



Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

6:30 PM

PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE

Pursuant to Section 3 of Executive Order N-29-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 17, 2020, this meeting of the Housing Advisory Commission will be conducted exclusively through teleconference and Zoom videoconference. Please be advised that pursuant to the Executive Order, and to ensure the health and safety of the public by limiting human contact that could spread the COVID-19 virus, there will not be a physical meeting location available.

To access the meeting remotely using the internet: Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device: Use URL –<https://zoom.us/j/4863098496>

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Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call
2. Agenda Approval
3. Public Comment

Update/Action Items

The Commission may take action related to any subject listed on the agenda, except where noted.

Berkeley Community Action Agency Board Business

4. Approve minutes from the 2/16/2022 Regular Meeting (Attachment A) – All
5. Update and approve the 2018-2023 HWCAC Work Plan for submission to City Council (Attachment B) – All
6. Review City of Berkeley funded agency Program and Financial reports (Attachment C) — Staff
 - a. J-Sei program and financial reports

Open Items

7. Communication: Vacant Properties (Attachment D)

8. Communication: Alta Bates Update (Attachment E)

Other Discussion Items

9. Discussion and possible action on communication to Council regarding Easy Does It lapse in services – Commissioner Behm-Steinberg
10. Discuss potential infrastructure and affordable housing bonds/taxes discussed by Council (Attachment F)
11. Discussion and possible action regarding a site visit to the Pathways facility – Commissioner Behm-Steinberg
12. Subcommittee for prevention and ending of homelessness in Berkeley update and possible action on communication to Council – Commissioners Bookstein, Lippman, Omodele
13. Subcommittee on Alta Bates update – Commissioners Bookstein, Omodele
14. Review latest City Council meeting agenda
15. Announcements
16. Future Agenda Items

Adjournment

Attachments

- A. Draft Minutes of the 2/16/2022 Meeting
- B. Draft 2018-2023 HWCAC Work Plan
- C. Program and financial reports from J-Sei
- D. Communication: Vacant Properties
- E. Communication: Alta Bates Update
- F. “Berkeley eyeing a big ballot measure in 2022 for streets, affordable housing”, Berkeleyside

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Secretary:

Mary-Claire Katz
Health, Housing & Community Services Department
510-981-5414
mkatz@CityofBerkeley.info

Mailing Address:

Human Welfare and Community Action Commission
Mary-Claire Katz, Secretary
2180 Milvia Street, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704



Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

6:30 PM

PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE

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Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call

Present: Behm-Steinberg, Bookstein, Omodele, Sood, Sim, Lippman

Absent: None.

Quorum: 4 (Attended: 6)

Staff Present: Mary-Claire Katz

Public Present: Adrionna Susana Cuevas

2. Agenda Approval

Action: M/S/C (Sood/Behm-Steinberg) to discuss items 9, 13 and 14 as one item and to discuss this revised item before item number 7; and, to discuss item number 16 after item number 9.

Vote: Ayes – Behm-Steinberg, Bookstein, Lippman, Omodele, Sood, Sim; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.

3. Public Comment

None

Update/Action Items

The Commission may take action related to any subject listed on the agenda, except where noted.

Berkeley Community Action Agency Board Business

4. Approve minutes from the 1/19/2022 Regular Meeting (Attachment A) – All
Action: M/S/C (Sood/Behm-Steinberg) to approve the 1/19/22 minutes with edits.
Vote: Ayes – Behm-Steinberg, Bookstein, Lippman, Omodele, Sood, Sim; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.
5. Review City of Berkeley funded agency Program and Financial reports (Attachment B) — Staff
 - a. LifeLong Medical Care program and financial reports
 Commissioners review the program and financial reports for LifeLong Medical Care. Behm-Steinberg asks if LifeLong subsidizes people who live outside of Berkeley.

Open Items

6. Communication: Vacant Properties (Attachment C)
 Commission secretary will follow up on this communication.
7. Communication: Alta Bates Update (Attachment D)
 Commission secretary will follow up on this communication.

Other Discussion Items

8. Discussion and possible action on communication to Council regarding Easy Does It lapse in services – Commissioner Behm-Steinberg
 Continued to next meeting.
9. Discuss current state of homelessness in Berkeley (Attachment E) – Commissioner Omodele
 This item is combined with items 13 and 14.
10. Discuss Berkeley air quality – Commissioner Bookstein
 Continued to next meeting.
11. Discuss potential infrastructure and affordable housing bonds/taxes discussed by Council (Attachment F)
 Behm-Steinberg discusses Measure O interest rate and debt service and an upcoming bond. Behm-Steinberg asks if funds not spent roll over into General Fund. Behm-Steinberg discusses writing a recommendation from the commission to Council against the upcoming bond. Behm-Steinberg requests a City staff member to come to a commission meeting to discuss the City bond process. Behm-Steinberg discusses holding a special meeting if necessary before the bond measure is passed.
12. Discussion and possible action regarding a site visit to the Pathways facility – Commissioner Behm-Steinberg

Behm-Steinberg discusses a Pathways ADA update including communication with City staff and scheduling a site visit. Behm-Steinberg will bring a draft letter to Council regarding Pathways to the next meeting.

13. Updates on City matters on the topic of homelessness – Commissioner Behm-Steinberg

This item is combined with items 9 and 14.

14. Subcommittee for prevention and ending of homelessness in Berkeley update

This item is combined with items 9 and 13. Bookstein, Lippman and Omodele met and plan to provide a report to the commission at future meeting. They discuss a Council meeting discussion regarding homelessness and encampments. Omodele discusses putting pressure on Council and the City Manager to do something to address homelessness in Berkeley. Lippman says to first evaluate work that the City has done so far. Lippman wants the subcommittee to draft a list of questions about the work and the solutions to homelessness that the City has done so far.

15. Subcommittee on Alta Bates update

Omodele discusses a Council closed session on the topic of Alta Bates.

Action: M/S/C (Sood/Bookstein) to extend the meeting to 8:35 PM.

Vote: Ayes – Behm-Steinberg, Bookstein, Lippman, Omodele, Sood, Sim; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.

16. Discussion and possible action regarding death of arrested individual – Commissioner Lippman

Lippman discusses an article in Berkeleyside on this topic. Lippman asks why the individual did not receive medical care. Lippman says that the Police Accountability Board opened an investigation of this case as a policy investigation. Lippman discusses general order policy 900, which is temporary custody of adults, on the Police Accountability Board website. Sood asks if this topic is part of the HWCAC purview. Bookstein and Sim will work on letter regarding this topic to present at the next meeting.

17. Review latest City Council meeting agenda

Continued to next meeting.

18. Announcements

None.

19. Future Agenda Items

HWCAC Work Plan.

Adjournment

Action: M/S/C (Lippman/Omodele) to adjourn at 8:35 PM.

Vote: Ayes – Behm-Steinberg, Bookstein, Lippman, Omodele, Sood, Sim; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.

Attachments

- A. Draft Minutes of the 1/19/2022 Meeting
- B. Program and financial reports from LifeLong
- C. Communication: Vacant Properties
- D. Communication: Alta Bates Update
- E. Path to End Homelessness Report, 9/25/2018
- F. “Berkeley eyeing a big ballot measure in 2022 for streets, affordable housing”,
Berkeleyside
- G. 2022 HWCAC Meeting Calendar

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Human Welfare and Community
Action Commission

2018-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision

Eradicate persistent poverty in the city of Berkeley by offering residents the services they require for a decent life while offering a path to economic stability.

Mission

Provide city council with recommendations to support a fully integrated system of community services and policies that provide low income residents of Berkeley, with the following: (A) Responsive, caring, and effective community services that provide basic human needs, including, but not limited to, the core services; (B) Opportunities for employment that provide a living wage and offer future growth; (C) Opportunities to continuously build an asset and skills base that can lead to greater economic stability.

Core Services to be provided by City and/or Agencies

1. Access to nutritious food/Food Security
2. Housing/Housing stability
3. Healthcare (Including Mental health services)
4. Childcare
5. Transportation
6. Services for the Disabled
7. Computer and Internet Access
8. Legal Services
9. Skills Training
10. Job/Opportunity Development
11. Banking Services
12. Money Management

Target Populations

1. General Funds: Low income(Defined as 20 to 60% of AMI.) households that own or rent within the City of Berkeley.
2. CSBG Funds: Households that own or rent within the City of Berkeley whose household income is 125% or less of the poverty level.

Objectives

1. Increase engagement with community to understand needs
2. Increase the number of low income commissioners serving on the HWCAC.
3. Show an improvement in living conditions of target population through the following:
 - a. Increase in people with access to regular meals
 - b. Increase in people with access to healthcare
 - c. Increase in people with stable housing
 - d. Increase in median household income
 - e. Increase In long term employment rates
 - f. Increase in median savings or net worth
 - g. Increase in education levels attained
4. Reduce number of households in target populations from Y1 baseline within 5 years
5. Create partnerships with other commissions and city agencies to find ways to increase services and leverage resources
6. Maintain a high approval rate on all agency and city services

Strategies

1. Establish baseline metrics and mechanisms for gathering those metrics on a regular basis
2. Use feedback and data to determine Core Service priorities before each funding cycle
3. Collaborate with other commissions on policy and recommendations
4. Monitor all council activities that may affect target populations and determine a response

5. Develop agency events or other programs that enhance collaboration and knowledge sharing
6. Keep up strategic plan up to date

Action Plan

1. Develop feedback mechanisms from community, agencies, and city staff on services currently provided and needed
 - a. Develop a questionnaire aimed at gathering information on services needed and provided
 - b. Carry out “listening booth” meetings at locations that can yield good information and/or carry out a semiannual community meeting to discuss needs
 - c. Bring in community experts to discuss and educate commissioners on agenda topics as required
 - d. Carry out regular meetings with agencies and city teams providing services regarding quality services
 - e. Work with staff to implement a survey form for agency clients to complete and submit
2. Commissioner Engagement
 - a. Find ways to recruit more low income members of the community into the commission
 - b. Strive to keep agenda focused and relevant
 - c. Keep all commissioners engaged and participating by encouraging them to take on tasks and to bring forward recommendations
 - d. Establish call-in meeting procedures
3. Metrics
 - a. Determine number of households that currently are in the target populations
 - b. Develop a map to determine where these households are located
 - c. locate sources for additional metrics per objectives
4. Stay informed on Council activities

- a. Appoint commissioners on a monthly rotating basis to examine council agenda and come back to group with relevant items
 - b. Add relevant items to meeting agenda to help ensure that they get discussed
 - c. Formally determine a no action/action (communication or recommendation) from commission on agenda items
5. Agency Reviews
- a. Look at implementing an annual meeting with agencies to discuss their programs and best practices
 - b. Review existing agency reports and provide staff with ideas on ways that could help provide additional information
 - c. Review all agency reports annually and work with city staff to carry out site visits at least once every funding cycle
 - d. Look for alternative sources of funding to help support agencies and staff
6. Carry out an annual planning meeting in October each year to discuss the following items
- a. Review of accomplishments for current year
 - b. Discuss commission priorities for the coming year
 - c. Review community services to ensure that community needs are being met
 - d. Review any recommendations for changes to commission bylaws
 - e. Discuss any updates to work/strategic plan
7. Working with other commissions
- a. Establish liaisons for other commissions
 - b. Find ways to bring other commissions into council recommendations
 - c. Share information with other commissions as needed

[Return to Reports Page](#)

**City of Berkeley
Community Agency
CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS REPORT**

Contract No: 31900264

Agency: J-Sei
Program: Senior Services
Phone: 510-654-4000

Period of: 1st Half 2022
Report Prepared By: Diane Wong
E-mail: diane@j-sei.org

1. CLIENT SUMMARY - 1st Half

	1st Half	YTD
A. Total New Clients Served by the Program (Berkeley and Non-Berkeley)	361	361
B. Total New Berkeley Clients Served for Whom You Were Able to Gather Statistics on Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Income:	153	153
C. Total New Berkeley Clients Served for Whom You Were NOT Able to Gather Statistics on Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Income:	0	0
D. Total New Berkeley Clients Served:	153	153

2. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

RACE - Unduplicated Count	Previous Periods		Report Period		Year-To-Date	
	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic Ethnicity?	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic Ethnicity
Single Race Categories						
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	0		0	0
Asian	0	0	82		82	0
Black/African American	0	0	12		12	0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	23		23	0
White	0	0	30		30	0
Combined Race Categories						
American Indian/Alaskan Native & White	0	0	0		0	0
Asian & White	0	0	6		6	0
Black/African American & White	0	0	0		0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native & Black/African American	0	0	0		0	0
Other Combined Race Categories	0	0	0		0	0
TOTALS	0	0	153	0	153	0
TOTAL SERVED	0		153		153	

3. INCOME LEVEL

Income Level - Unduplicated Count	Previous Periods	This Period	YTD
Poverty	0	44	44
Poverty to 30% of AMI (Ex. Low)	0	36	36
31-50% of AMI (Low)	0	37	37
51-80% of AMI (Moderate)	0	36	36
Above 80% of AMI	0	0	0
TOTALS	0	153	153

4. AGE

Age - Unduplicated Count	Previous Periods	This Period	YTD
0-5	0		0
6-11	0		0
12-17	0		0
18-24	0		0
25-44	0		0
45-54	0	8	8
55-61	0	24	24
62 and Over	0	121	121
Unknown	0	0	0
TOTALS	0	153	153

5. OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

Other Characteristics - Unduplicated Count	Previous Periods	This Period	YTD
Female	0	101	101
Male	0	52	52
Other			
Disabled	0	92	92
Homeless	0		0
Chronically Homeless	0		0

6. SERVICE MEASURES

Service Measures	Annual Goal		1st Half		2nd Half		Served YTD		% Served		
	UOS	New Clients	UOS	New Clients	UOS	# of Existing Clients	New Clients	Total UOS	Total New Clients	UOS	Total Clients
***** Senior Services *****											
1	Respite/Socialization Days	6,250	241	6,119	53			6,119	53	98%	22%

1st Half Narrative

J-Sei has made multiple adjustments that enabled the agency to continue and grow service delivery throughout the pandemic. As reported in our last year-end grant report and in our grant application for 2021 funding, the service model for every program was adjusted to meet safety and social distancing requirements. Case management, friendly visitor/caller and the caregiver registry were moved to on-line and phone interactions and staff made weekly check-in calls with seniors to offer support and resources. The online wellness and cultural programs quickly moved to Zoom where we retained about 85% of our students and attracted many new seniors surpassing our previous attendance rates. Past participants of the congregate meal program transitioned to receive home delivered nutrition. One of the biggest challenges was securing enough volunteers to replace the older adult volunteers that represented the vast majority of our nutrition volunteers. We were able to outreach and attract many new people who energized the program and assured continued service delivery without interruption. After seniors, volunteers and staff were able to receive full vaccination, J-Sei made some modification to operations. We now require that anyone entering the building must show proof of full vaccination and be screened for symptoms, have their temperature taken and sign a waiver before entering the building. Case management and friendly visitor/caller and caregiver registry clients can meet in-person with staff with social distancing and an air filter in the meeting room. Case managers have resumed attending medical and legal appointments with clients with distancing precautions as well.

Nine wellness classes have resumed in-person instruction with three of these maintained in a hybrid mode so that seniors have the option of attending in our facility or by Zoom. J-Sei started with one class in-person a day in an effort to provide plenty of space and time for individuals to enter and exit the building. Now we are inviting more classes to return in person but there is still hesitancy amongst instructors and students. Many people prefer on-line interaction as they don't have to drive or struggle with parking. We will likely continue a hybrid mode for many of our classes into the future.

J-Sei's cultural events have slowly returned in a hybrid in-person and online format. For example, our Family Festival in September featured in-person to-go bento meals from three different chefs, a shave iced stand, a weaving demonstration, and entertainment from J-Sei's Sentimental Strummers, and a ukulele group. Then an on-line program featuring presentations and entertainment was offered. This hybrid format was also used for an author reading and will likely continue as long as infection rates stay low.

As counties have loosened restrictions on indoor dining, J-Sei is not yet ready to invite seniors for in-person dining. The concern around break through infections prevents J-Sei from implementing this type of service for the near future, especially given the likelihood of a winter surge of COVID cases. The home delivered meal program has not had any changes since the availability of vaccines. J-Sei has been monitoring demand for meals, watching for declines in requests as the restrictions for shopping and running errands has eased. However, demand has not decreased and in fact continues to climb leaving J-Sei with now maintaining a waiting list for those who would like to receive J-Sei lunches.

Collaboration with individuals and organizations has uplifted the spirits and operational effectiveness of J-Sei during the pandemic. The Alameda County Food Bank has provided tremendous support. Their groceries for our brown bags delivered to seniors, online training resources and a grant to purchase equipment and computer software has been very helpful. They have remained flexible and responsive to the many changing needs of community based organizations.

7. OUTCOMES

Outcomes	Annual Goal	1st Half Achieved Outcome	2nd Half Achieved Outcome	Achieved Outcome YTD	% Achieved Outcome of Annual Goal	% Achieved Outcome of Total Served
1	Clients avoid institutionalization	241	153	153	63%	100%
1	Clients participated in services related to client needs	241	153	153	63%	100%

1st Half Narrative

Senior Nutrition Programs The reduced pandemic restrictions, and lower infection rates with a more fully vaccinated population did not bring a decline in nutrition demand. In fact, request for meals continues to increase and a wait list is now maintained for individuals who would like to receive J-Sei meals.

Case Management –The request for case management services remained fairly flat and began to rise in August and demand hit a peak in November almost reaching pre-pandemic rates. It seems that many seniors are still reluctant to seek help during the pandemic as much of the case management assistance takes place in-person with assessments and appointments to medical, benefits or legal appointments. There is still a high degree of reluctance for in-person interactions.

Friendly Visitors/Callers – During 2021 many friendly visitor/caller seniors passed away and due to the fear of COVID, new seniors are not inquiring about this service. Because J-Sei wants to limit in-door interaction, even amongst those fully vaccinated, we have encouraged seniors and volunteers to hold visits outdoors if possible. This precaution may be putting a damper on program interest. We have been promoting the friendly caller option of this program but so far there isn't much interest amongst seniors at this time. This may be a similar experience to other friendly visitor/caller programs in the county.

Caregiver Registry – When vaccines became available, the request for this program quickly grew as families had care needs that they had tried to manage on their own during the pandemic.

Wellness Classes – The majority of classes and events were held on Zoom, but in July seven classes returned to in-person instruction and two of these classes were held in a hybrid Zoom and in-person format. An author reading, our annual Crab Feed, Family Festival and artisan craft fair were held in a small outdoor in-person and on-line format. Seniors, instructors and presenters enjoy the ease of on-line programming but J-Sei is trying to encourage more programs to be held in-person at the Emeryville facility. For many classes we anticipate offering hybrid classes to support seniors who have challenges around mobility and transportation. This will be a gradual process and we will respond to the comfort level of those we serve. The wide range of education, emotional support and social connection provided through these programs brought seniors together, reducing social isolation and loneliness.

Transportation – The transportation program was reinstated in July when the building opened up with limited in-person classes and provided rides. This number will ramp up as J-Sei adds more in-person classes. While the drivers have not been using their work time driving seniors, they shifted some of their work hours to deliver meals which has been very helpful with the surge in nutrition demand.

New Ideas – In 2021 J-Sei offered in-person 'porch visits' where seniors could remain in their homes while conversing with a staff member or volunteer through an open window or door. There was no interest in this type of in-person socialization and support. J-Sei did purchase additional equipment to facilitate hybrid programming and recording and received donated computers to share with seniors.

Other new developments include a potential partnership with the Buddhist Temple of Alameda to deliver lunches to J-Sei seniors in the city of Alameda. The temple would coordinate the volunteers for delivery and expand J-Sei's catchment area.

Uploaded Attachments:8. PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEY

Question		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Does Not Apply	I Do Not Understand This Question	Total Number of responses
1. I am satisfied with the services I have received from this program.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
2. This program's staff treated me with respect.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
3. This program helped me make progress towards my goals.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
4. This program met my needs.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								

Additional Questions:

ATTACHMENT C

5. As a direct result of participating in the program I have what I need to maintain my independence.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
6. As a direct result of participating in the program my overall health and wellness has improved.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
7. As a direct result of participating in the program I have enhanced skills and/or knowledge.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
8. As a direct result of participating in the program I have what I need to achieve my educational goals.	This Period								0
	Prior Periods								0
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	% of Total								
9. Additional comments from consumers completing the survey									

Date Signed 12/14/2021

Approved By Mary-Claire Katz
Date Signed 01/04/2022

Initially submitted: Dec 14, 2021 - 16:19:34

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**CITY OF BERKELEY
COMMUNITY AGENCY STATEMENT OF EXPENSE
10/01/2021 TO 12/31/2021**

Note: Any variation from the Approved Budget exceeding ten percent (10%) requires a Budget Modification Form.

Agency Name: [J-Sei](#) Contract #: [31900264](#)
 Program Name: [Senior Services](#) PO #: [22000514](#)
 Funding Source : General Fund

Expenditure Category	Staff Name	Approved Budget	Jul-Sep 2021	Oct-Dec 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Apr-Jun 2022	Total Expenditure	Budget Balance
Case Manager Bilingual	Miyuki Iwata	\$4,110.00	\$1,278.00	\$1,278.00			\$2,556.00	\$1,554.00
Senior Nutrition Manager	Kathleen Wong	\$5,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00			\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00
TOTAL		\$9,110.00	\$2,278.00	\$2,278.00			\$4,556.00	\$4,554.00

Advances Received [\\$2,278.00](#)
 Underspent/(Overspent) [\(-\\$2,278.00\)](#)

Explain any staffing changes and/or spending anomalies that do not require a budget modification at this time:

Upload of Resumes for New Staff (required): [Go to Document Upload page](#)

- Expenditures reported in this statement are in accordance with our contract agreement and are taken from our books of account which are supported by source documentation.
- All federal and state taxes withheld from employees for this reporting period were remitted to the appropriate government agencies. Furthermore, the employer's share or contributions for Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment and State Disability insurance, and any related government contribution required were remitted as well.

Prepared By: [Diane Wong, Suzanne Otani](#) Email: diane@j-sei.org, suzanne@j-sei.org Date: 11/21/2021
 Authorized By: [Diane Wong](#) Email: diane@j-sei.org
 Name of Authorized Signatory with Signature on File

Approved By: Mary-Claire Katz 12/08/2021 Project Manager Date	Examined By: _____ CSA Fiscal Unit Date	Approved By: _____ CSA Fiscal Unit Date
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Initially submitted: Nov 21, 2021 - 09:32:09



Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

Communication
January 10, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC)
Submitted by: Praveen Sood, Chairperson, HWCAC
Subject: Companion Report: Assessment of Vacant Properties

Thank you for your help with the attached item. The HWCAC is looking to see if Council could help provide feedback on the City Manager's recommendation to refer this item to Council's process for setting priorities for measure O funds. The original item was on Council's agenda on 2/19/2019, and no additional steps or actions have been communicated since that time. We believe that the actions described in the original recommendation would still be useful as another tool to help the City with its goal of increasing the supply of affordable housing. As such, we would appreciate any additional information/feedback on possible next steps.

Thank you for your time.

Praveen Sood, Chair
Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

Attachments:

1. Companion Report: Assessment of Vacant Properties, 2/19/2019



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR
February 19, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Kelly Wallace, Interim Director, Health, Housing & Community Services
 Subject: Companion Report: Assessment of Vacant Properties

RECOMMENDATION

Refer the issue of vacant housing units to Council's process for setting priorities for Measure O funds.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Fiscal impacts will depend on what action Council chooses. It is also likely that some property owners would require financial support from the City in order to bring their vacant units onto the market.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC) recommended that the Council direct the City Manager develop a plan to locate 3,754 vacant housing units identified in the City's Fiscal Years 2018 & 2019 Adopted Biennial Budget. The HWCAC proposed this as a short-term strategy to bring properties onto the market and boost the supply of available rental properties in Berkeley. Maximizing the use of Berkeley's existing housing stock is in concept an efficient way to make more housing available, and the specific task proposed by the HWCAC is complex.

The identification and assessment of all of Berkeley's vacant apartments, an inventory which changes daily, would be time-intensive, and is beyond the scope and capacity of the current housing staff. Staff would need to dedicate a significant amount of time to undertake a survey of Berkeley multifamily properties to determine how many units are currently vacant, and to assess what each unit or property owner needs in order for those units to come onto the market. Staff would need to interview property owners regarding vacancies, assess property conditions, undertake title research, and generally spend a significant amount of time assessing barriers to occupancy. In addition to housing staff, the City Attorney's Office would likely need to evaluate the tools available to City staff for encouraging full occupancy. Since these housing units are privately owned, those tools would be limited to acquiring properties or supporting another organization to acquire them from willing owners, or making loans to willing owners. Because this would likely require the addition of new staff, this proposed strategy should be considered by Council as they establish Measure O priorities.

In the past six months, the City has taken action to encourage occupancy of vacant units. On July 24, 2018, Council adopted the second reading of Ordinance No. 7,622-N.S. that amended the Berkeley Municipal code to specify that residential buildings that are vacant for more than 120 consecutive days could be declared an unlawful nuisance if they also meet one of five other conditions of blight. The intent of the ordinance is to both reduce blight and encourage property owners to bring their vacant buildings back onto the market.

In addition, on October 16, 2018, Council adopted Resolution No. 68,624-N.S. to approve a \$50,000 grant to support Bay Area Community Land Trust's (BACLT) capacity building efforts in relation to the City's new Small Sites Program. BACLT will use the funds to support increased staffing, and to identify prospective properties for the Small Sites Program, which could include small, multifamily rental properties that are vacant.

BACKGROUND

Some level of vacancy is always present in a housing market. The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) estimate listed in the City's budget report represents a point in time count of vacant housing units in Berkeley. The 2017 ACS estimated 3,622 vacant housing units in Berkeley, or about 7.4% of the total housing stock. This number represents individual vacant units, not vacant buildings. Some vacancy is normal in the housing market, and based on ACS data Berkeley's rate is on par with statewide (7.9%) and inner Bay Area trends (8.1% in San Francisco and 5.8% in Oakland).

The reasons properties are vacant at any given point are varied and complicated. ACS reported that about half (1,761) of Berkeley's housing units were vacant for one of the following typical market reasons:

- The property was actively listed for rent;
- The property was rented, but not currently occupied;
- The property was for sale;
- The property was sold, but not currently occupied; and
- The property was vacant, and only occupied seasonally or recreationally.

The remaining 1,861 housing units were vacant for other reasons not listed, but could be attributed to various factors. Owners may be preparing for sale or working on renovations between tenants. Sometimes properties are acquired by groups of heirs who are unable to organize to operate a property.

Approximately 84% of Berkeley's housing units are in buildings with fewer than 20 units. In a 10 unit building, one vacant unit under renovation between tenants translates to 10% vacancy. In addition, small, family property owners may take longer than property management companies to renovate units at tenant turnover, because of their capacity for managing contractors, ability to pay, or other reasons.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley's current vacancy rate is similar to most housing markets. The vacant housing units are owned by private owners and are scattered in buildings across the City. In most cases, the City's remedies for vacant units are limited to supporting sale or rehabilitation by a willing owner and identifying those units will require a commitment of staff time. For this reason, the City should consider the HWCAC's recommendation in the context of Measure O priorities.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The issue of vacant housing units could be incorporated into to Council's referral prioritization process or the Housing Action Plan.

CONTACT PERSON

Jenny Wyant, Community Development Project Coordinator, HHCS, (510) 981-5228



Human Welfare and Community
Action Commission

Communication
November 19, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Human Welfare Community Action Commission (HWCAC)

Submitted by: Praveen Sood, Chair, HWCAC

Subject: Communication Regarding Alta Bates

When lives are on the line, there is no excuse to close the hospital - Mayor Jesse Arreguín <https://www.dailycal.org/2019/11/22/to-save-lives-alta-bates-must-be-saved/>

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Councilmembers,

We, the Commissioners on HWCAC, are encouraged to know that the City's position, namely that Alta Bates must remain open as a fully functioning hospital, remains unchanged. We are happy to know, based on the information Remi Omodele gathered recently from Councilmember Sophie Hahn and Ms. Jacquelyn McCormick, that the City is working arduously to realize this goal. We recommend your position and efforts, and wish you success. You and Berkeley deserve no less.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to kindly inform us of your current actions and specific progress. It was recently announced that UC Berkeley made "a commitment to work with the City around the closure of Alta Bates Hospital", but the details of the commitment were not released. We are also concerned that the frequent campaigns and other forms of activism the City witnessed a couple of years ago (in favor of keeping Alta Bates open beyond 2030) have stalled completely, and all is eerily quiet.

We are concerned about this quiet. Unless the threat to shut down the hospital in 2030 has been lifted completely, we believe that Berkeley should return to the aforementioned campaigns. Knowing Sutter's reputation for closing down local hospitals (as Sen Skinner said repeatedly in 2017), we cannot afford to remain quiet. HWCAC is willing and able to speak out, but we need the information only you can provide in order to mobilize our communities to save Alta Bates.

In addition to a written response, we would also appreciate a visit from the offices of the City Manager and the Mayor. Again, we thank you for all you do, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Praveen Sood".

Praveen Sood, Chair
Human Welfare and Community Action Commission

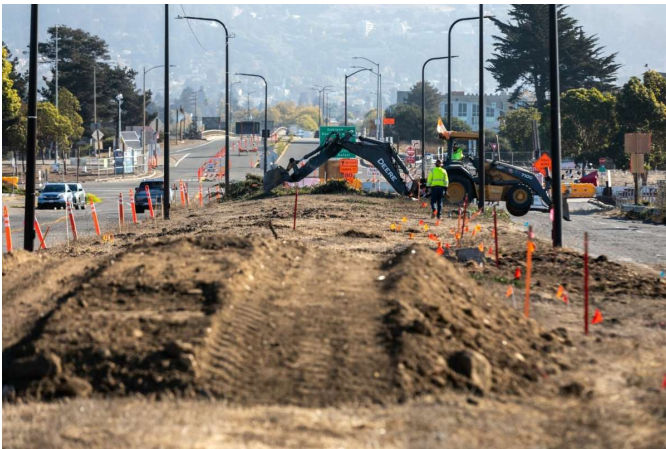
Berkeleyside

HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT

Berkeley eyeing a big ballot measure in 2022 for streets, affordable housing

Mayor Jesse Arreguín and others are making the case for a new measure raising hundreds of millions of dollars for infrastructure and housing.

By Nico Savidge, Jan. 9, 2022, 8 a.m.



Crews work to improve University Avenue at the Berkeley Marina. The project was funded by Measure T1, an infrastructure bond voters approved in 2016. Credit: Kelly Sullivan

Berkeley leaders are poised to spend much of 2022 making the case for a ballot measure that could raise hundreds of millions of dollars to repair the city's aging infrastructure and address its shortage of affordable housing.

Most voters want Berkeley to fix crumbling streets and provide more housing for low-income and homeless residents, [early city polling on the issue found](#) — but there are signs the appetite for another new measure to fund those needs may be waning.

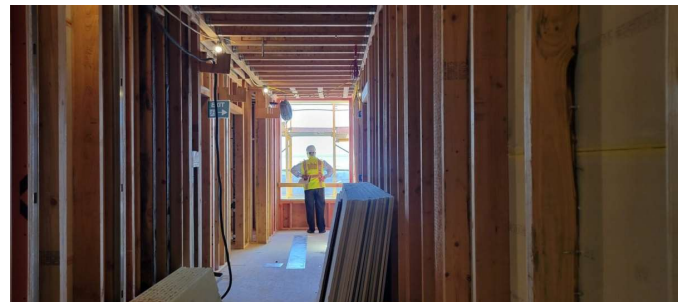
Just about all of the details of the potential measure will be worked out over the coming months. Among the most important questions: How much money will the city ask voters for? Will it propose a combined measure raising money for both housing and infrastructure, or could the issues be split into separate questions on the

ballot? And will the new revenue be raised through a bond or another method, such as a parcel or sales tax?

Broadly, though, city officials have started making the case that Berkeley needs a measure orders of magnitude larger than those residents have approved in recent years.

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in our people and invest in our infrastructure,” Mayor Jesse Arreguín said in an interview. “Just doing \$150 million or \$250 million is probably not enough to have the scale of impact we need.”

“I think we have to think big, because the need is big,” Arreguín added.



Construction at the new affordable housing development at 2012 Berkeley Way. Credit: Supriya Yelimeli

Between streets, sidewalks, civic buildings, stormwater systems and other pieces of local infrastructure, Berkeley has [identified \\$1 billion worth of maintenance needs](#) city-wide. A 2020 estimate projected the cost just of repairing Berkeley's roads — which [rank among the worst in the Bay Area](#), according to the Metropolitan

Transportation Commission — [will surpass \\$300 million](#) by next year.

Then there’s the challenge of [affordable housing](#). As the housing crisis has pushed less-wealthy residents out of Berkeley and onto its streets, the city has [fallen far short of its goals for affordable housing construction](#) in recent years — in part because organizations often struggle to patch together funding for projects. Arreguín said he also sees promise in the strategy of buying existing buildings to preserve their units as affordable housing and prevent displacement, but noted the options for financing those deals are limited.



A file photo shows flooding at the Ashby Avenue on-ramp to Interstate 80. The low-lying roadway often floods during heavy rains. Photo: Jennifer Lazo

The city is soliciting responses through Wednesday to [an online survey about local infrastructure](#), and plans to send a questionnaire to residents about a potential revenue measure this month. The City Council is set to discuss its priorities for a measure at a Jan. 20 meeting.

From there, city staff will develop a draft plan for the measure in February, which will be updated through the spring with more public outreach. The City Council is expected to vote in June on whether to place the measure on the ballot.

Berkeley voters have supported several measures to address the two issues in recent years, [approving two infrastructure bonds](#), an [affordable housing bond](#) and a [tax for homeless services](#) since 2012.

City of Berkeley

@CityofBerkeley

Help us understand what we should fund for City improvements. Take our survey and let us know what improvements are important to you.

Survey: tinyurl.com/2050Survey

Details: cityofberkeley.info/Vision

4:07 PM · Dec 19, 2021

3 Reply Share this Tweet

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To Isabelle Gaston, a former City Council candidate who [opposed prior bond measures](#), asking for another big round of funding is “redundant” and “excessive.”

“Berkeley really needs to live within its means,” Gaston said.

Backers of a new revenue measure — who point to [street repairs](#), [upgraded park facilities](#) and [new affordable housing](#) as successes made possible by those prior taxes and bonds — contend the continuing need shows those measures weren’t ambitious enough. Arreguín called the \$30 million raised for local infrastructure through

[2012's Measure M](#) "a drop in the bucket," while Berkeley Public Works Director Liam Garland said the city's aging infrastructure "demands a bigger investment" than the \$100 million raised with [2016's Measure T1](#).

"What T1 has not been able to do is address the size and scale of the need," Garland said. "T1 has been great, and we need more."

Whether enough Berkeley voters agree could be another story, however.



Improvements to University Avenue at the Berkeley Marina were funded by 2016's Measure T1. City officials contend the infrastructure bond has been a success, but wasn't big enough to address the scale of Berkeley's needs. Credit: Kelly Sullivan

City-funded polling that was conducted in October and [made public in a memo](#) last month found a majority of

likely voters said they would be in favor of a hypothetical measure to fund both housing and infrastructure needs. But that support fell short of the two-thirds majority such a measure would likely need to pass. The share of respondents saying they would vote yes consistently hovered between 57% and 60%, with opposition ranging from 27% to 32%, when voters were asked about new taxes and bonds of varying sizes. The poll's sample size was 500 likely voters, and it had a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

"There is going to be work to do to garner enough support to pass," Garland acknowledged.

Still, more than three-quarters of respondents said they considered "increasing affordable housing for low-income and homeless residents" to be a "very" or "extremely important" priority for the city, and 73% said the same about repairing streets.

While Arreguín said he understands voters' hesitation about raising taxes amid the pandemic, he contends Berkeley must push for the funding to shore up infrastructure and provide more affordable housing. And after getting voters to approve measure after measure in a "piecemeal" approach over the past decade, he said, part of the city's promise must be that "we're not going to come back for another bond for a while."

Nico Savidge is Berkeleyside's senior reporter covering city hall. Email: nico@berkeleyside.org. Twitter: [NSavidge](https://twitter.com/NSavidge).

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