



Office of the City Manager

February 25, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: *Dee* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Subject: Support for and Engagement with the Berkeley Flea Market

This memo provides an update on recent Office of Economic Development (OED) and Planning Department efforts to engage and support the Berkeley Flea Market, which has recently experienced multiple setbacks and left it in a precarious financial position.

OED uses a consultant to specifically provide direct services to small businesses at risk of displacement or closure. The consultant – Uptima Business Bootcamp – has at the behest of OED been meeting twice a week since January with Community Services United, the Berkeley non-profit that manages the flea market. The services include the creation of a business plan, fundraising activities, new marketing strategies, and a plan to ‘reboot’ the Berkeley Flea Market in April 2019.

For over four decades, the Berkeley Flea Market has operated on Saturdays and Sundays in the Ashby BART Station northwest parking lot. The market is comprised of approximately 100 independent vendors offering a wide variety of items and goods. Recent setbacks led to cancellation of the market in February and March.

Concurrently, CSU and the Flea Market vendors are considering a relocation of the market to the public right-of-way on Adeline Street or another location near the current site. CSU board members and their consultant are engaging with Special Events staff to analyze potential locations, hurdles, and costs, and prepare to submit a street event permit application. CSU is also in contact with BART regarding a potential amendment to their Concessions Permit and the terms of their lease, to reduce their cost burden. OED and Planning staff are tracking and supporting each of these efforts.

City staff have also engaged with CSU and the vendors as part of the Adeline Corridor planning process – a process that is engaging community members to develop a long-range plan with a 20-year time horizon for the area along Adeline Street and a portion of South Shattuck Avenue, including the Ashby BART station area. Based on community feedback recognizing the Berkeley Flea Market’s cultural and historic significance to the

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neighborhood, the Plan will include land use and economic development strategies designed to enhance the long-term success of the Market and other existing community assets.

Staff will provide continuing engagement and support through this transition and hope that these efforts will result in a successful, sustainable Berkeley Flea Market.

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager
Jordan Klein, Manager, Office of Economic Development
Timothy Burroughs, Director of Planning and Development
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager / Public Information Officer
Jenny Wong, City Auditor