



Peace and Justice Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
April 24, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Peace and Justice Commission
Submitted by: Alex Mabanta, Chairperson, Peace and Justice Commission
Subject: FY 2017-18 Peace and Justice Commission Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

At its September 2017 meeting, the Peace and Justice Commission adopted its FY 2017-2018 Work Plan (Attachment 1).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Peace and Justice Commission identified issues to work on in FY 2018. The Commission discussed strategies to investigate during FY 2018. After the summer recess, the commission adopted the work plan at its September 11, 2017 meeting.

M/S/C: Mabanta/Marchesini
Ayes: Maran, R., Lippman, G., Bohn, D., Meola, B. Mabanta, A., Watson, R. Gorrocino, E., Marchesini, M.
Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Orozco, C., Rodriguez, Z, Agrawal, T.,

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the Council adopted direction to Commissions to submit a work plan annually.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no environmental sustainability impacts directly associated with the adoption of the work plan.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The Commission has appointed subcommittees to work on areas of the work plan and will return to Council with recommendations as appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Fiscal impacts will depend on the actions recommended and the Council's decisions.

CONTACT PERSON

Shallon Allen, Secretary, Peace and Justice Commission, 510-981-7071

Attachment

1: FY 2017-18 Peace and Justice Commission Work Plan

1. Mission Statement

The Peace and Justice Commission advises the Berkeley City Council and the Berkeley Unified School Board on all matters relating to the City of Berkeley's role in issues of peace and social justice. (BMC Section 3.68.070.A.) Under its mandate, the Commission also helps create citizen awareness around issues of social justice, holds public hearings and community forums, initiates and encourage research programs, develops ways to resolve conflict which do not involve violence, acts as a liaison between community groups organizing around issues of peace and social justice and City government, and assists the Director of Finance in the evaluation of financial institutions for socially responsible investing.

2. Commission's Goals

The Commission will be pursuing five policy initiatives and one major event this year. These include:

1. Developing the City of Berkeley's capacity to resist far-right policies
2. Fighting for racial justice
3. Combatting threats by the Trump Administration to international peace
4. Advocating to promote social justice in local government
5. Exploring human rights at the city-wide level
6. Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Peace and Justice Commission.

The Peace and Justice Commission will seek to develop the capacity of the city to resist the far-right direction within the U.S. The Commission proposes to strengthen Berkeley as a Sanctuary City and a City of Refuge, by withdrawing from the national security apparatus to the extent possible.

The Peace and Justice Commission will support the campaign for racial justice in Berkeley. The Commission will advocate for concrete policy and program changes to eliminate racial disparities and discrimination, improve police accountability and oversight, and support the African American Holistic Resource Center.

The Peace and Justice Commission affirms its role of advising council, and the council's role in speaking out, "in support of human rights and self-determination throughout the world." (BMC

Section 3.68.070.A.) The Commission will prioritize global issues that affect Berkeley, including militarism, the nuclear cycle, immigration, human trafficking and sweatshops, trade, and a humane international economic order.

The Peace and Justice Commission will conduct research and make proposals regarding transformation of local government structures to prioritize social justice and human rights. The Commission will engage with the council and staff in support of their pursuit of social equity, to strengthen the commission structure, and to institutionalize human rights principles in municipal governance. It will seek to improve and institutionalize the City's commitment to Socially Responsible Investing, Banking, and Procurement. (BMC Section 3.68.070.K.)

The Peace and Justice Commission will conduct research to explore human rights at the city-wide level. The Commission will conduct research on areas affecting community climate throughout the diverse communities of the city. The Commission also seeks to develop broad-based solidarity with marginalized communities in Berkeley. Furthermore, the commission will study how to broaden Berkeley's commitment as a human rights city and develop action items that tangibly realize that goal.

The Peace and Justice Commission will host the 30th Anniversary event this September 14 in order to examine the role of the Commission in this era. The Commission will offer a forum to discuss how it can better exercise moral leadership in Berkeley for peace and social justice and how it can effectively support broad-based campaigns for social justice.

In addition, the Commission will work to strengthen its relationship with the Board of Education. The Commission will hold a meeting with the School Board president on issues of shared concern, and will seek Commission appointments from those school directors with open seats on the Commission.

3. Resources

The Commission has no budget and uses few City materials or equipment. The Commission does rely on staff time in several ways: through our Commission secretary, and through the advice of expert staff whom we consult about specific policy questions. We may request to meet with key city staffers this year to ask for their input on existing city programs and how to best implement any new Commission recommendations that are adopted by the City Council.

4. Program Activities

We expect to develop several policy recommendations for the City Council and the Board of Education.

To accomplish this goal, our subcommittees will follow a structured process. First, the subcommittee members will prepare a research packet in order to familiarize themselves with the issue. The subcommittee may ask to meet with relevant city staff to learn about related existing Berkeley policies, as well as consult with community stakeholders. As appropriate, the subcommittee will speak with regional or national experts about initiatives that have been developed in other cities. At this point, the subcommittee will meet to formulate a draft of a recommendation.

The subcommittee will present the draft recommendation to key stakeholders for feedback. This may include other commissions, community or business organizations, or a public town hall.

Finally, the subcommittee will draft a recommendation to present to the full Commission for a vote. If approved, the recommendation will be sent to the City Council and/or the Board of Education for consideration.

5. Outputs

We hope to present several policy recommendations to the City Council and Board of Education this year.

We will hold ten full Commission meetings, and as many subcommittee meetings as needed. We may also hold educational or roundtable discussions with other commissions, community organizations, or at a public town hall meeting.

6. Outcomes

The specific topics of policy recommendations will be determined over the course of this year, based on conditions in the community and the interests of commissioners. We hope to suggest useful changes to city policies and ordinances, programs, and practices that will have a positive impact for peace and social justice for years to come.