



Planning Commission

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INFORMATION CALENDAR

September 24, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Planning Commission

Submitted by: Chris Schildt, Chairperson, Planning Commission and Jeff Vincent,  
Chairperson, Workplan Subcommittee of the Planning commission

Subject: Planning Commission Workplan 2019-2020

INTRODUCTION

The City of Berkeley Planning Commission (PC) hereby submits its work plan for Fiscal Year 2019, pursuant to the Berkeley City Council's request.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Unlike other city commissions, the PC's workload is almost exclusively dictated by referrals from the City Council. Each year, the Council goes through an extensive referral ranking process, which shapes the prioritization of work for the PC. Thus, by design, the PC has far less latitude than other city commissions in setting its agenda. As of October 2019, the PC has a workload of more than 40 referrals from the City Council.

The PC's workplan organizes the referrals around three strategic areas of PC interest/outcome, as described below. Across these strategic outcome areas, the PC aims to **demonstrate state-wide leadership in promoting social equity, affordability, and climate resilience issues**. In some cases, this requires action to comply with new state laws, and in some cases, this may involve going "beyond" state laws to recommend local land use policy policies that the PC feels will achieve more equitable results than state requirements.

***Strategic Outcome Areas:***

1. **Increase affordable housing.** This includes retaining and expanding the stock of affordable housing available throughout the city. The commission has identified three mechanisms by which we can advance this strategic outcome:
  1. Modify development standards to create more affordable housing;
  2. Revise administrative procedures and levels of discretion to streamline affordable housing;
  3. Develop community benefits and other value capture mechanisms in order to maximize affordability in new development.

2. **Promote healthy, livable communities.** This includes ensuring Berkeley residents live in safe, healthy, and accessible communities with parks, schools, local businesses, and cultural institutions, and promoting healthy mobility options for all residents.
3. **Support community economic development and commercial vitality.** This includes preserving and enhancing Berkeley's thriving neighborhood commercial areas and ensuring a vibrant downtown.

**Resources:** Significant staff time is required to conduct the research, write reports, and draft zoning language. In some cases, consultants are brought on board to assist staff.

**Activities:** For each referral, the PC's action requires staff time for substantive reports on each topic within each referral as well as developing draft zoning language changes. Often the draft zoning language goes through multiple revisions across multiple PC meetings.

**Outputs:** On nearly all referrals, the PC output consists of recommendations to the City Council.

## BACKGROUND

City Council has requested that each commission provide a workplan that explains the mission and goals of each appointed body. The mission of the PC, as outlined in the City Charter, reads:

*"The Commission recommends modifications to the City of Berkeley General Plan and related policy documents. All Zoning Ordinance amendments are developed through this Commission and recommended to the City Council. Other purviews include subdivision map consideration and review and comments on substantial projects from surrounding jurisdictions."*

Members of the PC have discussed their goals and prioritized three strategic outcomes to guide their 2019-2020 work as described above: 1) Increase affordable housing; 2) Promote healthy, livable communities; and 3) Support community economic development and commercial vitality.

At its meeting of May 1, 2019, the PC voted to adopt this workplan with Commissioner Vincent's edits and send it to City Council. [Vote: 9-0-0-0; Ayes: Beach, Fong, Kapla, Lacey, Martinot, Twu, Vincent, Wrenn, Wiblin. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None. Motion/Second: Kapla/Vincent]

The attached Planning Commission Workplan Table 2019-2020 (see Attachment 1) shows prioritized referrals, referrals awaiting action from other commission(s), referrals ranked by City Council that are slated for PC action to begin after the current work planning period (ending June 2020) based on resources and capacity, and referrals not

ranked by City Council for 2019-2020 work plan but which will be added to PC work schedule in priority order once ranked by Council.

The PC's pace in working through City Council referrals is determinant on staff support. The Long Range Policy Group has just hired three fulltime staff planners that will support the workload of the PC.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The PC's workplan aids in advancing the city's goals around sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Planning Commission Workplan Table 2019-2020

REFERRALS to Planning Commission by the City Council	RANKING* - RRV & HAP	STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREAS			
A. Referrals Prioritized by PC for 2019-2020 Workplan		1. Increase Affordable Housing	2. Promote Healthy, Livable Communities	3. Support Economic Development and Commercial Vitality	Waiting on other Commission or Department
Moderate Impact Home Occupations	started			x	
Cannabis Package	started & short-term		x	x	
Density Bonus Package / Objective Standards	started	x			JSISHL
Student Housing Package	started	x			
Adeline Plan (Community Benefits/Land Value Capture/Auto Uses/Opportunity Zone Overlay)	started	x	x		
Streamline Permitting for Affordable Housing	started	x			
Zoning Ordinance Revision Project Phase 1 & 2	started		x		
Parking Reform (GAH & Green Dev Stds)	started	x	x		
Flexible Ground Floor Uses	started	x			
Housing Linkage Fees	started (short-term)	x			
Toxic Remediation Regulations	started		x		
North Berkeley BART Zoning	started	x	x		
Fee Waivers for Housing Trust Fund Projects	started (short term)	x			

B. Referrals Awaiting Action by Other Commission(s)		1. Increase Affordable Housing	2. Promote Healthy, Livable Communities	3. Support Economic Development and Commercial Vitality	Waiting on other Commission or Department
Green Stormwater Requirements from CEAC	CEAC started		x		CEAC
Air Pollution Performance Standards from CEAC	CEAC started		x		CEAC
Expand boundaries of Downtown Arts District	OESD started			x	OED

REFERRALS to Planning Commission by the City Council	RANKING* - RRV & HAP	STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREAS			
ADUs in very high fire zones	43		x		Fire
Denial of Permits to Violators	52		x		HAC

C. Referrals ranked by City Council, work to begin after end "started" projects, based on resources and capacity		1. Increase Affordable Housing	2. Promote Healthy, Livable Communities	3. Support Economic Development and Commercial Vitality	Waiting on other Commission or Department
Gentrification/Displacement Research & Workshop	1	x	x		
Residential Development Standards (Missing Middle Research)	2	x	x		
AHMF modifications to calculations	4	x			
San Pablo Ave Specific Area Plan	6		x		
Junior ADUs	8				
Development Agreements	10			x	
Urban Forestry Ordinance	15		x		
Demolition Ordinance	HAP 16	x			
ADA Improvements in ADUs	18		x		
AHMF modifcaiton: condo conversion existing tenants	24	x			
ADU Mods	30 / HAP 13		x		
Inclusionary Requirement for Live/Work	33	x			
Lower discretion for internal remodeling	42		x		
Beer and wine service in the M-districts	46			x	
ADUs for Homeless	59	x			

REFERRALS to Planning Commission by the City Council	RANKING* - RRV & HAP	STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREAS			
D. Referrals not ranked by City Council for 2019-2020 work plan; will be added to work schedule once ranked based on ranking.		1. Increase Affordable Housing	2. Promote Healthy, Livable Communities	3. Support Economic Development and Commercial Vitality	Waiting on other Commission or Department
Mini Dorms (student housing)	NR	x			
Arcade Uses in Elmwood	NR			x	
Cannabis Use in Live/Work	NR			x	

\* "started" is a referral on which substantive work began before last Council RRV, thus not subject to re-ranking. If blank, the referral has not yet been ranked by the City Council

NOTE: Many of these referrals touch on all 3 strategic outcome areas.

- Key:
- ADU = Accessory Dwelling Unit
  - AHMF = Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee
  - GAH = Green Affordable Housing
  - HAP = Housing Action Plan
  - NR = Not Ranked in 2019