



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 2, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín, Vice-Mayor Susan Wengraf, and Councilmembers Kate Harrison and Cheryl Davila

Subject: Co-Sponsorship and Budget Referral for the 2019 Bay Area Book Festival

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Adopt a Resolution approving official City of Berkeley co-sponsorship of the non-profit Bay Area Book Festival to be held from May 4-5, 2019 in Downtown Berkeley; and
- 2) Refer an allocation of \$50,000 for the Bay Area Book Festival to the FY 2020/2021 Budget Process

BACKGROUND

The fifth annual Bay Area Book Festival will take place on Saturday, May 4 through Sunday, May 5 in downtown Berkeley. This annual literary event, free to the public, combines a street fair with diverse author panels and conversations on stages in downtown auditoriums. The festival will present over 200 top local, national, and international authors of all genres. Approximately 50,000 residents and visitors over the weekend are expected to attend, including low-income people who typically do not attend premium literary events.

To be held in the quadrant between Oxford and MLK (keeping Shattuck open) and between Addison and Kittredge, the festival will draw significant traffic to local restaurants, hotels, retail businesses, and arts/culture venues downtown and beyond. Over seventy exhibitors will include independent bookstores, publishers, literary nonprofits and other literary/arts endeavors.

As with last year, this year's festival continues to build partnerships with UC Berkeley by having the festival take place during the school year. Previous years have contributed towards town-gown collaboration with UC Berkeley faculty involved and has selected campus venues used for additional author panels.

This annual, world-class, legacy event can enrich the lives of residents, draw visitors, raise revenues, and enhance the city's reputation regionally and worldwide. Summary of benefits:

- Diverse cultural and literary riches brought to our residents

- Increased tax revenues from restaurant, retail stores, and exhibitor sales from 50,000 visitors during festival hours all day Saturday, Saturday night and Sunday, plus from large Authors/VIP party Friday night
- Increased hotel tax revenues
- Increased parking revenue
- Increased theatre/music venue attendance through co-promoted festival specials
- Focus on Berkeley by the entire Bay Area, thanks to promotions by the SF Chronicle, KQED and other radio coverage, TV coverage, Twitter and more
- International attention to the City of Berkeley; a third of festival authors to come from other countries
- Closer connection between town and gown
- Very low cost for the city relative to the benefits because the vast majority of costs are borne by the nonprofit festival organization

Recently, the City has changed the way festivals are funded. In 2016, then-Mayor Tom Bates introduced an item to refer to the budget process \$50,000 for the Bay Area Book Festival, and to request that it be a regular line item in the budget¹. This allocation has been in the City budget and approved for the past three years. Consistent with this commitment to ongoing City funding, this item refers to the FY 2020/2021 Budget process an allocation of \$50,000 for the Bay Area Book Festival.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Bay Area Book Festival has quickly become one of Berkeley's premier annual festivals. The financial benefits to the City far outweigh the \$50,000 contribution and cost of fee waivers. The City will receive funding for various sources, including hotel taxes, parking revenue, and sales tax from increased sales at local businesses. Providing a contribution also shows Berkeley's commitment to the Book Festival, ensuring that they continue to host the festival here for years to come.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Continuation of providing \$50,000 from the General Fund to the event.
Various fees associated with the event will be waived.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No environmental effects.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguin 510-981-7100

Attachments:

1: Resolution

¹ [http://records.cityofberkeley.info/Agenda/Documents/DownloadFile/5_31_2016%3b%20CLK%20-%20Report%20\(Public\)%3b%20MAYOR%3b%20%3b%20REGULAR%3b%20BUDGET%20REFERRAL%20B.pdf?documentType=1&meetingId=186&itemId=2294&publishId=7575&isSection=False&isAttachment=True](http://records.cityofberkeley.info/Agenda/Documents/DownloadFile/5_31_2016%3b%20CLK%20-%20Report%20(Public)%3b%20MAYOR%3b%20%3b%20REGULAR%3b%20BUDGET%20REFERRAL%20B.pdf?documentType=1&meetingId=186&itemId=2294&publishId=7575&isSection=False&isAttachment=True)

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CITY CO-SPONSORSHIP OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL BAY AREA BOOK FESTIVAL

WHEREAS, the Bay Area Book Festival will be held this year from May 4-5, 2019 in downtown Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, this annual, nonprofit literary event, free to the public, will combine a street fair with diverse author panels and conversations on stages in downtown auditoriums; and

WHEREAS, the festival will present over 200 top authors of all genres and expects to attract at least 50,000 residents and visitors over the weekend, including low-income people who typically unable to such literary events; and

WHEREAS, Bay Area Book Festival is a legacy event that can enrich the lives of residents, draw visitors, raise revenues, and enhance the city's reputation regionally and worldwide.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley hereby co-sponsors the Bay Area Book Festival and that it has permission to use the City's name and logo in the event's promotional materials and signage naming the City of Berkeley as a co-sponsor solely for the purpose of the City indicating its policy endorsement of the event.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this co-sponsorship does not: (1) constitute the acceptance of any liability, management, or control on the part of the City for or over the Bay Area Book Festival; or (2) constitute regulatory approval of the Bay Area Book Festival.

