

**Kriss Worthington**

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
 2180 Milvia Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704  
 PHONE 510-981-7170, FAX 510-981-7177, EMAIL  
 kworthington@cityofberkeley.info

CONSENT CALENDAR

November 27, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington & Cheryl Davila  
 Subject: Referral for City Manager to Take a Fresh Look at Repurposing the  
 Old City Hall Building

RECOMMENDATION:

Short-term referral to the City Manager to consider further utilizing the currently mostly unused Old City Hall for nonprofits including Berkeley Community Media for classes, and potentially a temporary emergency winter shelter.

BACKGROUND:

Recently, the City of Berkeley and the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) reached an agreement that allows City Council meetings to be relocated from the Old City Hall to a meeting room operated by BUSD. Vacant buildings are a blight to the community. Berkeley should not have Old City Hall boarded up and locked away. If Old City Hall is not being utilized, this City treasure risks becoming an unkempt eyesore.

Concerns have been expressed about seismic safety issues at Old City Hall. However the Veterans Building has similar seismic issues and the City is allowing multiple temporary uses there for the Berkeley Historical Society, Options Recovery Services, local veteran organizations, and the emergency shelter in the basement.

For the past fifteen years the City of Berkeley has run a storm shelter. It is essential that it continue this year. The City of Berkeley currently possesses \$31,000 set aside for operating an emergency shelter. Unfortunately no location has identified yet. In the past, this shelter was located at the North Berkeley Senior Center (NBSC). However, the NBSC is currently undergoing seismic retrofitting and other improvements. Other potential City owned sites would require negative impacts such as relocation of staff or services. Due to the fact that the City of Berkeley has declared a state of emergency regarding homelessness, it can legally utilize spaces for emergency purposes for up to six months. This proposal only recommends using the Old City Hall for four months.

Therefore, it could serve Berkeley well to convert Old City Hall, an unused building, into a temporary emergency shelter. In doing so, the City of Berkeley can provide stability

Moreover, nonprofit organizations could also benefit from better reallocation and utilization of this space. Groups like Berkeley Community Media (BCM) can offer more classes through any additional expansion. These benefits may stand for other similar nonprofit organizations in other sections of the building.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

\$31,000 of funding already in budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

No negative impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Kriss Worthington      510-981-7170

