



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
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CONSENT CALENDAR  
 May 2, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
 Councilmember Sophie Hahn  
 Councilmember Kate Harrison

Subject: One Year Maintenance Deferral for the Berkeley Art Center

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the city grant a maintenance deferral to the Berkeley Art Center to remain at the Live Oak facility for one year. Before this deadline expires, BAC shall procure an agreement to establish a new location for the center. Thereafter, BAC shall have the option to remain at its current location for up to 3 additional years, on a year-to-year basis.

### BACKGROUND:

For many years this center has been a primary resource for the display of local artists, with a diverse representation of multicultural creativity and the first point of contact between local artists and the broader community. Furthermore, BAC provides arts education to community members of all ages, and general admission has always been free. Berkeley Art Center is a primary candidate for relocation downtown to further strengthen our Arts District.

While market forces beyond our control are leading to the displacement and elimination of numerous small arts groups and individual artists in the local area, we seek to avoid our own City taking actions that are likely to displace the arts. BAC, and similar arts organizations, needs our support now more than ever given the current local economic and national political climates.

Over its 50 year history, the Berkeley Art Center has played a significant role in offering local artists a space where they could showcase their talent. The current board leadership and staff offer Berkeley an incredible opportunity to build on decades of achievement, and pursue a visionary path that takes into account contemporary demands. The sad reality is most arts "temporary shutdowns" end up as permanent. It would take many years for a new group to develop the reputation equivalent to the forty-nine years of experience offered by BAC.

While multiple City Council members, Civic Arts Commission members and city staff are exploring new funding opportunities to attract and create multiple revenue streams to assist arts groups to relocate and/or reorganize, as well as City capital funding needs, it would be sad to allow this gem to fall through the cracks now, just at the time when there are several potential paths to success. The current proposal allows BAC a one year deferral. If the BAC provides the city with a signed agreement for the new location the organization would have up to three years to complete the project planning process for their new location, and to explore new funding opportunities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Minimal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Consistent with Berkeley's Environmental Sustainability Goals and no negative impact.

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