



Office of the City Manager

April 2, 2020

To: Board of Directors, East Bay Regional Park District

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager *DWR*

Subject: COVID-19 Response – Request to use District properties west of I-80 within City of Berkeley limits to support homeless populations

These are difficult times for all of us and I hope you all are well. I am writing with a request to use East Bay Regional Park District properties west of I-80 within City of Berkeley limits to set up isolation and social distancing tents and/or facilities for homeless people that are currently living in dense encampments within the City.

Due to the current outbreak of COVID-19 in the general public, which is now a pandemic according to the World Health Organization, there is a public health emergency throughout the City of Berkeley. The scientific evidence shows that at this stage of the emergency, it is essential to slow virus transmission as much as possible to protect the most vulnerable and to prevent the health care system from being overwhelmed.

The intent of this request is to help ensure that homeless persons living within Berkeley City limits who may have been or may become infected with or have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 (“novel coronavirus”) have access to safe housing that isolates or quarantines them from other members of the community, or allows for greater social distancing, to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We are currently identifying City of Berkeley properties for this purpose. It would be of great public benefit to potentially utilize some of the District properties just west of the current encampment at I-80 and University Ave, and at the Tom Bates Fields north parking lot, as well as other District properties within the City of Berkeley limits.

We seek your approval at the Board’s April meeting so that we have the ability to negotiate with staff on an agreement that would support the needs of this extraordinary time. I would be happy to have staff attend if that would be helpful. Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager
David White, Deputy City Manager
Scott Ferris, Director, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
Jenny Wong, City Auditor
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager / Public Information Officer