to the EOC for a range of roles and activities. Other employees have served in Disaster Service Worker roles:

- Assisting Aging Services with food distribution.
- Working with the Public Works and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Departments to purchase and install refillable water stations to increase access to water for the unhoused and for cooling stations.
- Incorporating PPE distributions to partners, such as dental providers.

Public Health, in general, has held many roles in the EOC since its activation, leading a host of COVID-19 response operations, including:

- Collecting and distributing PPE.
- Coordinating with long term care facilities.
- Supporting mass fatality planning.
- Coordinating with County and State COVID-19 response efforts.
- Standing up COVID-19 test sites for symptomatic patients.
- Transitioning testing strategies from symptomatic individuals to include asymptomatic community members.
- Creating mobile testing with an equity approach for vulnerable populations.
- Implementing a State-funded Optum testing site in Berkeley.
- Supporting the implementation of the Curative self-administered testing site in Berkeley.

These efforts have been pivotal to Berkeley's COVID-19 response and have had tangible results, including bringing the City's testing numbers from an average of 56 tests completed per day to an average of 366 tests completed per day, which is well beyond the 245 per day target for the City.

However, these efforts have come at a cost. For example, all Targeted Case Management (TCM) program staff were deployed to the EOC and have not been able to invoice for programmatic activities since March 2020. This has left some clients without case

management services since the EOC was activated. Also, the Immunization (IZ) program was halted when the IZ nurse was deployed to the EOC. The IZ program has been nonoperational since then and flu shot clinics have been difficult to stand up due to hiring challenges. In addition to the public health impacts for the community from these programs being halted, the unit will not be able to fully complete its grant deliverable or fully draw down the IZ grant funds, resulting in revenue losses. Due to the nature of public health programs, many outreach and health promotion activities were stalled or deferred. Public Health programs shifted as much as possible to a virtual modality, which required the purchase of software to support online and virtual activities. Public Health also had to purchase laptops and accessories to accommodate staff's remote work.

Additionally, throughout Public Health, which is heavily grant funded, many programmatic staff were shifted away from completing their grant work, which hinders the City's ability to complete the grant deliverables and may lead to a potential loss of revenue that would otherwise cover personnel and operational costs

Housing and Community Services

Housing and Community Services (HCS) employees worked on COVID-19 support activities from within the Division and also deployed staff to the EOC. Their work included leading the COVID-19 response for vulnerable populations in Berkeley, as well as supporting response efforts by recruiting staff and scheduling them for open positions. HCS collaborates with other units in HHCS, as well as many other Departments and outside partners, including Alameda County, non-profits, and State and federal officials. All HCS staff contributed to COVID-19 response, either directly or through supporting normal work of colleagues deployed to the EOC.

HCS has also partnered with the Eviction Defense Center (EDC) to utilize a number of grants to assist community members in need, such as:

- \$125,000 Basic Needs Fund, of which EDC has allocated \$86,278 and distributed \$78,778. To date, 69 individuals have been assisted through this fund. There are currently seven pending applications.
- \$1,018,456 Housing Retention Program COVID-19, of which EDC has allocated all of the funds to 174 households and distributed \$859,324. EDC estimates it will finish distributing the fund by mid-December.

- \$900,000 Housing Retention Program, of which EDC has allocated \$694,157 for 144 households and distributed \$108,555. EDC estimates it will have exhausted these funds by the end of November. At that time, EDC will create a waitlist.

The work of HCS continues throughout the pandemic, often in new and innovative ways. One example is in the Youth Works Program. Since it was impossible to administer the Summer Youth Works program as in the past, HCS transitioned to selecting the highest need 50 applicants and worked with partner agencies to make sure they could still participate in the program. Staff conducted training and placements virtually as opposed to in person, and instituted safety protocols for all placements. In this way, rather than cancelling the program, the City's highest need youth were able to participate.

Additionally, HCS has changed how it is doing [Shelter Plus Care](#) inspections to insure that placements can continue through the pandemic. Staff worked extensively with non-profit partners to help them modify their programs to continue to safely serve clients, including meals programs and shelters. HCS greatly expanded services to encampments, including increased and "enriched" outreach providing food and other essential items. Also, HCS set up COVID-19 respite housing for unhoused vulnerable people both directly and in partnership with Alameda County and worked in partnership with other agencies to provide testing for vulnerable populations.

The COVID-19 response has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on the work of HCS and its individual staff members. Staff deployed to address COVID-19 have been unable to do their regular duties. This means other staff have had to pick up the work of those who are deployed. With the work of this division, there are often hard deadlines from funders that cannot be moved or adjusted. This has resulted in staff working many extra hours to complete all tasks, and other priorities not being addressed due to lack of capacity.

This has been an extraordinarily challenging time for HCS. As noted above, part of the reason is that HCS has programs and projects that cannot be delayed or postponed. Also, HCS works extensively with internal and external partners, and this has been much more difficult to do during this pandemic, in that people are not at their desks, there are technical challenges in meeting remotely, and they too are dealing with many more issues than before due to COVID-19 impacts.

Human Resources

In response to COVID-19, the Human Resources Department (HR) pivoted to quickly respond to the Health Officer Orders, public health regulations, and supporting testing sites. As a result of these efforts, HR has lifted up new policies, trainings, and procedures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Health Officer Orders, and new related laws. These include:

- Administrative Regulation 2.4 Family Care Leave (revised),
- Administrative Regulation 2.23 Telework Policy (new),
- Administrative Regulation 2.22 Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (new),
- Guidance on Post-Exposure,
- Guidance and Safety Protocols While at Work,
- Telework Policy Trainings,
- Worker Engagement Trainings, and
- COVID-19 Trainings.

This required several meet and confers with labor groups regarding safety and alternate work schedules to reduce potential COVID-19 exposure. HR also implemented a citywide hiring freeze, and has incurred increased costs to address the legal issues surrounding employees and COVID-19, including a review of policies, new laws, meet and confer of Disaster Service Worker work, and alternate work schedules. Additionally, HR has had staff consistently deployed to the EOC, in particular its Safety Officers.

HR focused on ensuring clear communication of these new policies and procedures to staff by:

- Meeting with labor groups to provide bi-monthly updates.
- Launching a COVID-19 Employee Information webpage.
- Providing regular communication around Positive Employee Cases.
- Using a variety of methods to communicate with employees (e.g., Zoom, email, flyers, intranet, internet).

While striving to meet the HR needs of the COVID-19 response, much of the regular work of HR continued, including labor negotiations for all City contracts and staffing a project to move HR and payroll operations to a modern software solution (due to launch in late 2020).

Information Technology

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) mobilized quickly in response to COVID-19, deploying Disaster Service Workers to the EOC, maintaining essential department functions, and establishing employees' ability to work remotely to ensure continuity of operations for City departments.

Several DoIT staff were deployed to the EOC, supporting Logistics, Plans and Intelligence, Public Safety, and Joint Information Center (JIC) work. As part of the JIC, DoIT staff from 311 Customer Service (311) helped draft the COVID-19 Safety Enforcement Strategy with the City Attorney, Public Health, and the City Manager's Office, as well as related workflows for 311, the EOC, the Office of Economic Development, Code Enforcement, and Environmental Health.

Telecommuting

DoIT helped set up almost 700 employees to securely work from home. This work included:

- Setting up security tokens to all virtual private network (VPN) users to improve security via 2-factor authentication.
- Providing Skype for Business dial-in numbers for conference calls.
- Improving network access performance and stability by increasing the number of remote terminal servers from one to seven.
- Improving overall network stability and performance by implementing login limits per server and load balancing across all servers.
- Improving the stability and performance of the City's remote access platform, as well as improving the user experience, by implementing a new web VPN solution (Citrix Storefront).
- Configuring and deploying almost 70 laptops for remote work.
- Setting up and distributing over 200 iPhones for remote work.
- Addressing any unique remote software needs on a case-by-case basis by installing software on all seven terminal servers.
- Working with HR and the City Attorney's Office to draft the telecommuting policy.
- Publishing over 25 knowledge base (i.e., user guide) articles relating to remote work.

While DoIT was able to help City employees telecommute, the department also had to adjust its own operations. Office space for DoIT consists of less than half of one floor in the 2180

Milvia Street building. Pre-pandemic, this space was crowded with 50 employees plus some consultants. In other parts of the building, a space of similar size typically contains work areas for 15 to 20 employees. During the pandemic, consultants were not allowed onsite. However, space remained cramped with cubicles less than five feet apart and in some cases, the employees were sitting less than three feet apart. In response, to increase worker safety, DoIT made scheduling and shift adjustments, increased telecommuting options, and instituted other measures including installing plexiglass.

Cyber Security

Transitioning the City to remote work also entailed strengthening cyber security. Cyber security incidents have increased substantially, with sources citing anywhere from a 300 to 800 percent increase¹⁷, resulting in the need to make many policy changes to enable additional controls. Some of the cyber security strategies that DoIT employed include:

- Providing “tips and tricks” and informational documents about cyber security.
- Making mandatory a cyber security assessment for all projects and software.
- Requesting multifactor/2-factor authentication by all vendors accessing City network and systems.
- Developing a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) template with the City Attorney’s Office and HHCS.
- Attending weekly Alameda County Law Enforcement COVID-19 meetings for weekly updates on regional and national issues.
- Updating the City contract boilerplate Appendix for Security to reflect recent changes in the law and cybersecurity events.
- Implementing other cyber security technical safeguards.

Technical Support

After the initial Shelter in Place Order was announced, as employees started working remotely, DoIT Help Desk requests increased dramatically. The Help Desk call volume increased by 45 percent and ticket volume increased by 50 percent between February and March 2020. In response, DoIT partnered with the Library, bringing in three Disaster Service

¹⁷ Various industry sources reporting, include a projection of 300% (<https://www.cybintsolutions.com/cyber-security-facts-stats/>), a report of 400% (<https://www.insurancebusinessmag.com/us/news/cyber/fbi-sees-a-400-increase-in-reports-of-cyberattacks-since-the-start-of-the-pandemic-231939.aspx>) and a report of 800% (<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/top-cyber-security-experts-report-4-000-cyber-attacks-a-day-since-covid-19-pandemic-301110157.html>).

Workers from Library IT to assist with the high volume of Help Desk calls and to allow some Help Desk staff to assist with hardware deployments via phone support. Also, DoIT implemented a Walk-in Appointment calendar at the Help Desk to implement physical distancing protocols.

DoIT was also flooded with many requests for software solutions to assist with remote work. Some examples include:

- Remote building inspection solution for the Planning Department.
- Forms and survey solutions for the EOC and HHCS.
- Multiple technology solutions and business associate agreements for HHCS (tele-health, tele-texting tool).
- Contact Tracing contract coordination for HHCS.
- COVID-19 Statistics Report on City's website.
- Video Conferencing / Teleconferencing tools for staff and City Council.

311 Customer Service

With the closure of City buildings, 311 Customer Service (311) is the only full-service customer service center available to the community. As a result of the increased demand related to COVID-19, the Direct Line answering service assists 311 two hours per day to enable staff to meet each morning for daily updates, to provide lunch coverage, and at the end of the day so that 311 can process credit card edits for the Finance Department's Treasury division.

Additionally, 311 and Library Disaster Service Workers together manage and maintain the City's COVID-19 email box, which was stood up May 1, 2020. To date 1,550 emails have been received, 1,730 responses have been written and over 1,000 internal emails have been generated to coordinate responses with Public Health, Legal, Office of Economic Development and EOC Management to ensure the City conveys timely and accurate information.

The City of Berkeley's **Open Data Portal** <https://data.cityofberkeley.info/> contains many data sets freely accessible to the public. The most downloaded dataset in June 2020 was COVID-19 related.

Besides maintaining regular operations and the COVID-19 email box, 311 worked with the Help Desk to set up and manage scripting of the Communicable Disease Nurse Triage line. The line enabled community members to schedule COVID-19 testing appointments and get answers to their medically sensitive questions. As the requirements of the Nurse Triage line changed over time, the phone scripts and programming to call lines were updated three times to adapt the program to the evolving COVID-19 situation.

Library

At the height of the COVID-19 response to date, the Library had 47 Disaster Service Workers deployed to the EOC or in training to prepare for deployment. Library staff supported all areas of the City's COVID response, including support to the shower program, 311, testing sites, shelters, monitoring parks/skateboard areas, and food/supply distribution. A number of staff trained to support the Office of Economic Development, and their work included assessing grant requests from local businesses and arts organizations, advising businesses on complying with the Health Officer Order, surveying businesses, and related activities. Besides direct deployment to the EOC, the Library also engaged in other COVID-19 response activities, including collaborating with other departments to develop an informed service response and deploying Library IT staff to support the City's IT pandemic response efforts.

In the days immediately following the Shelter-in-Place order, providing this critical support had significantly less impact on library operations because library facilities were closed and not providing in-person services. As the Library introduced an outdoor pickup library service, fewer Disaster Service Workers were deployed to support COVID-19 operations, and more staff returned to support library services. COVID-19 deployments generally had a positive impact on the Library's operations by reinforcing its connections with other City departments.

Like many organizations, the Library needed to develop new service models to provide for a higher degree of safety for both staff and the public. For the Library, this meant shifting to provide curbside pickup service for library holds. Many people have expressed appreciation for the ability to access library materials in a safe way. The Library also shifted some of its programming online, which has been very well received. Programming that moved online included the annual Summer Reading Program and the ESL Conversation Club. Additionally, as an adaptation to people being unable to receive technical help in person, the Library now provides new virtual one-on-one technical help. The Library is also offering special virtual programs, like [Puppet Art Theater: The Boy Who Cried Wolf](#).

These innovations were counterbalanced by some operational challenges relating to COVID-19. In general, the Library is operating with overall lower staffing levels and many people have needed to take leave. The Library has also needed to explore how to maintain employee health and safety with new workflows, which sometimes requires the provision of new

supplies.¹⁸ Another ongoing challenge is associated with library processing. It necessarily takes place in person, with staff having to both physically distance and continue processing both new materials and items already in circulation.

¹⁸ The Library purchased supplies such as face masks and N95 masks to cope with the air quality, wipes, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant, as well as many more bins, to store books and materials that are under quarantine until they can be processed.

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront

The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) Department both directly mobilized employees and adapted much of its operational work in response to the pandemic. The below sections describe the operational impacts on each of PRW's divisions.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division contributed to the COVID-19 response in a variety of ways, including:

- Developing department policies and procedures for remote work.
- Supporting department staff with purchases relating to COVID-19 (e.g., sanitizer, disinfectant, masks, plastic screens, caution tape, signage, handwashing stations, portable toilets, laptops for remote work).
- Supporting the EOC with time tracking and cost recovery efforts.

Capital Projects Division

Much of the Capital Projects Division's COVID-19 work related to adjusting timing and funding of projects, such as:

- Developing and implementing a strategy to adjust to a loss of \$5.3 million of General Fund (GF) resources previously allocated to [Measure T1](#) (T1), by:
 - Rejecting all Grove Park Project bidders,
 - Delaying the Marina Streets Project,
 - Borrowing funding from the Parks Tax and Public Works Special Funds, and
 - Accelerating the T1 Phase 2 Public Process.
- Developing and implementing a strategy to adjust to a loss of \$1.9 million of GF resources previously allocated for work in the Marina by deferring the replacement of failing Marina pilings.
- Developing and implementing a strategy to adjust to a loss of \$545,000 of GF resources previously allocated for work on the Echo Lake ADA Project to make all current facilities and paths of travel accessible by not going to bid.
- Developing and implementing a strategy to adjust to a deferral of \$400,000 from FY21 GF by delaying project timelines and seeking alternative funding sources for the Ohlone Play Structure and Mural Garden Project and John Hinkle Lower Play Structure, Picnic and Amphitheater Improvements Project.

Additionally, Capital Projects implemented and enforced Health Officer standards related to construction.

Parks Division

The Parks Division worked hard to make public spaces safe and clean during the pandemic, including:

- Developing COVID-19 standards for restroom cleaning,
- Deploying Landscape Gardeners and Groundskeepers to clean City restrooms three times per day and portable toilets twice per day.
- Changing assigned cleanup routes to focus on areas with an increased number of people living and sleeping in parks.
- Responding to hundreds of phone calls and emails from the community about people living in parks.
- Engaging in weekly checks to ensure play, picnic and recreational areas (closed due to COVID-19) are secured and taped off with caution tape, with signage in place.
- More frequently checking and emptying garbage cans which were filling more quickly with increased usage of parks and the waterfront.¹⁹

Additionally, as the City worked to decompress its shelters for the unhoused in order to implement social distancing requirements, Parks worked with the EOC to prepare the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center (YAP) to become a shelter for the unhoused. This including modifying the facility by adding additional temporary rooms and installing a washer and dryer. However, as alternate options for the unhoused became available, Parks worked with the EOC to pivot the YAP site to serve as a COVID-19 testing location.

Recreation Division

In the Recreation Division, supervisors and managers were heavily involved in the EOC at the onset of the pandemic. They explored establishing childcare for essential workers and connected essential workers to childcare opportunities. Along with Parks, as discussed above, the Recreation Division contributed to the City's efforts to provide shelter to unhoused people by:

- Creating space for food and water storage at YAP for distribution to encampments,
- Purchasing supplies and equipment,
- Developing a shelter manual,
- Recruiting and training staff to operate the shelter,

¹⁹ Garbage cans in Aquatic Park and the Waterfront are not serviced by Zero Waste.

- Setting up the shelter, and
- Providing building supervision staff for a COVID-19 Testing Site at YAP.

The Recreation Division's pandemic response also included:

- Expanding the Shower Program hours and sites, as well as developing and implementing a COVID-19 Shower Program protocol.
- Developing and implementing COVID-19 protocols for use of the skate park.
- Implementing Summer Childcare/Camp/Afterschool Program from June 2020 through the present, following all Health Officer Orders with all operations exclusively outdoors. This also involved developing a COVID-19 Summer Camp/Afterschool Program staff manual and training program.
- Working with BUSD staff to provide priority scholarships to Berkeley's Excellent Academic Road to Success (BEARS) afterschool program participants.
- Implementing COVID-19 protocols for the Summer Lunch Program that was available at eight locations throughout the City from June 15, 2020 to August 7, 2020, such as grab-and-go lunches.
- Developing a COVID-19 Manual and training for Aquatics employees.
- Implementing Aquatics Programming in compliance with Health Officer Order restrictions.
- Providing information to the public about the Health Officer Orders. Park monitors have been providing public health information, handing out face coverings, monitoring activity in parks, and tracking face covering usage. During 59 separate counting events from July through October, Park Monitors observed over 20,000 people with, on average, 76 percent of community members wearing face coverings.
- Making sure groups with field permits are complying with Health Officer Orders.
- Modifying the popular "Movies in the Park" series to be a "Drive-in Movie" series.

Shower Program Participation

From late April through early October, over **3,387 people** participated at **West Campus Pool** and **6,777 people** at **Willard Pool**.

Waterfront Division

The Waterfront Division has had to pivot in response to challenges arising in relation to the pandemic, including:

- Developing a payment deferral policy for slipholders and live-aboards experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of COVID-19.

- Adjusting staffing in response to a reduction in revenue for the Marina Fund. Staffing adjustments included reducing staffing levels by not hiring a replacement Marina Assistant for an internal promotion and reducing Waterfront Security coverage. Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on lease revenue on hotel, restaurant, and commercial tenants, the Marina Fund will exhaust all reserves within a year.
- Crime increased significantly since the initial Shelter-in-Place Order was issued, with 84 incidents in August 2020 alone, including assault, vehicle theft and break-ins, boat theft, and vandalism. As a result, staff have had to focus on addressing security issues, which has taken away time from customer service responsibilities.
- Requiring staff overtime to pick up additional garbage stemming from the increased usage of the waterfront during the Shelter-in-Place.

Planning and Development

Operational Adjustments in Response to COVID-19

In early March 2020, prior to first Shelter-In-Place Order, the Planning and Development Department (Planning) convened its management team to strategize for remote working and possible changes to service delivery. Immediately after the first Shelter-In-Place Order was issued, Planning went live with the [Virtual Permit Service Center](#) which made all permitting services available without a visit to City offices. These include new building permit applications, submittal of plans and resubmittals of corrections. These services are mainstays of the construction process needed by both homeowners with small projects and builders of large construction projects. Since the initial Shelter-In-Place Order, the Permit Service Center has:

- Initiated 3,500 building permit reviews,
- Issued 2,400 permits, including revisions and deferrals,
- Completed 4,000 cashiering transactions, and
- Processed about 15-20 plan submittals and resubmittals daily.

Additionally, Planning developed a process to accept new Land Use project applications and offer other services online ([as described here](#)), many of which previously required in-office visits previously.

Within one week of the first Shelter-In-Place Order, Planning contracted to use a new remote video technology (“Blitzz”) to maintain required inspections, allowing construction to continue without potentially exposing customers and staff to COVID-19. Berkeley became one of the first cities in the nation to use this platform, and many other cities have since also followed suit. Berkeley is now conducting an average of 130 daily inspections this way.

Another way Planning adjusted in response to COVID-19 was by enforcing Health Officer Orders pertaining to construction, which included remote and onsite enforcement when most construction work was ordered to halt. Later, when construction was allowed to resume, staff publicized the new detailed COVID-19 site safety protocols and assisted work sites with compliance. This work included multiple messages to every permit holder in Berkeley in the last three years.

Within Planning, the Building and Safety Plan Check team quickly adapted to remote working via VPN, using remote meeting and file-sharing platforms, and providing staff with access to a digital code library. The team has maintained its historical weekly average of around 100 plan checks per week, and responded with comments early or on-time for every project in the last 80 calendar days.

In May 2020, Planning re-started Commission meetings for legally mandated and time-sensitive matters, using a video conferencing/webinar platform (Zoom). Part of this work included learning the platform, training around 25 Commission Chairs, secretaries and support staff, and developing completely new procedures for noticing and agenda preparation. To date, eight essential public bodies staffed by Planning have held more than 30 meetings, allowing timely consideration of development projects and continuation of critical policy efforts like the Adeline Corridor Plan and Zoning Ordinance Revision Project.

Service Impacts to the Department

While Planning was able to adjust its operations and creatively innovate how it accomplished its work, it also deployed many Disaster Service Workers to the EOC, resulting in the following service impacts:

- Shifting work in the Land Use unit to address the loss of staff that were reassigned to the EOC.
- Decreasing customer service. The permitting process depends on the ability of staff members to establish and maintain a relationship with their customers. When staff are deployed to the EOC, there are fewer staff to provide timely responses to customer inquiries.
- Increasing work sent to consultants. Land Use had to increase the work assigned to third-party consultants due to the need to address COVID-19 related projects such as outdoor commerce.
- Decreasing number of Hazardous Materials inspections by Toxics division to address the loss of staff reassigned to the EOC. This has the potential to negatively affect the City's State rating, which is produced every 3 years. The State rating system considers the number of inspections performed during a ranking cycle.
- Delaying Land Use Planning policy projects, including the Zoning Ordinance Revision Project (ZORP), Southside Zoning Projects, Parking Reform Package, Business Support Referrals, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and Housing Pipeline

Report Corrections, and Objective Standards & Joint Subcommittee for the Implementation of State Housing Law (JSISHL) final recommendation report.

Police

The Police Department supported the EOC activation with Disaster Service Workers and site allocation support. Police Officers (one sergeant, two lieutenants, and a captain) worked in the EOC Logistics and Operations Support Sections. In the Operations Support Section, Police representatives connected the EOC to law enforcement advice and coordination on key COVID-19 response activities. Department personnel led the EOC Logistics Section for months, providing critical support to set up COVID-19 testing sites and respite sites. The Police Department also hosted the physical headquarters of the EOC in its Public Safety Building multipurpose room until the EOC could operate remotely.

Outside of the EOC, Department staff were involved in a variety of COVID-19 response activities, including:

- Training two employees to serve as Department Infection Control Officers (DICOs) with guidance from the Fire Department and its trained DICOS. DICOs conduct contact tracing and evaluation for potential COVID-19 exposures. DICOs also conducted relevant training and created an outdoor decontamination tent.
- Providing support at the City's testing site. Numerous Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) and Traffic Officers helped with traffic control, ensuring traffic safety and providing information. Additionally, some PEOs have helped staff the City's testing site, acting in non-PEO roles.
- Providing police officers with face coverings to give to community members at their discretion, especially if the lack of a face covering was an issue during a call for service. The Police Department continues to maintain a supply of face coverings for this purpose.

COVID-19 has had numerous impacts on Police department operations, including:

- Scheduling changes.
 - Calls for service were down in the early months of the Shelter-In-Place, enabling the Department to implement an alternative work schedule for patrol personnel to protect the workforce. This alternative work schedule allowed personnel to shelter-in-place for two weeks at a time and reduce potential cross-shift contact. As the COVID-19 pandemic has continued, patrol personnel have returned to normal staffing schedules.

- Similarly, Jail and Parking Enforcement staff worked adjusted schedules for several weeks. This was made possible due to a reduced number of arrestees and reduced parking enforcement needs. All have returned to normal staffing schedules.
- Employees who could telework, did so nearly exclusively early on in the pandemic. Many now work rotating schedules so that fewer people are in shared offices at the same time.
- Closing the front counter and shifting to conducting business via phone.
- Instituting COVID-19 safety measures for prisoners and at the jail, including putting screening mechanisms in place for arrestees, using specific vehicles for prisoner transport, and screening prisoners before jail entry.
- Conducting meetings routinely via Skype or Zoom, rather than in conference rooms.
- Curtailing traditional community engagement activities to facilitate physical distancing. For example, Police has had to cancel its monthly Coffee with a Cop and the annual National Night Out event.
- Creating alternative ways to engage with the community. Recently Police held a virtual Coffee with a Cop, using Zoom.

Public Works

The Public Works Department's work on the COVID-19 response activities included both Disaster Service Worker deployments to the EOC, as well as many activities within their department's own operations. Within the EOC, Public Works Disaster Service Workers had roles in the Plans, Management, Logistics, and Operations Support Sections. Additional Public Works contributions to the COVID-19 response included:

- Setting up and hosting the LRSS (Local Receiving, Storage, and Staging for PPE and other critical supplies) and subsequently supporting LRSS relocation.
- Providing daytime security for 2180 Milvia and 1947 Center Street when City facilities were initially closed.
- Contracting with a vendor to dispose of biohazard materials for Police, Fire, and COVID-19 testing sites.
- Evaluating ventilation at City buildings in consideration of COVID-19 transmission.
- Distributing COVID-19 communications to employees re via email and printed flyers.
- Ensuring City respite sites for the unhoused were safe and functional by:
 - Cleaning the area,
 - Clearing and grading,
 - Providing fencing and fence repairs,
 - Staging trailers,
 - Setting up electrical connections and water hook-ups, and
 - Providing refuse and recycling services.

Public Works partnered extensively with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) Department on many of the above-listed respite site activities. Other partnerships included:

- Working with the Planning Department's Building and Safety and Permit Service Center staff to issue permits remotely.
- Collaborating with Planning's Permit Service Center and DoIT to establish a fee waiver for sidewalk seating and parklet applications.
- Conducting COVID-19 Construction Safety Building Inspections with Planning's Building Inspectors.
- Coordinating with HHCS to successfully establish and operate the LRSS.
- Working with PRW to collect debris from encampments.

The Public Works Department was also able to pivot its operations in response to COVID-19. These changes and improvements included:

- Creating a cache of safety supplies, including face coverings, gloves, hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies at the Corporation Yard for employees.
- Increasing stock of face coverings, gloves, safety glasses, and sanitizing wipes, as well as adding the use of disinfectant for cleaning the interiors of trucks, carts and bins at the Transfer Station.
- Implementing schedule changes, such as:
 - “3/12” schedules for Clean City, Sewer, Storm and Asphalt/Concrete Construction crews to promote physical distancing in Corporation Yard facilities and vehicles. Crews were split into two shifts, A (Monday through Wednesday) and B (Thursday through Saturday) working three days for twelve hours each day with a four hour furlough.
 - Staggered shifts in the Electrical Division.
- Giving staff the option to work from home where possible.
- Promoting teleconferencing to support physical distancing during meetings.
- Performing additional and/or daily cleaning of high touch areas and vehicles.
- Providing pro-active safety training on a variety of subjects.
- Installing 30 wall-mounted and two free-standing hand sanitizer stations in key City buildings.
- Constructing and installing sneeze guards at the security desks for 2180 Milvia Street and 1947 Center Street. Additional sneeze guards were purchased from a vendor by Public Works who managed the installation at the Animal Shelter, reception desks for Information Technology, Transportation, Engineering, Human Resources, Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront, Finance, City Attorney, and the 5th floor of 2180 Milvia Street.
- Implementing the [Healthy Streets Initiative](#) to support physical distancing in the public right of way.

Public Works also experienced challenges in relation to COVID-19, including:

- Declining revenues from Commercial Waste Collection and Parking Meters.
- Increasing expenditures associated with purchases of PPE, cleaning supplies and equipment.

- Suspending work on technology improvement projects (e.g., digital permitting) that would support, when implemented, more efficient and remote work.
- Experiencing delays to equipment and vehicle purchases.
- Incurring additional costs relating to the installation of hand sanitizer dispensers and sneeze guards in City buildings.

Rent Stabilization Board

Since the proclamation of local emergency for COVID-19, the Rent Stabilization Board (RSB) has shifted operations in many ways. Initially, along with most City Departments, the RSB closed its offices to the public while almost immediately pivoting to provide remote services at or near pre-COVID-19 levels.

Currently, most staff continue to work from home with some staff working on-site to varying degrees. Other RSB operational changes include:

- Shifting from public-facing counters (i.e., the Public Information and Registration Units) to phone and email. Additionally, staff rescheduled all in-person workshops to be live webinars that are recorded, close captioned, and available online.
- Handling all inquiries regarding the City's anti-displacement measures. This included COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance (B.M.C. 13.110) to provide tenants with COVID-19 related eviction protections and amendments to Tenant Screening Fees (B.M.C. 13.78) to provide greater flexibility for tenants to terminate their rental agreements for COVID-related reasons. Concerns regarding housing instability are at an all-time high in Berkeley, and RSB has received more inquiries regarding anti-displacement laws and pending legislation than ever before.
- Providing a "curbside drop-off" payment option (by appointment only) to accommodate those with barriers to technology while maintaining strict COVID-19 safety protocols.
- Developing infographics to highlight critical changes that impact landlords' and tenants' rights and responsibilities during the pandemic.
- Converting to 100 percent remote hearings in March 2020, first using Skype, then Zoom. With this change, the quality of hearings recordings improved from audio only, to video. The remote technology allows RSB to present exhibits effectively in the video format using the 'Share screen' function. Also, the conversion of all current petition files to PDF saved on a shared drive allows other staff to access them remotely.
- Offering all RSB meetings remotely.
- Shifting much of the processes relating to hearings and mediations from paper-based to email.
- Amending Emergency Regulation 1017.5 to allow landlords, in some instances, to voluntarily reduce rent during the COVID-19 State of Emergency without impacting the lawful rent ceiling.

RSB was able to work closely with many departments on a variety of activities in response to COVID-19, including:

- Assisting with troubleshooting and technical support internally to reduce the burden on the IT Department's Help Desk staff as IT worked to implement VPN access.
- Consulting with the City Clerk to confirm best practices for conducting virtual public meetings and adapting RSB meeting protocols to maintain compliance, ensure transparency and encourage the public to participate as fully as possible.
- Collaborating with staff from the Mayor's Office and the City Attorney's Office, collaborating on the passage of Berkeley's COVID-19 Emergency Response Ordinance (B.M.C. 13.110) and amendments to Tenant Screening Fees (B.M.C. 13.78). RSB attorneys continue to liaise with the City Attorney's Office to determine how the local eviction moratorium interacts with State legislation and local ordinances.

The pandemic has created many operational impacts to the RSB, including:

- Pandemic-related budget uncertainties causing a six-month delay in selecting a vendor to replace the department's core database.
- Increased expenditures for necessary hardware purchases (e.g., laptops for remote work, video conference-capable monitors); infrastructure modifications and supplies needed to comply with COVID-19 safety protocols (access control system for public lobby, sneeze guards for public counters, extra cleaning supplies & PPE); and software subscriptions (Zoom & Grasshopper accounts).
- Supply chain delays impacting RSB's ability to procure necessary cleaning supplies and PPE.

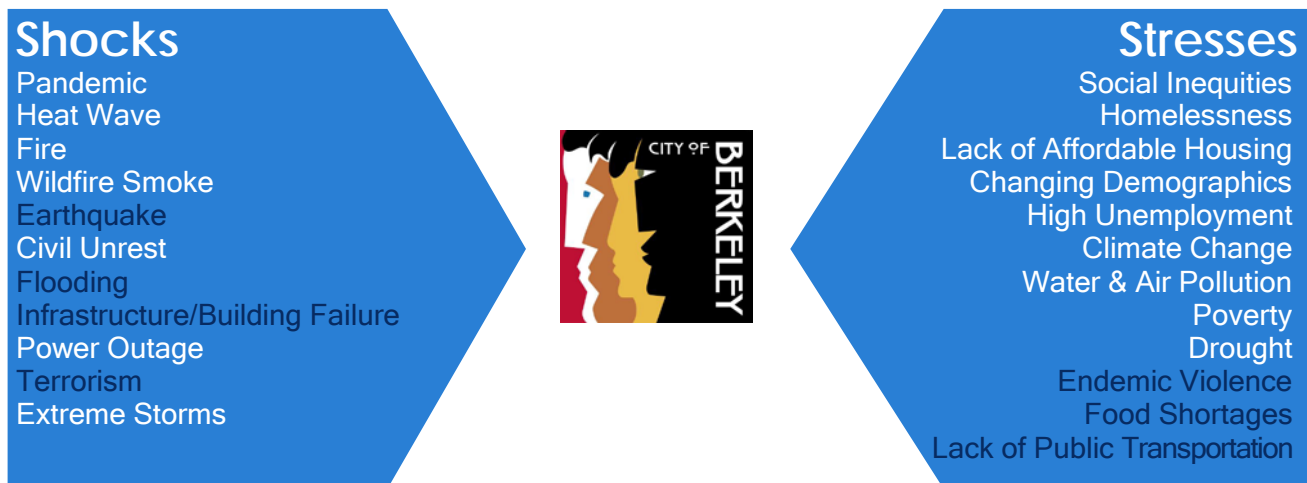
BERKELEY RESILIENT

Overview

COVID-19 poses an unprecedented challenge that Berkeley and communities around the world are wrestling with, and will need to recover from. This pandemic has exacerbated many underlying challenges that have put stress on our community for many years, including systemic racism and inequality, housing affordability, displacement, and the impacts of climate change. COVID-19 and these additional challenges have disproportionately impacted vulnerable communities, including people of color, low-income communities, the elderly, youth, people with disabilities, immigrants, the detained, veterans, the unhoused, women and LGBTQIA communities. These communities have been hit first and worst. The challenges facing Berkeley are interconnected, and require a holistic approach to address.

Resilient Recovery

One definition of resilience is a city's ability to respond to and recover from multiple shocks and stresses. Resilience also provides a framework for doing our work better, by addressing as many challenges, including as many voices as possible, and incorporating as many benefits as possible.



Shocks and stresses experienced in 2020 denoted in white.

The City has a long history of modeling resilience, including:

- [Climate Action Plan](#),
- [Vision 2050](#),
- [Berkeley's Resilience Strategy](#),

- Berkeley's [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), and
- Participation in the [Resilient Cities Network](#).

In responding to, and planning for our recovery from COVID-19, the City has prioritized solutions that promote community resilience - meaning they tackle multiple challenges, bring multiple stakeholders together, and provide multiple benefits - as opposed to siloed approaches that can miss opportunities and/or have unintended consequences. Examples of resilience projects that have been implemented with collaboration across departments as part of COVID-19 response include:

- Creating a COVID-19 Business and Arts Organization Continuity Grant program prioritizing grants to small businesses owned by women and people of color, providing economic and equity benefits.
- Expanding shelter options for the unhoused community, mitigating COVID-19 spread in the broader community while providing benefits of health, safety, and comfort to one of the most vulnerable communities to COVID-19.
- Launching a testing site in partnership with LifeLong Medical and U.C. Berkeley that provides testing to those without access to healthcare, with the unhoused specifically in mind.

As the City begins planning on how to recover from this pandemic, it is clear that the pre-COVID-19 "normal" was not good enough. The City needs to be intentional in these plans to build back better for a resilient community that is more equitable, safe, and sustainable. To begin this process, the City is conducting a Resilient Recovery Needs Assessment, which will identify the needs and priorities across the City Departments for how to build back better.