



Housing Advisory Commission

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA

Regular Meeting Thursday, February 2, 2023 7:00 pm	Mike Uberti, Secretary HAC@cityofberkeley.info
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PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE

Pursuant to Section 3 of Executive Order N-29-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 17, 2020, this meeting of the Housing Advisory Commission will be conducted exclusively through teleconference and Zoom videoconference. Please be advised that pursuant to the Executive Order, and to ensure the health and safety of the public by limiting human contact that could spread the COVID-19 virus, there will not be a physical meeting location available.

To access the meeting remotely using the internet: Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device use: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89440679916>. If you do not wish for your name to appear on the screen, then use the drop down menu and click on "rename" to rename yourself to be anonymous. To request to speak, use the "raise hand" icon on the screen.

To join by phone: Dial US: 1-669-444-9171 Enter Meeting 894 4067 9916. If you wish to comment during the public comment portion of the agenda, press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair.

Written communications submitted by mail or e-mail to the Housing Advisory Commission by 5:00 p.m. the day before the meeting will be distributed to the members of the Committee in advance of the meeting and retained as part of the official record. City offices are currently closed and cannot accept written communications in person.

All agenda items are for discussion and possible action.

Public comment policy: Members of the public may speak on any items on the Agenda and items not on the Agenda during the initial Public Comment period. Members of the public may also comment on any item listed on the agenda as the item is taken up. Members of the public may not speak more than once on any given item. The Chair may limit public comments to 3 minutes or less.

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Agenda Approval**
3. **Public Comment**
4. **Approval of the November 9, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes** (Attachment 1)
5. **Officer Elections – All/Staff** (Attachment 2)

6. **Discussion and Possible Action to Approve a Land Acknowledgement Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral, Unceded Home of the Ohlone People – All/Staff**
(Attachment 3)
7. **Approve City Funding for a future Homekey Project– All/Staff** (Attachment 4)
8. **Discussion and Possible Action Fair Access and Transparency in the Residential Application Process Study Session– Commissioner Simon-Weisberg** (Attachment 5)
9. **Update on Council Items (Future Dates Subject to Change)**
 - a. Adoption of Citywide Affordable Housing Requirements (January 17, 2023)
 - b. Adoption of 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (January 18, 2023)
10. **Announcements/Information Items**
 - a. Return to In-Person Meetings (Attachment 6)
11. **Future Items**
12. **Adjourn**

Attachments

1. Draft November 9, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
2. Mike Uberti, HHCS, February Officer Elections
3. Mark Numainville, City Clerk, Land Acknowledgement Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral, Unceded Home of the Ohlone People
4. Jenny Wyant, HHCS, Approve City Funding for a future Homekey Project
5. Commissioner Simon-Weisberg, Fair Access and Transparency in the Residential Application Process Study Session
6. Mark Numainville, City Clerk, Update – Return to In-Person Meetings

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the Secretary of the commission. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the Secretary for further information.

Written communications addressed to the Housing Advisory Commission and submitted to the Commission Secretary will be distributed to the Commission prior to the meeting. This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Mark Numainville, City Clerk, (510) 981-6900.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION:



To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at (510) 981-6418 (V) or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date.



HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION
Thursday, November 9, 2022

Housing Advisory Commission

Time: 7:01 pm
Held via Video and
Teleconference

Secretary – Mike Uberti
HAC@cityofberkeley.info

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Roll Call

Present: Nico Calavita, Sara Fain, Xavier Johnson, Libby Lee-Egan, Mari Mendonca, Deborah Potter, Alexandria Rodriguez, and Ainsley Sanidad.

Absent: Leah Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

Commissioners in attendance: 8 of 9

Staff Present: Anna Cash and Mike Uberti.

Members of the public in attendance: 3

Public Speakers: 1

2. Agenda Approval

Action: M/S/C (Potter/Fain) to approve the agenda.

Vote: Ayes: Calavita, Fain, Johnson, Lee-Egan, Mendonca, Potter, Rodriguez, and Sanidad. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

3. Public Comment

There was one speaker during public comment.

4. Approval of the October 6, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Action: M/S/F (Mendonca/Johnson) to accept the October 6, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Lee-Egan, Mendonca, and Sanidad. Noes: None. Abstain: Calavita, Fain, Potter, and Rodriguez. Absent: Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

Action: M/S/C (Mendonca/Johnson) to accept the October 6, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Lee-Egan, Mendonca, Rodriguez, and Sanidad. Noes: None. Abstain: Calavita, Fain, and Potter. Absent: Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

5. Approval of 2023 HAC Meeting Calendar

Action: M/S/C (Calavita/Mendonca) to adopt the 2023 HAC Meeting Calendar.

Vote: Ayes: Calavita, Fain, Johnson, Lee-Egan, Mendonca, Potter, Rodriguez, and Sanidad. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

6. Update on Council Items

7. Announcements/Information Items

8. Future Items

9. Adjourn

Action: M/S/C (Potter/Johnson) to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm.

Vote: Ayes: Calavita, Fain, Johnson, Lee-Egan, Mendonca, Potter, Rodriguez, and Sanidad. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Simon-Weisberg (unexcused).

Approved:

_____, Mike Uberti, Secretary



Health Housing and
Community Services Department
Housing & Community Services Division

MEMORANDUM

To: Housing Advisory Commission

From: Mike Uberti, Sr. Community Development Project Coordinator

Date: February 2, 2023

Subject: **February Officer Elections**

Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) officer elections are held each year in February. The offices established in the Commissioner Manual are Chair and Vice Chair. The term for each office is one year. An individual Chair may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms and there are no term limits for the Vice Chair.

The Chair presides over meetings of the HAC, and has numerous responsibilities outside the meeting. These include:

- Drafting all Commission-approved reports and correspondence in accordance with the requirements and in a timely way, or coordinating with other Commissioners to do so;
- Approving the final version of each Commission-approved report and correspondence, signing them and submitting them to staff;
- Representing the HAC at Council meetings for all HAC adopted items sent to Council;
- Completing officer training;
- Meeting with staff to discuss the agenda each month;
- Approving the final agenda for each meeting; and
- Receiving media requests on behalf of the HAC, subject to numerous restrictions explained in the Commissioner Manual.

As a reminder, HAC returns to in-person meetings as of March 1, 2023. Currently, the Chair can attend Council meetings as-needed via Zoom, but there may be situations that require in-person Council attendance. The Vice Chair participates in agenda setting as well, and fills in for the Chair when the Chair is not available. If you have questions, please consult the Commissioners Manual: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/Commissioners-Manual.pdf>. I am also available to answer additional questions.

Commissioners are allowed to nominate themselves or a fellow appointed commissioner. A vote will not be taken until all candidates are nominated.

A Vibrant and Healthy Berkeley for All



City Clerk Department

October 21, 2022

To: Berkeley Unified School District
Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board
Board of Library Trustees
Berkeley Housing Authority
All Berkeley Boards & Commissions

From: Mark Numainville, City Clerk

Subject: Land Acknowledgement Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral, Unceded Home of the Ohlone People

On October 11, 2022, the Berkeley City Council unanimously adopted the Land Acknowledgement Statement Resolution. The Statement acknowledges that the City of Berkeley rests upon the ancestral lands of the Chochenyo speaking Lisjan Ohlone people, brings attention to their centuries of resistance to colonial violence, and reminds our City and community of the need to take concrete restorative actions.

The full recommendation of the City Council is as follows:

1. Adopt the Land Acknowledgement Statement Resolution recognizing that Berkeley is the ancestral, unceded home of the Ohlone people.
2. Display the Land Acknowledgement in writing at all in-person or online Regular meetings of the City Council and read the Acknowledgement at the first Regular meeting of each month in which Regular City Council meetings are held.
3. Recommend to all Berkeley Commissions, Committees, Boards, and other elected and appointed City entities to consider inclusion of the Land Acknowledgement in meeting practices and direct the City Manager to convey a copy of this Item and Resolution to all such entities for reference.
4. Direct the City Manager to post the Land Acknowledgement or a prominent link to the Acknowledgement on the home page of the City's website and to create a webpage dedicated to Ohlone history and culture.
5. Now and in the future, consider additional more substantive reparative and restorative actions, including but not limited to those described under the heading "Actions/Alternatives Considered."

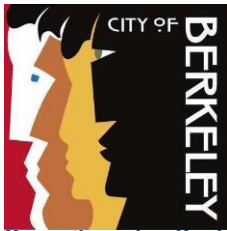
Land Acknowledgement Resolution

This memo transmits the agenda item and resolution to you as directed by the City Council in recommendation number three. Recommendation number three also states that the City Council recommends to all Berkeley Commissions, Committees, Boards, and other elected and appointed City entities to consider inclusion of the Land Acknowledgement in their meeting practices.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this important item.

cc: Mayor and City Council
Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Enc.



Councilmember Sophie Hahn
City of Berkeley, District 5

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 11, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Hahn (Author)
Mayor Jesse Arreguín (Co-Sponsor)
Councilmember Taplin (Co-Sponsor)
Councilmember Robinson (Co-Sponsor)
Subject: Land Acknowledgement Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral,
Unceded Home of the Ohlone people.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt the Land Acknowledgement Statement Resolution recognizing that Berkeley is the ancestral, unceded home of the Ohlone people.
2. Display the Land Acknowledgement in writing at all in-person or online Regular meetings of the City Council and read the Acknowledgement at the first Regular meeting of each month in which Regular City Council meetings are held.
3. Recommend to all Berkeley Commissions, Committees, Boards, and other elected and appointed City entities to consider inclusion of the Land Acknowledgement in meeting practices and direct the City Manager to convey a copy of this Item and Resolution to all such entities for reference.
4. Direct the City Manager to post the Land Acknowledgement or a prominent link to the Acknowledgement on the home page of the City's website and to create a webpage dedicated to Ohlone history and culture.
5. Now and in the future, consider additional more substantive reparative and restorative actions, including but not limited to those described under the heading "Actions/Alternatives Considered."

SUMMARY

Acknowledging that the City of Berkeley rests upon the ancestral lands of the Chochenyo speaking Lisjan Ohlone people brings attention to their centuries of resistance to colonial violence and reminds our City and community of the need to take concrete restorative actions.

The settlers of California, primarily Europeans seeking religious converts, agricultural land and economic opportunity during the gold rush, committed one of the most egregious genocides in history. Settlers murdered 80 percent of Indigenous people in the state from

1846 to 1873 through massacre by state-directed militias, enslavement in mining and agricultural production, displacement causing starvation, and compulsory assimilation.¹

Land acknowledgment is a traditional custom that dates back centuries in many Native nations and communities. Today, land acknowledgments are used by Native Peoples and non-Natives to recognize Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands on which we now live.² To begin public meetings, dozens of localities across the United States including Denver (CO), Portland (OR), and Phoenix (AZ) now share official land acknowledgements. Many public agencies, including the National Park Service, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), read these acknowledgements as well. The practice has been common for nearly a decade in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.³

Locally, many public and public-facing private institutions have also adopted land acknowledgement statements including UC Berkeley, Mills College, Chabot Las Positas Community College District, California College of the Arts, UCSF, Stanford, and recently, Berkeley's Rent Stabilization Board.

However impactful these statements may be, it's important to consider that land acknowledgements have been criticized as appropriating the Indigenous practice of acknowledging the ancestral roots of land without taking concrete action against ongoing oppression.⁴ According to University of Oklahoma Professor of Native American Cultural Studies Dustin Tahmahkera, "To acknowledge Indigenous homelands and to return those lands are related, but the former alone allows for rhetoric without further action."⁵

Dr. Duke Redbird, an Elder of the Saugeen First Nation in Ontario recently noted that Canada has invited non-Indigenous territories such as Prince Edward Island into the government's confederation, giving them lawmaker representation in parliament, while excluding millions of Indigenous people from the same opportunity:⁶

¹ Madley, B. (2016). *An American Genocide. The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe*. Yale University Press. Print. p. 10, 12. Note: approximately, one in ten of these 125,000 deaths were the result of direct violence, often perpetuated by volunteer militias. Others resulted indirectly through displacement and disease.

² Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, *Honoring Original Indigenous Inhabitants: Land Acknowledgment*. [Web](#).

³ Dewey, C. (2021). *Growing Number of Cities Weigh Tribal 'Land Acknowledgements.'* Pew Research Trust. [Web](#).

⁴ Kaur, H. (2021). *Land acknowledgments are often an empty gesture, some Indigenous people say.* CNN. [Web](#).

⁵ Wood, G. (2021). *'Land Acknowledgments' Are Just Moral Exhibitionism.* The Atlantic. [Web](#).

⁶ Museum of Toronto (2020). *Ask an Elder: What do Land Acknowledgements represent?* [Web](#).

To get up in government and give a land acknowledgement without even inviting us into confederation, we were left out. What is the land acknowledgement supposed to represent? Give us a feeling that we should be grateful? Grateful for what?

Naomi Bob, an Indigenous Youth Wellness Project Coordinator with the Snaw'naw'as and Nanoose First Nation, shared his perspective:⁷

I'm seeing land acknowledgements done in a way that is tokenizing and minimizes responsibility and our history... It's really easy to list off your host nations you found off of a google search but I want to hear how you as an individual have ended up on their land and I want to hear about the work you're doing to reconcile responsibilities you have inherited . . .

One of the leading advocacy groups for land acknowledgement, the Native Governance Center, acknowledges this issue of “optical allyship,” asking that local governments and community groups craft land acknowledgements that go beyond a mere statement, by providing research on the history of Indigenous peoples and offering concrete actions to support them. The organization’s Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgement states “every moment spent agonizing over land acknowledgement wording is time that could be used to actually support indigenous people... an apology or an acknowledgement is one thing, but what are you going to do next?”⁸

At an April 2022 Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board meeting Lisjan Ohlone Chairperson Corrina Gould spoke in support of their land acknowledgment and emphasized that we must acknowledge not only the past but also the future. She stressed that land acknowledgements are “a way to create goals together so there is an ongoing partnership taking care of the lands, and waters, and places that we live.”⁹ The City of Berkeley should honor this intention and use this resolution and the Land Acknowledgement practice as a first step to bring attention to these histories and as a foundation for further concrete actions.

This item asks for the Land Acknowledgement to be formally adopted, displayed, and spoken by the City Council at the start of proceedings, and asks other appointed and elected governmental bodies in Berkeley to consider adopting similar Land

⁷ CFSC Video (2020). Why are land acknowledgments important? Naomi Bob - Indigenous Voices on Reconciliation. [Web](#).

⁸ Native Governance Center (2019), quoting Dr. Kate Beane of the Falandreau Santee Dakota and Muskogee Creek as well as Robert Larson of the Sioux Indian Community. A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. [Web](#).

⁹ City of Berkeley (2022). Berkeley Rent Board Adopts Land Acknowledgement Statement. [Web](#).

Acknowledgement practices. More importantly, *it is intended to serve as a starting point for further restorative and reparative work our City and community must engage in*, not as an end in and of itself.

BACKGROUND

The United States, the State of California, and the City of Berkeley came into being through the deliberate and sustained genocide of Indigenous people, and modern forms of this colonial violence continue to this day both here in Berkeley and across the country and globe. This history is often obscured or erased. Schools for decades have failed to teach the truth about this legacy, replacing hard and ugly facts with a variety of convenient myths and misrepresentations. Surviving Native Americans endured forced reeducation at boarding schools that suppressed oral history transmission, and fear of violence and murder drove many to hide their Indigenous ancestry, further eroding culture and memory.¹⁰ But Lisjan Ohlone and other Native American people found ways to survive this murderous and cultural genocide, and many are with us today.

To contextualize this painful history, honor the Indigenous people who have survived and resisted this violence, and chart a new path forward for our community, this item briefly recounts elements of this history to understand the present.

The Ohlone are a group of around 50 separate tribes, who for 10,000 years lived on ancestral lands that spanned the coast of what is now known as San Francisco through Monterey Bay to the lower Salinas Valley.¹¹ There were eight different nations in the Bay Area alone, including the Lisjan; many came to adopt the term Ohlone in solidarity with other nations to push back against the Spanish colonizers' blanket name of "Costanoan."¹²

The territory xučyun (Huchiun), extending from what is now known as the Berkeley Hills to the Bay Shore from West Oakland to El Cerrito, is the home territory of the Chochenyo speaking Ohlone people. The cities of Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, El Cerrito, and most of Oakland were created on this ancestral territory. Nearly 310,000 Indigenous people across the region lived in what is now called California, speaking as many as 100 languages.¹³

Spain began colonizing these lands in 1769, establishing military forts and religious "mission" outposts across the region, including Mission San Jose in Fremont and

¹⁰ Madley, B. (2016). Ibid. p. 10.

¹¹ UC Berkeley, n.d. Berkeley sits in the territory of xučyun. [Web](#).

¹² Gould, Corrina. (2021). Berkeley's Ohlone History. Peralta Community Garden. [Web](#).

¹³ Madley, B. (2016). Ibid. p. 23.

Mission Dolores in San Francisco, that enslaved the ancestors of some modern-day Berkeley and East Bay Ohlone people.¹⁴ ¹⁵Spain used slavery, rape, and torture of Indigenous people to secure silver mines to compete against colonial powers like Russia and Britain and “spiritually conquer” the region in the name of Catholicism.¹⁶ In this period, Spain claimed ownership of the land and granted use rights to some ranchers and farmers.¹⁷

In 1818, the Spanish soldier Luis Peralta petitioned the Spanish authorities to be granted 48,000 acres extending from modern day San Leandro Creek to El Cerrito. This area, encapsulating modern day Berkeley, was known as “Rancho San Antonio.” Two of Peralta’s four sons, Domingo and Vicente (for which streets are named today), administered the territory for nearly two decades, through the transfer of the region to Mexico from Spain. Ranching appropriated and destroyed native landscapes and diverted streams for irrigation at great cost to native peoples, some of whom found ways to survive amid ongoing Spanish oppression.¹⁸

Following Mexican independence in 1821, the new Mexican government granted private land rights to individual “ranchos” through the Missions: these land grant settlers began occupying prime agricultural lands across the state, but remained less than 20 percent of California’s population – the remainder being Native American.¹⁹ The Peralta family soon had company in the form of other landed “aristocratic” families, which replaced the missionary friars as the most powerful people across the region.²⁰

Amid the 1850’s Gold Rush, U.S. soldiers victorious over Mexico and other squatters began to make legal claims to the Peralta lands. Federal judges of the California Land Commission in 1851, not well prepared for their tasks, attempted to resolve these numerous land disputes, but the Peraltas were overwhelmed by lawyers’ bills and property taxes, eventually selling off much of their lands to pay their debts.²¹ Meanwhile the violent occupation of settlers as well as the spread of European diseases like smallpox reduced the Indigenous population to only 150,000 people by the time the United States had taken legal control of what is now California in 1846, during the Mexican-American war.²²

¹⁴ Novan, K. (2021). California Agriculture: Dimensions and Issues, 2nd Edition: Chapter 3, California’s Evolving Landscape. University of California: Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics. [Web](#). p. 59.

¹⁵ Gould, Corrina. (2021). Ibid.

¹⁶ Novan, K. (2021). Ibid. p. 59.

¹⁷ Madley, B. (2016). Ibid. p. 27 - 38.

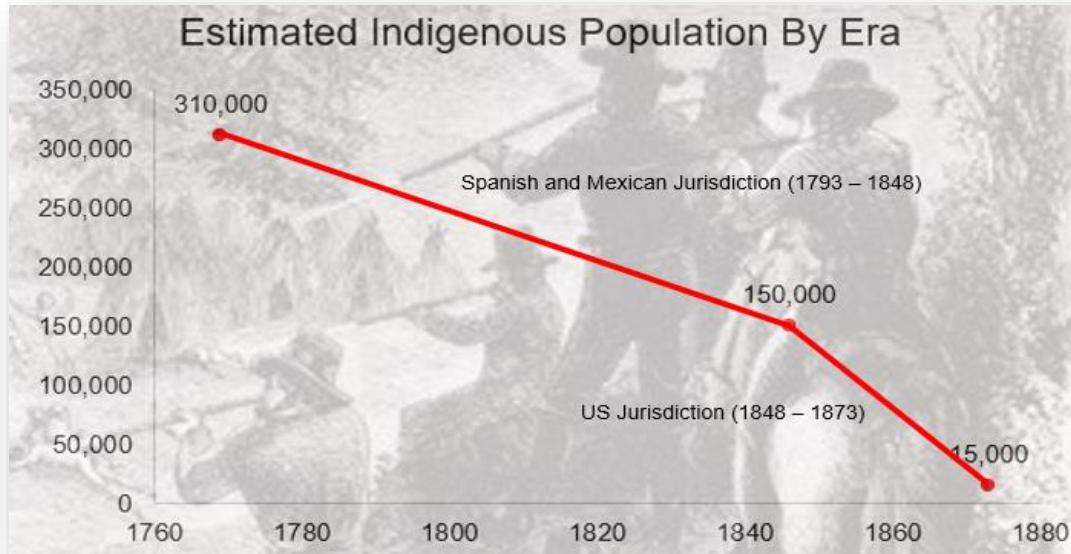
¹⁸ Wollenberg, C. (2008). Berkeley: A City in History. Chapter One: First Settlers. UC Press. p. 8. [Web](#).

¹⁹ Novan, K. (2021). Ibid. p. 60. / Lindsay, B.C. (2012), p. 131

²⁰ Wollenberg, C. (2008). Ibid. P. 8

²¹ Wollenberg, C. (2008). Ibid. P. 14

²² Madley, B. (2016). Ibid. p. 3, 12



So began the era of more affirmative, state-sponsored genocide that led US Indian Affairs Commissioner John Collier to declare in 1935 that “The world’s annals contain few comparable instances of swift depopulation— practically, of racial massacre—at the hands of a conquering race.”²³ Brenden C. Lindsay, Associate Professor of History at Sacramento State and author of *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide*, concludes that “northern California’s Native population faced a genocidal assault perhaps unrivaled in North America in terms of its ferocity, bloodiness, and loss of human life,” this violence was executed through state-sponsored and state-tolerated violence, enslavement, and displacement.²⁴

It was just not just a select few who engaged in this violence. European settlers flooding into Northern California in search of gold came with a manufactured fear of Indigenous people, due to repetitive, sensationalized, and false storytelling in newspapers and other reports. Deaths from disease, natural causes, and even suicide were attributed to Indigenous people while actual violence by Indigenous people against settlers was quite rare. For example, contrary to popular myths, only 115 of nearly 90,000 new settlers were killed in conflicts with Indigenous people during the 1840s.²⁵ This manufactured fear, which translated into hatred, provided pretext for California Governors John

²³ Madley, B.

²⁴ Lindsay, B.C. (2012) *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873*. University of Nebraska Press. Print. p. 177

²⁵ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 9, 23, 31, 39, 120.

McDougal and Peter Burnett to legally sanction volunteer militias tasked with pushing Indigenous people off farming and ranching lands in the most economically efficient way possible: massacre.²⁶ Justifying this genocide with slurs like “digger,” Indigenous people were equated with animals for the purpose of literally hunting them with guns.²⁷

Many Indigenous people were enslaved for labor as well. Prominent State Senators and ranchers during California’s early years pushed the Governor to create reservations where Indigenous people could be used for hard labor but kept separate from whites. Legislation was also passed echoing legislation in southern States to reduce Indigenous people to non-legal entities who could be legally enslaved.²⁸ If Indigenous people were found drunk on Sundays, they were arrested and enslaved: the Los Angeles Star reported one instance where a jail door fell down because the cell was so crowded with imprisoned native people.²⁹ These and similar atrocities precipitated the unsuccessful pan-Indigenous “Garra Revolt” during the 1850s.

This enslavement also went hand in hand with displacement from ranching, which led to extreme poverty and starvation, with many Indigenous people desperate for work to survive. Ranching throughout California depended on the labor of enslaved Indigenous people as quests for gold by settlers drained the labor force.³⁰ Ranchers hunted deer and elk that competed for food with their cows and horses, devastating wild herds. Domesticated animals like cows, pigs, and sheep ate thousands of acres of plants Indigenous people depended on for food.³¹ This environmental devastation drove some Indigenous people such as the Paiutes to attack cows and horses (though even this tactic of survival was exaggerated by settlers, who often attributed the natural deaths of domesticated animals to Indigenous people).³² In an ironic twist, Indigenous peoples who killed domesticated animals tended to receive more in reservation funding, as this act of resistance created heavy costs for the ranchos.

The legal system, disguised with the veneer of “democratic will,” barred Indigenous people from testifying in court against settlers: in practice, legalizing their murder.³³ The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War, was violated as California took Indigenous affairs, a federal responsibility, into local hands following

²⁶ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 151, 170.

²⁷ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 133, 185

²⁸ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 146-148

²⁹ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 23, 153

³⁰ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 31, 136, 153

³¹ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 176, 181, 183, 186

³² Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 17, 136, 186

³³ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). *Ibid.* p. 27, 28, 132, 168,

statehood.³⁴ For its part, however, the federal government reimbursed the cost of volunteer militias with millions in funding, effectively bankrolling massacre. It also issued a decree allowing soldiers from the Mexican-American war to claim up to 160 acres of land in California as a bounty, another factor in the demise of Ranchos and the establishment of “land rights” - to land that was stolen once from Indigenous peoples and a second time from the “owners” of formerly Spanish and later Mexican Ranchos.

The Sogorea Te’ Land Trust is an urban Indigenous women-led land trust based in the Bay Area that facilitates the return of Indigenous land to Indigenous people. The Trust’s website includes a short history of the Lisjan Ohlone, which parallels the history recounted in other sources.

“The Lisjan people have lived in the territory of Huchiun since the beginning of time. For thousands of years, hundreds of generations, the Lisjan Ohlone people have lived on the land that is now known as the East Bay in the San Francisco Bay Area. We did not own the land, we belonged to it. Generation after generation, we have cultivated reciprocal relationships with the plants and animals we share this place with, and developed beautiful and powerful cultural practices that keep us in balance.

The Confederated Villages of Lisjan are one of many Ohlone nations, each with its own geography and history. Our tribes, cultures and languages are as diverse as the ecosystems we live within. When the Spanish invaded in the late 1700s, in their ignorance they called us Costanoan, people of the coast. In the 1960s and 70s, inspired by the Black Power and American Indian Movements, we organized and renamed ourselves Ohlone. The different nations of Ohlone people are connected but have different territories and languages. The Confederated Villages of Lisjan speak the language Chochenyo.

The Lisjan are made up of the six nations that were directly enslaved at Mission San Jose in Fremont, CA and Mission Dolores in San Francisco, CA: Lisjan (Ohlone), Karkin (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok, Delta Yokut and Napien (Patwin). Our territory includes 5 Bay Area counties; Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, Napa and San Joaquin, and we are directly tied to the “Indian Town” census of the 1920s and the Verona Band.

The colonization of this land began with the reign of terror inflicted by Spanish soldiers and missionaries who sought to convert all Indigenous people into Catholic subjects of Spain and steal their land. The Missions were plantations, built by slave

³⁴ Lindsay, B.C. (2012). Ibid. p. 28, 140-143

labor and sustained through brutal physical violence and extractive land practices. The Spanish brought deadly diseases, invasive species, and Christian ideology, based on human dominion of the natural world, causing devastating consequences for the Lisjan people and all living beings we have shared the land with.

After a brief but harrowing Mexican rancho period, Lisjan survivors faced extermination policies by the United States that aimed to eliminate California Indians entirely. In a climate of virulent racial discrimination and state-sponsored vigilante killings, most Lisjan families survived by isolating themselves and concealing their identities. Cultural and spiritual traditions were forced into dormancy or secrecy, and much knowledge perished with the passing of generations.

Despite these concerted efforts to erase our history and identity, the Lisjan community forms a diverse and vibrant constellation of tribes and families. Utilizing a wide array of survival strategies to navigate a profoundly altered 21st century world, we continue to revitalize our cultural practices and uphold our responsibilities to protect and care for our ancestral homeland.

We have survived over two centuries of genocide and colonization during the Spanish, Mexican and American eras. Today, we continue to inhabit our ancestral homeland, fight for our sacred sites and revitalize our cultural practices.”³⁵

Despite the incredible strength it has taken to survive the repeated onslaughts of slavery, disease, environmental destruction, land appropriation, and state-sponsored physical and cultural genocide, centuries of trauma from colonization manifest themselves in ongoing struggles for Indigenous People in California and beyond. The nearly two million Indigenous people living under U.S. jurisdiction suffer the highest rate of poverty of any racial group—almost twice the national average. Rates of suicide, alcoholism, gang membership, and sexual abuse are also far higher than that of the non-Indigenous population, with challenges particularly acute on reservations.³⁶

By restoring sovereignty and land to Indigenous people, with negotiated environmental protections and meaningful economic opportunity, is one way to help repair deeply scarred communities.

As Standing Rock and other pipeline opposition campaigns have shown, Indigenous peoples living under U.S. jurisdiction continue to stand up against pipelines, oil extraction,

³⁵ Sogorea Te' Land Trust, Lisjan (Ohlone) History & Territory. [Web](#).

³⁶ Riley, N.S. (2016). One Way to Help Native Americans: Property Rights. The Atlantic. [Web](#).

and other desecrations that destroy their limited lands and poison communities with cancer and polluted water. The petroleum industry has demolished sacred sites and confronts individuals who resist with rubber bullets, attack dogs, and other war-like practices.³⁷ While Indigenous People are anything but a monolith, this common cause against extraction, pollution and desecration unites many. As Dallas Goldtooth of the Dakota Nation and Indigenous Environmental Network has described:

[Resistance] resonates across the diaspora of Indigenous Peoples. This is a critical moment we find ourselves in on this planet, not just in the sense for addressing climate change, but also a sense for social justice, a sense of just overall justice for all species. Indigenous Peoples tend to be, and rightfully are, on the frontline of those fights and those struggles. That's encapsulated by this idea of us rising together.

This connection even extends internationally, as the state of California plays an outsized role in the extraction and destruction of Indigenous homelands in the Amazon as well. In turn, the deforestation of the Amazon destroys moisture distribution that contains wildfires across North America, and California in particular.³⁸ A recent investigation demonstrated that California consumes more oil extracted from the Western Amazon than any other region on earth, refining it for airports, Amazon, PepsiCo and COSTCO.³⁹

In another example of the enduring nexus between our State and community and forces of destruction to Indigenous lands, a federal investigation found the largest animal production company in the world, JBS, has been implicated in the continued deforestation of the Amazon as well as the torture and murder of Indigenous people of the Amazon.^{40 41} Several of Europe's largest supermarket chains have responded by banning JBS beef products, acknowledging that animal feed crops and animal grazing drives 80 percent of Amazon deforestation.^{42 43} Through our consumption here in Berkeley, we literally fuel practices that continue to destroy Indigenous People and the lands on which they survive.

³⁷ Bunten, A.C. (2017). Indigenous Resistance: The Big Picture behind Pipeline Protests. Cultural Survival. [Web](#).

³⁸ Lazard, O. (2020). One Answer to California's Fires Lies in the Amazon. Carnegie Europe. [Web](#).

³⁹ Amazon Watch. Linked Fates: How California's Oil Imports Affect the Future of the Amazon Rainforest. [Web](#).

⁴⁰ Mano, A. (2021). Brazil's JBS bought 301,000 cattle from 'irregular' farms in the Amazon, audit finds. Reuters. [Web](#).

⁴¹ Phillips, D. (2020). Brazilian meat companies linked to farmer charged with 'massacre' in Amazon. The Guardian. [Web](#).

⁴² Spring, J. and Deutsch, A. (2021). European supermarkets stop selling Brazil beef over deforestation links. Reuters. [Web](#).

⁴³ Butler, R. (2009). Controlling the Ranching Boom that Threatens the Amazon. Yale School of the Environment. [Web](#).

With knowledge of these connections between the meat we eat and petroleum we consume to continued oppression of Indigenous People and desecration of their lands, we should consider actions like the boycotts undertaken in European countries.

Thoughtfully acknowledging our own history and current aspirations for local and other Indigenous Peoples prior to public deliberation offers hope for more permanent and meaningful restorative action in Berkeley as well as statewide, nationally, and across the globe.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

The City of Berkeley has a legacy of acknowledging the oppression and genocide of Indigenous people and taking concrete steps to support their struggle against institutions that grew out of settler-colonialist ideology as well as oppressive actions that persist today.

In 1992, Berkeley became the first city in the United States to rename as Indigenous Peoples' Day the federal holiday formerly recognized as Columbus Day. This action motivated changes to BUSD's history curriculum and undermined a long-standing revisionist history that European colonizer Christopher Columbus was a hero instead of a violent leader whose arrival led to the murder, enslavement, rape, and disease-related deaths of millions of Indigenous People.⁴⁴ Since then, nearly 130 cities nationwide and 20 states have acknowledged this day of recognition as well.

In 2000, the City of Berkeley officially designated the West Berkeley Shellmound, one of 425 ceremonial burial mounds that ringed San Francisco Bay to honor ancestors, as a landmark. The site is also recognized by the State of California and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, meaning it meets all of the criteria for such listing. In 2020, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Berkeley Shellmound and Village Site one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States.⁴⁵

Regarding the significance of the Shellmound and Village historic district, the "Shellmound - Ohlone Heritage Site and Sacred Ground" website documents that:

"For thousands of years, the people of this original village on the East Bay shore thrived on the abundant resources of land and sea, developing a sophisticated maritime culture. Towering over the village was a great mound, estimated to have been at least 20 feet high and hundreds of feet long, one of the largest of the 425

⁴⁴ Associated Press (1992). In Berkeley, Day for Columbus Is Renamed. New York Times. [Web](#).

⁴⁵ Dinkelspiel, F. (2020). West Berkeley Shellmound is now considered one of the U.S.'s 11 most endangered historic places. BerkeleySide. [Web](#).

shellmound funerary monuments that once lined the shores of San Francisco Bay. These mounds are older than the pyramids in Egypt and most of the major cities in the world.

Archaeologists have long recognized the importance of the West Berkeley Shellmound site, also known as the “West Berkeley Site,” or CA-ALA-307. The site has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under all four criteria, and is listed on the California Register of Historical Resources. Archaeological evidence from the West Berkeley Site has fundamentally shaped understandings of the early human history of the San Francisco Bay Area, and ongoing research continues to enrich and reinterpret an amazing historical narrative.

Eminent UC Berkeley archaeologist Kent Lightfoot describes the West Berkeley Site as a fishing village where “an active port was maintained over hundreds of years,” with dozens of tule balsa canoes going out on fishing and hunting expeditions, or ferrying people and goods across the Bay. Large nets were used to catch fish such as sturgeon, salmon, thresher sharks, jacksmelt and surfperch. Hunters pursued antelope, deer, tule elk, dolphins, porpoises, otters, sea birds and other quarry, cooking their catch in underground ovens and hearths.

A unique 40-foot long oval-shaped building at the site is thought to have functioned as a center for ceremonies, dances and special meetings. Charmstones, abalone pendants and other ritual items have been recovered from the site. Hundreds of human burials have been recorded, as well as ritual burials of coyotes and a California condor.”⁴⁶

In May of 2009, the City Council adopted a resolution recognizing and endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), a statement of values denouncing forced assimilation, land removal, violent exploitation, cultural genocide, and other actions abridging Indigenous People’s right to self-determination.⁴⁷ In 2015, the Council later delivered a letter to the UN Secretary General and US Ambassador to the UN urging this declaration to be adopted as a convention, which would be legally binding.

In January of 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution formally recognizing the Ohlone Peoples as the original inhabitants of Berkeley and referred to the Berkeley Shellmound landmark.⁴⁸ The latter affirmed the City’s commitment to the “defense of Indigenous rights,

⁴⁶ Shellmound – Ohlone Heritage Site and Sacred Grounds. [Web](#).

⁴⁷ United Nations General Assembly (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. [Web](#).

⁴⁸ Berkeley Resolution No. 67,352-N.S. Recognizing the Ohlone Peoples. [Web](#).

culture, and dignity” as an official value, committing that “free, prior, and informed consent of the Ohlone and other Indigenous people should be integral to any alteration planning for the Berkeley Shellmound sacred site...”⁴⁹ The success of this measure underscores how Indigenous groups including Ohlone members and conservation activists have organized in spreading awareness throughout the community about their homeland and sacred sites in Berkeley and the Bay Area.

In January 2018, Council adopted a policy changing Berkeley's City Limits signs to read "Welcome to Berkeley - Ohlone Territory." In October 2018, the City Council took further action and adopted a similar measure replacing all existing Welcome to Berkeley signs to signs including "Ohlone Territory." As part of their deliberations, the City Council decided that in addition to recognizing the Ohlone People through signage, there was a need for more learning opportunities to add historical context, including a special Council session on Ohlone history and culture, a webpage on the City of Berkeley website linking to cultural and historic information, and inviting representatives of the Ohlone to speak at a City Council meeting.

On June 9, 2020 the City Council passed an item to paint the words “Black Lives Matter” and “Ohlone Territory” on streets adjacent to Berkeley’s City Hall.

At its January 20, 2022 meeting, the Berkeley Rent Board unanimously voted to adopt a land acknowledgement statement to be read out loud at all future board and committee meetings.⁵⁰

In the spirit of continuing to demonstrate and deepen the City of Berkeley’s commitment to recognition and inclusion of the Ohlone People we bring the proposal for an official land acknowledgment forward, including consideration of concrete actions that may follow from public deliberation.

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The City of Berkeley should consult with Lisjan Ohlone leadership regarding any decisions related to restorative, reparative, or other supportive actions. Some actions the City may wish to consult on include:

⁴⁹ Berkeley Resolution No. 67,353-N.S. Honor Berkeley Shellmound Indigenous Sacred Site, UC Berkeley Return Ancestral Remains to Ohlone Peoples. [Web](#).

⁵⁰City of Berkeley (2022). Berkeley Rent Board Adopts Land Acknowledgement Statement. [Web](#).

Create Easements and/or Return City land: The Sogorea Te' Land Trust and the City of Oakland on September 8, 2022 announced a visionary, historic plan to return approximately five acres of land owned by the City to Indigenous stewardship.

The Oakland City Council will hold hearings to consider conveying the site, known as Sequoia Point, to the Sogorea Te' Land Trust, and the East Bay Ohlone tribe, Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation. The City would grant a cultural conservation easement in perpetuity to the Land Trust, allowing the Land Trust to immediately use the land for natural resource restoration, cultural practices, public education, and to plan for additional future uses.

What started out with a casual conversation between Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and tribal Chairperson Corrina Gould in 2018, grew into a partnership between the City and the Land Trust to begin to address the historic harms of Oakland's founding.

In the short term, the easement would allow the Land Trust to immediately begin tending to the land, gather Native plants and foods, clean up the area, and perform environmental and natural habitat restoration. The long-term vision of this project is to create a thriving, beautiful, ceremonial gathering place and structure where Indigenous people and their guests can come together and share cultural information and celebrations.

"I am committed to returning land to Indigenous stewardship, to offer some redress for past injustices to Native people," said Mayor Schaaf. "I hope the work we are doing in Oakland with the Sogorea Te' Land Trust can serve as a model for other cities working to return Indigenous land to the Indigenous community we stole it from."

In recognition of this historic moment, tribal Chairperson Corrina Gould said, "This agreement will restore our access to this important area, allowing a return of our sacred relationship with our ancestral lands in the hills. The easement allows us to begin to heal the land and heal the scars that have been created by colonization for the next generations."⁵¹

Berkeley should consider this or similar actions to return land to Ohlone ownership and/or stewardship.

⁵¹ Sogorea Te' Land Trust and City of Oakland Announce Plan to Return Land to Indigenous Stewardship. [Web.](#)

Local Support for Land Transfers: As part of the land acknowledgement process, the City of Berkeley might consider encouraging residents to donate land to indigenous stakeholders such as the Sogorea Te' Land Trust that partners with dozens of local food justice and environmental groups to protect our shared environment.⁵² The Council could recognize donations of land or actions taken by community members to donate land through wills. The City could also partner to distribute information on the Sogorea Te' Land Trust and include information about the Trust on its website, including a guide to these types of donations produced by the Sustainable Economies Law Center, a copy of which is attached.^{53 54}

Local support for Voluntary Land Taxes: The City of Berkeley may consider further means to encourage residents to donate Indigenous causes through payment of voluntary land taxes, "Shuumi," that support the return of Indigenous land to Indigenous people.⁵⁵ The Sogorea Te' Land Trust, located in the East Bay, has such a program, and a similar program allows residents of the Humboldt Bay region to pay a voluntary tax to the Wiyot people. In Seattle, nearly 4,300 residents have signed up to pay the Duwamish Tribe symbolic rent.⁵⁶

Support for Statewide Indigenous Land Sovereignty: The City of Berkeley may continue its consideration of support letters, resolutions, and education campaigns that highlight exploitation of ancestral Indigenous people and lands.

Future efforts could support action to return land or pay restitution to Indigenous people. Returning land to Indigenous sovereignty or using restitution funds for Indigenous-led sustainability initiatives acknowledges the leading role that the securing of land had in the genocide of Indigenous people across the region.⁵⁷

Berkeley further may consider statements of support for giving Indigenous people sovereignty over national and local parks, acknowledging the acts of violence and genocide that drove them from these locations. Precedent exists in New Zealand and Australia.

⁵² Sogorea Te' Land Trust. Return the Land / Land Return. [Web](#).

⁵³ Sustainable Economies Law Center. Options for Transferring Land. [Web](#).

⁵⁴ Note: for lands outside this region, individuals can often find information on donations by searching "Tribal Historic Preservation Officer" along with the name of the nation they wish to give to.

⁵⁵ Sogorea Te' Land Trust. Shuumi Land Tax. [Web](#).

⁵⁶ Singh, M. (2019). Native American 'land taxes': a step on the roadmap for reparations. The Guardian. [Web](#).

⁵⁷ Lindsay, B.C. (2012) Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1873. University of Nebraska Press. Print. P. 147- 186.

Indigenous communities are already stakeholders in park management, with a century of experience managing the layers of bureaucracy involved in managing these lands.⁵⁸

CONSULTATION/OUTREACH OVERVIEW AND RESULTS

Much like the process the Rent Stabilization Board pursued, the wording and intentions behind this land acknowledgement were developed in close consultation with Ohlone representatives. Academic and Native American sources underly the brief historical overview.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The City of Berkeley has a moral obligation to acknowledge local and broader atrocities against Indigenous people, and continued injustices. The regular repetition of the Land Acknowledgement, coupled with opportunities for deeper learning, will serve as a constant reminder of our responsibilities, and open the door to further restorative actions by the City and members of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATION & ENFORCEMENT

Very little staff time or expense is needed to carry out the requirements of this referral. For Zoom meetings, a written version of the Acknowledgement will need to be prepared for screening prior to Council meetings, and the Agenda Committee will need to add the reading of the Acknowledgement to the Ceremonial Agenda of the first Regular City Council meeting of each month. For in-person meetings, a poster-sized version of the Land Acknowledgement should be produced for display in a prominent location in the Council chambers. This likely can be accomplished for under \$100.

Staff will further need to convey a copy of this item and resolution to the secretaries and chairs of each appointed or elected body in Berkeley, with a note that the City Council has requested such bodies to consider incorporating the acknowledgement into their meeting practices.

Posting the Land Acknowledgement on the City's website homepage and completing the new Ohlone history webpage is a limited expense and should be completed as quickly as possible. Other jurisdictions and organizations that practice the reading of Land Acknowledgements often also include pages about the history of local Indigenous People on their websites. These can serve as examples. Consultation with Lisjan Ohlone representatives is central to ensuring what is posted is complete and accurate.

⁵⁸ Treuer, D. (2021). Return the National Parks to the Tribes. The Atlantic. [Web](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This resolution raises awareness of how genocide and exploitation of land and other natural resources intersects with climate change, wildfire, food insecurity, and other major challenges our community – and planet - face. It will also raise awareness of the local conservation and environmental work of the Ohlone people.

FISCAL IMPACT

See Section in Implementation, Administration, and Enforcement for a description of de minimus associated costs.

OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

The City Council should partner with the Ohlone to develop and carry out more substantive acts of education, partnership, and restitution. This will prevent the land acknowledgement statement from becoming a mere “check-box of optical allyship.”

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Sophie Hahn, shahn@cityofberkeley.info; 510-682-5905

Attachments

1. Land Acknowledgement Statement
2. Land Acknowledgement Resolution
3. Sustainable Economies Law Center Options for Transferring Land – A Brief Guide

ATTACHMENT 1

Land Acknowledgement Statement

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

ATTACHMENT 2 - RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION #####-N.S.

RECOGNIZING THAT BERKELEY IS THE ANCESTRAL, UNCEDED HOME OF THE OHLONE PEOPLE AND ADOPTING AN OFFICIAL CITY OF BERKELEY LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PRACTICES

WHEREAS Acknowledging that the City of Berkeley rests upon the ancestral lands of the Chochochenyo speaking Lisjan Ohlone people brings attention to their centuries of resistance to colonial violence and reminds our City and community of the need to take concrete restorative actions; and

WHEREAS Land acknowledgment is a traditional custom that dates back centuries in many Native nations and communities, land acknowledgments continue to be used by Native Peoples and non-Natives to recognize Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands on which we now live; and

WHEREAS To begin public meetings, localities across the United States including Denver (CO), Portland (OR), and Phoenix (AZ) now share official land acknowledgements as well as many public agencies, including the National Park Service, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); and

WHEREAS Many public and public-facing private institutions have also adopted land acknowledgement statements including UC Berkeley, Mills College, Chabot Las Positas Community College District, California College of the Arts, UCSF, Stanford, and recently, Berkeley's Rent Stabilization Board; and

WHEREAS One of the leading advocacy groups for land acknowledgement, the Native Governance Center, asks that land acknowledgements go beyond a mere statement, by providing research on the history of indigenous peoples and offering concrete actions to support them; and

WHEREAS The settlers of California, primarily Europeans seeking religious converts, agricultural land, and economic opportunity during the gold rush committed one of the most egregious genocides in history, murdering 80 percent of Indigenous people in the state from 1846 to 1873 through massacre by state-directed militias, enslavement in mining and agricultural production, displacement causing starvation, and compulsory assimilation; and

WHEREAS The Lisjan people have lived in the territory of Huchiun, the land that is now known as the East Bay in the San Francisco Bay Area, since the beginning of time and for thousands of years and hundreds of generations; and

WHEREAS the Lisjan people did not own the land, *they belonged to it*, and generation after generation they have cultivated reciprocal relationships with plants and animals and developed beautiful and powerful cultural practices that keep us in balance; and

WHEREAS The Confederated Villages of Lisjan are one of many Ohlone nations, each with its own geography and history, whose tribes, cultures and languages are as diverse as the ecosystems we live within; and

WHEREAS The Lisjan are made up of the six nations that were directly enslaved at Mission San Jose in Fremont, CA and Mission Dolores in San Francisco, CA: Lisjan (Ohlone), Karkin (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok, Delta Yokut and Napian (Patwin); and

WHEREAS The colonization of the land where Berkeley is located began with the reign of terror inflicted by Spanish soldiers and missionaries who sought to convert all Indigenous people into Catholic subjects of Spain and steal their land; and

WHEREAS The Missions were plantations, built by slave labor and sustained through brutal physical violence and extractive land practices, and the Spanish also brought deadly diseases, invasive species, and Christian ideology based on human dominion of the natural world, causing devastating consequences for the Lisjan people and all living beings they shared the land with; and

WHEREAS After a brief but harrowing Mexican rancho period, Lisjan survivors faced extermination policies by the United States that aimed to eliminate California Indians entirely; and

WHEREAS In a climate of virulent racial discrimination and state-sponsored vigilante killings, most Lisjan families survived by isolating themselves and concealing their identities, and cultural and spiritual traditions were forced into dormancy or secrecy resulting in much knowledge perishing with the passing of generations; and

WHEREAS Despite these concerted efforts to erase Lisjan history and identity, the Lisjan community forms a diverse and vibrant constellation of tribes and families that utilizes a wide array of survival strategies to navigate a profoundly altered 21st century

world, and the Lisjan continue to revitalize their cultural practices and uphold their responsibilities to protect and care for their ancestral homeland; and

WHEREAS Having survived over two centuries of genocide and colonization during the Spanish, Mexican and American eras, the Lisjan continue to inhabit their ancestral homeland, fight for their sacred sites, and revitalize their cultural practices; and

WHEREAS The City of Berkeley has a legacy of acknowledging the oppression and genocide of Indigenous people and taking both symbolic and concrete steps to support their struggle against institutions that grew out of settler-colonialist ideology as well as steps to address oppressive actions that persist today; and

WHEREAS In 1992, Berkeley became the first city in the United States to rename as Indigenous Peoples' Day the federal holiday formerly recognized as Columbus Day, which motivated changes to BUSD's history curriculum and undermined a long-standing revisionist history that European colonizer Christopher Columbus was a hero instead of a violent leader whose arrival led to the murder, enslavement, rape, and disease-related deaths of millions of Indigenous People; and

WHEREAS In 2000, the City of Berkeley officially designated the West Berkeley Shellmound, one of 425 ceremonial burial mounds that ringed San Francisco Bay to honor ancestors, as an official Landmark, and the site is also recognized by the State of California and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, meaning it meets all of the criteria for such listing; and

WHEREAS In 2020, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Berkeley Shellmound and Village Site one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States; and

WHEREAS In May of 2009, the City Council adopted a resolution recognizing and endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), a statement of values denouncing forced assimilation, land removal, violent exploitation, cultural genocide, and other actions abridging Indigenous People's right to self-determination and in 2015 the Council delivered a letter to the UN Secretary General and US Ambassador to the UN urging this declaration to be adopted as a convention, which would be legally binding; and

WHEREAS In January of 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution formally recognizing the Ohlone Peoples as the original inhabitants of Berkeley and affirmed the City's commitment to the "defense of Indigenous rights, culture, and dignity" as an official value,

committing that “free, prior, and informed consent of the Ohlone and other Indigenous people should be integral to any alteration planning for the Berkeley Shellmound sacred site...”; and

WHEREAS In January 2018, the City Council adopted a policy changing Berkeley's City Limits signs to read "Welcome to Berkeley - Ohlone Territory" and in October 2018, the City Council took further action and adopted a similar measure replacing all existing Welcome to Berkeley signs to signs including "Ohlone Territory;" and

WHEREAS During deliberations to recognize the Ohlone on City Limit Signs, the City Council decided that in addition to recognizing the Ohlone People through signage, there was a need for more learning opportunities to add historical context, including a special Council session on Ohlone history and culture, a webpage on the City of Berkeley website linking to cultural and historic information, and inviting representatives of the Ohlone to speak at a City Council meeting; and

WHEREAS On June 9, 2020 the City Council passed an item to paint the words “Black Lives Matter” and “Ohlone Territory” on streets adjacent to Berkeley’s City Hall; and

WHEREAS At its January 20, 2022 meeting, the Berkeley Rent Board unanimously voted to adopt a land acknowledgement statement to be read out loud at all future board and committee meetings, providing an important example for the City to follow.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED In the spirit of continuing to demonstrate and deepen the City of Berkeley’s recognition, inclusion, restitution, and repair towards the Lisjan Ohlone, whose ancestral home lies where the City of Berkeley is located, and who have survived centuries of cultural, physical, and environment genocide at the hands of Spanish, Mexican, and American colonists, the Council of the City of Berkeley hereby adopts the following Land Acknowledgement:

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of

this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the Land Acknowledgement shall be displayed in writing at all Regular Meetings of the Berkeley City Council and shall be read out loud during the Ceremonial portion of the first Regular City Council Meeting of each month.



OPTIONS FOR TRANSFERRING LAND

A BRIEF GUIDE

This short guide summarizes various options for landowners interested in transferring land to another person, group, or community. Landowners who are particularly interested in transferring ownership to nonprofit land trusts, indigenous tribes, and community-based organizations will find this guide most useful.

Because we have written this guide with landowners in mind, we also provide a brief consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of each option from that perspective. Having said that, we think it is essential that landowners consider their own goals as well as the goals and needs of the party or community to whom they would like to transfer land.

Four key questions to consider as you read through this guide focus on the *financial* and *use* needs of the parties.

1. What are the **financial needs** of the transferring party?
2. What are the **financial needs** of the receiving party?
3. What are the **use needs** of the transferring party after the transfer?
4. What are the **use needs** of the receiving party after the transfer?

The land transfer mechanisms covered in this guide include:

- Full Value Sale
- Charitable (Bargain) Sale
- Full Donation
- Donation of a Remainder Interest
- Revocable Transfer on Death (Lady Bird Deed)
- Donation by Bequest
- Sale or Donation of an Easement

In any situation, we strongly recommend that you seek individualized tax, legal, and estate planning advice to determine which of these options is best suited to your circumstances. Laws vary from state to state, so having appropriate counsel where the land is located is critical.



Full Value Sale

This is likely the kind of transfer of ownership that most people are familiar with. In this scenario, the landowner sells to the buyer at a price determined by a third-party appraisal. The buyer pays the full value and receives title to the property. For many people, including nonprofits and other community-based organizations, a full value sale is not an affordable option. However, there are ways to make this option more affordable by delaying payment in two ways.

1. **Installment Sale:** An installment sale allows the buyer to make payments over several years at intervals and amounts that are agreeable to both parties. The landowner would retain title to the property until the final payment. The parties could agree to provide the buyer with use of the land at any point during the payment period, including at the first payment or after payment has been made in full.
2. **Seller Financing:** Alternatively, the landowner could provide seller financing, meaning that title immediately transfers to buyer, and in exchange, the landowner gets a promissory note in which the buyer promises to pay the landowner over time, with or without interest. A deed of trust is recorded on the property to secure payment of the promissory note.

Advantages of this option:

- Fee simple ownership of land gives the buyer the greatest ability to fulfill their mission and ensure secure tenure over the long term.

Disadvantages of this option:

- The landowner will have to pay income tax on the capital gain if the land has appreciated in value since it was originally purchased.
- This is the least financially feasible option for buyers, particularly nonprofit organizations with a limited budget and limited capacity to raise capital.
- An installment sale may limit the buyer's uses of the land until the transfer is complete.



Charitable (Bargain) Sale

A charitable, or bargain, sale occurs when the landowner sells land to a *tax-exempt nonprofit* organization for less than market value. This kind of sale makes the land more affordable to the buying nonprofit, and can offer tax deduction benefits to the selling landowner. The parties can also use the **Installment Sale** or **Seller Financing** options discussed above in this situation as well, if affordability is still a concern for the nonprofit buying the land.

Advantages of this option:

- The difference between full market value and the sale price can qualify the landowner for an income tax deduction and capital gains tax reduction for that portion of the value. This can offset the income taxes and capital gains taxes the landowner will incur from the sale of the property, after reducing ordinary income.
- If the land has significantly increased in value since the seller purchased it, this option can offset a large amount of the resulting capital gains liability for the increased value.
- The nonprofit buyer will be more likely to afford the purchase price of the land.

Disadvantages of this option:

- The landowner does not realize the full income from the market value of the property.
- This may not be the best strategy if the landowner would otherwise qualify for public benefits in the next several years. Recently transferred assets like land can negatively impact eligibility for benefits.



Full Donation

This is the simplest way to transfer land to another party and is the most affordable option for receiving nonprofits or community-based organizations to advance their mission to protect, preserve, and steward land in the long term.

Advantages of this option:

- Fee simple donation to an eligible tax-exempt organization would give the landowner the greatest immediate income tax benefits, sometimes for the full appraised value of the land, in addition to relief from property taxes, and potential estate tax benefits.
- The receiving party would not require financing in order to receive the land.
- The land would be immediately available to the receiving party.

Disadvantages of this option:

- The landowner does not realize the full income from the market value of the property.
- This may not be the best strategy if the landowner would otherwise qualify for public benefits in the next several years. Recently transferred assets like land can negatively impact eligibility for benefits.



Donation of a Remainder Interest

If the landowner would like to donate the land to an eligible tax-exempt nonprofit organization but retain the ability to live on the land during their, or their family members', lifetime, they can donate what is called a "remainder interest" in the land while retaining what is called a "life estate."

Advantages of this option:

- Full transfer to the receiving party will occur immediately upon the landowner's death. Upon the landowner's, or their designated family members', death, this kind of transfer avoids the expense and delay of probate.
- The landowner may be able to receive an immediate income tax deduction for the value of the property that was donated (determined by an appraisal).
- This may be a good option for landowners who receive public benefits. The state can make a claim for repayment of these benefits against an estate and place a lien on property after death. However, because donating a remainder interest is irrevocable, the property will not be part of the estate at death.
- The land will not be subject to capital gains tax on appreciated value.
- The property will not be part of the donor's taxable estate, where the donor (and/or the donor's spouse) are the only life tenants.

Disadvantages of this option:

- The landowner will need to pay the property taxes on the land while retaining use of the property.
- The landowner does not realize the full income from the market value of the property.
- The receiving party would not require financing in order to receive the land.
- Without another agreement, the land will not be immediately available for use by the receiving party.



Revocable Transfer on Death Deed (Lady Bird Deed)

Lady Bird Deeds, which are only available in some states, are similar to deeds described above that create a life estate and donate a remainder interest, except that Lady Bird Deeds are revocable, meaning that the landowner can, during their lifetime, revoke the transfer. This gives more control to the landowner, but can put the receiving party in an uncertain position. Lady Bird Deeds are available in California until 2021, unless legislation is introduced to extend the law.

Advantages of this option:

- Transfer of title will occur immediately upon the landowner's death, so the donation will not be subject to the expense and delay of probate.
- The land donation will not be subject to capital gains tax on appreciated value.
- The landowner can revoke the deed at any time during their lifetime.

Disadvantages of this option:

- Because the deed is revocable, the landowner does not receive an income tax deduction available with other land donations.
- Without another agreement, the land will not be immediately available to the receiving party.
- The receiving party would not require financing in order to receive the land.
- This kind of transfer does not provide reliable certainty to the receiving party since the transfer can be revoked during the landowner's lifetime.



Donation by Will or Living Trust (Bequest)

A landowner can donate land in a will or through a revocable living trust. Both strategies allow the landowner to retain full use of the land during their lifetime.

Advantages of this option:

- Reduces estate or inheritance taxes.
- Can be changed or revoked at any time during landowner's lifetime.
- The receiving party would not require financing in order to receive the land.

Disadvantages of this option:

- The landowner will still be responsible for paying property taxes for the entire property during their lifetime.
- Without another agreement, the land will not be immediately available to the receiving party.



Agricultural, Conservation, or Cultural Easement Donation

An *easement* is an agreement between the landowner and a third party that affects the landowner's rights on the land covered by the easement. Easements are generally recorded on the deed of the property and are therefore permanent. Conservation, agricultural, and cultural easements are specific kinds of agreements that can be entered into with eligible organizations or tribes that can also qualify as a charitable contribution if donated by the landowner.

- A *conservation easement* permanently restricts uses on the land that interfere with the ecological conservation of that land.
- An *agricultural easement* permanently protects farmland by setting limitations on the use of the land.
- A *cultural easement*, available in some states, grants indigenous communities certain access rights to lands for continuing and preserving cultural heritage.

Easements can be sold or donated. The party holding the easement cannot also be the party that holds title to the land.

Advantages of this option:

- The landowner can retain ownership of the land and convey the land to their heirs.
- If the easement meets IRS criteria, the landowner may be able to deduct the value of any donated portion of the easement up to 50% of their adjusted gross income, or 100% if they are a farmer, for up to 15 years.
- Affirmative easements (those requiring certain uses) can increase the value of the easement and reduce the overall value of the land, making it more affordable if the easement is sold instead of donated
- In addition to an income tax deduction, the easement may reduce property taxes and estate taxes.

Disadvantages of this option:

- Easements do not convey an ownership interest in the land to the party holding the easement. This may not align with the intent of either or both parties.
- Easements can be expensive to enforce, thus creating a financial liability for the easement-holding party.
- Easements, alone, do not preserve long-term affordability of land, because an easement only reduces the relative market value of the land, but does not immunize the land value from increasing through speculation and other market forces.

RESOLUTION 70,564-N.S.

RECOGNIZING THAT BERKELEY IS THE ANCESTRAL, UNCEDED HOME OF THE OHLONE PEOPLE AND ADOPTING AN OFFICIAL CITY OF BERKELEY LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PRACTICES

WHEREAS Acknowledging that the City of Berkeley rests upon the ancestral lands of the Chochenyo speaking Lisjan Ohlone people brings attention to their centuries of resistance to colonial violence and reminds our City and community of the need to take concrete restorative actions; and

WHEREAS Land acknowledgment is a traditional custom that dates back centuries in many Native nations and communities, land acknowledgments continue to be used by Native Peoples and non-Natives to recognize Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands on which we now live; and

WHEREAS To begin public meetings, localities across the United States including Denver (CO), Portland (OR), and Phoenix (AZ) now share official land acknowledgements as well as many public agencies, including the National Park Service, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); and

WHEREAS Many public and public-facing private institutions have also adopted land acknowledgement statements including UC Berkeley, Mills College, Chabot Las Positas Community College District, California College of the Arts, UCSF, Stanford, and recently, Berkeley's Rent Stabilization Board; and

WHEREAS One of the leading advocacy groups for land acknowledgement, the Native Governance Center, asks that land acknowledgements go beyond a mere statement, by providing research on the history of indigenous peoples and offering concrete actions to support them; and

WHEREAS The settlers of California, primarily Europeans seeking religious converts, agricultural land, and economic opportunity during the gold rush committed one of the most egregious genocides in history, murdering 80 percent of Indigenous people in the state from 1846 to 1873 through massacre by state-directed militias, enslavement in mining and agricultural production, displacement causing starvation, and compulsory assimilation; and

WHEREAS The Lisjan people have lived in the territory of Huchiun, the land that is now known as the East Bay in the San Francisco Bay Area, since the beginning of time and for thousands of years and hundreds of generations; and

WHEREAS the Lisjan people did not own the land, *they belonged to it*, and generation after generation they have cultivated reciprocal relationships with plants and animals and developed beautiful and powerful cultural practices that keep us in balance; and

WHEREAS The Confederated Villages of Lisjan are one of many Ohlone nations, each with its own geography and history, whose tribes, cultures and languages are as diverse as the ecosystems we live within; and

WHEREAS The Lisjan are made up of the six nations that were directly enslaved at Mission San Jose in Fremont, CA and Mission Dolores in San Francisco, CA: Lisjan (Ohlone), Karkin (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok, Delta Yokut and Napien (Patwin); and

WHEREAS The colonization of the land where Berkeley is located began with the reign of terror inflicted by Spanish soldiers and missionaries who sought to convert all Indigenous people into Catholic subjects of Spain and steal their land; and

WHEREAS The Missions were plantations, built by slave labor and sustained through brutal physical violence and extractive land practices, and the Spanish also brought deadly diseases, invasive species, and Christian ideology based on human dominion of the natural world, causing devastating consequences for the Lisjan people and all living beings they shared the land with; and

WHEREAS After a brief but harrowing Mexican rancho period, Lisjan survivors faced extermination policies by the United States that aimed to eliminate California Indians entirely; and

WHEREAS In a climate of virulent racial discrimination and state-sponsored vigilante killings, most Lisjan families survived by isolating themselves and concealing their identities, and cultural and spiritual traditions were forced into dormancy or secrecy resulting in much knowledge perishing with the passing of generations; and

WHEREAS Despite these concerted efforts to erase Lisjan history and identity, the Lisjan community forms a diverse and vibrant constellation of tribes and families that utilizes a wide array of survival strategies to navigate a profoundly altered 21st century world, and the Lisjan continue to revitalize their cultural practices and uphold their responsibilities to protect and care for their ancestral homeland; and

WHEREAS Having survived over two centuries of genocide and colonization during the Spanish, Mexican and American eras, the Lisjan continue to inhabit their ancestral homeland, fight for their sacred sites, and revitalize their cultural practices; and

WHEREAS The City of Berkeley has a legacy of acknowledging the oppression and genocide of Indigenous people and taking both symbolic and concrete steps to support their struggle against institutions that grew out of settler-colonialist ideology as well as steps to address oppressive actions that persist today; and

WHEREAS In 1992, Berkeley became the first city in the United States to rename as Indigenous Peoples' Day the federal holiday formerly recognized as Columbus Day, which motivated changes to BUSD's history curriculum and undermined a long-standing

revisionist history that European colonizer Christopher Columbus was a hero instead of a violent leader whose arrival led to the murder, enslavement, rape, and disease-related deaths of millions of Indigenous People; and

WHEREAS In 2000, the City of Berkeley officially designated the West Berkeley Shellmound, one of 425 ceremonial burial mounds that ringed San Francisco Bay to honor ancestors, as an official Landmark, and the site is also recognized by the State of California and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, meaning it meets all of the criteria for such listing; and

WHEREAS In 2020, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Berkeley Shellmound and Village Site one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States; and

WHEREAS In May of 2009, the City Council adopted a resolution recognizing and endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), a statement of values denouncing forced assimilation, land removal, violent exploitation, cultural genocide, and other actions abridging Indigenous People's right to self-determination and in 2015 the Council delivered a letter to the UN Secretary General and US Ambassador to the UN urging this declaration to be adopted as a convention, which would be legally binding; and

WHEREAS In January of 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution formally recognizing the Ohlone Peoples as the original inhabitants of Berkeley and affirmed the City's commitment to the "defense of Indigenous rights, culture, and dignity" as an official value, committing that "free, prior, and informed consent of the Ohlone and other Indigenous people should be integral to any alteration planning for the Berkeley Shellmound sacred site..."; and

WHEREAS In January 2018, the City Council adopted a policy changing Berkeley's City Limits signs to read "Welcome to Berkeley - Ohlone Territory" and in October 2018, the City Council took further action and adopted a similar measure replacing all existing Welcome to Berkeley signs to signs including "Ohlone Territory;" and

WHEREAS During deliberations to recognize the Ohlone on City Limit Signs, the City Council decided that in addition to recognizing the Ohlone People through signage, there was a need for more learning opportunities to add historical context, including a special Council session on Ohlone history and culture, a webpage on the City of Berkeley website linking to cultural and historic information, and inviting representatives of the Ohlone to speak at a City Council meeting; and

WHEREAS On June 9, 2020 the City Council passed an item to paint the words "Black Lives Matter" and "Ohlone Territory" on streets adjacent to Berkeley's City Hall; and

WHEREAS At its January 20, 2022 meeting, the Berkeley Rent Board unanimously voted to adopt a land acknowledgement statement to be read out loud at all future board and committee meetings, providing an important example for the City to follow.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED In the spirit of continuing to demonstrate and deepen the City of Berkeley's recognition, inclusion, restitution, and repair towards the Lisjan Ohlone, whose ancestral home lies where the City of Berkeley is located, and who have survived centuries of cultural, physical, and environment genocide at the hands of Spanish, Mexican, and American colonists, the Council of the City of Berkeley hereby adopts the following Land Acknowledgement:

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the Land Acknowledgement shall be displayed in writing at all Regular Meetings of the Berkeley City Council and shall be read out loud during the Ceremonial portion of the first Regular City Council Meeting of each month.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on October 11, 2022 by the following vote:

Ayes: Bartlett, Droste, Hahn, Harrison, Kesarwani, Robinson, Taplin, Wengraf, and Arreguin.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.


Jesse Arreguin, Mayor

Attest: 
Mark Numainville, City Clerk



Health Housing and
Community Services Department
Housing & Community Services Division

MEMORANDUM

To: Housing Advisory Commission

From: Jenny Wyant, Senior Community Development Project Coordinator

Date: February 2, 2023

Subject: **Approve City Funding for a Future Homekey Project**

Recommendation

Recommend that Council approve funding for one Homekey housing development, to be selected through a competitive process based on applicant qualifications, project feasibility, and assessment of competitiveness for state Homekey funds.

Current Situation and Effects

Upcoming State Homekey NOFA

The State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (the "State") is expected to release a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for round three of the Homekey program in March 2023, and to accept applications and award funds on a first come, first served basis.

The City is therefore motivated to apply for Homekey funds as early as possible. Staff plan to submit an application in April 2023 for the selected project, or as soon as is feasible after the State's Homekey NOFA release and City Council's approval.

In order to expedite the City's application for a Homekey project and maximize the chances of successful award, staff request that the Housing Advisory Commission demonstrate support for a Homekey project generally, and recommend the use of City funds for this purpose.

City's Homekey RFP

In anticipation of the State's upcoming Homekey 3 NOFA, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on November 29, 2022 to select an eligible Homekey project and development team. Health, Housing and Community Services (HHCS) received two proposals for the following projects:

A Vibrant and Healthy Berkeley for All

- Russell Street (1741, 1743, and 1747 Russell Street)
- Rodeway Inn (1461 University Avenue)

Berkeley Food & Housing Project (BFHP) is requesting \$8.43M to purchase and rehabilitate two adjacent parcels where it currently operates a 17-bed Board and Care and 4 units of interim housing. BFHP proposes two development phases. In the first phase, BFHP will rehabilitate and operate 25 units of interim housing beds for people with a disability or mental illness who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In the second phase, BFHP will convert 23 of the units to permanent supportive housing for unhoused persons and people at risk of homelessness, many of whom will be veterans.

Memar Properties, Inc. (MPI Homes) and Housing Consortium of the East Bay (HCEB) are requesting \$8.2M to acquire and rehabilitate the Rodeway Inn, a 43-room hotel currently leased by the City as an emergency shelter, to convert all units to permanent supportive housing. MPI Homes and HCEB requested an additional \$1M to continue operating the Rodeway Inn as interim housing prior to permanent housing conversion.

Housing and Community Services (HCS) staff are reviewing both proposals received through the RFP, and will prioritize development team capacity, project feasibility, and applicant experience with providing supportive services to unhoused residents. Staff will make a recommendation to Council on the proposed project and funds.

On September 13, 2022, Council approved issuing the RFP and considering requests for up to \$8.5M in local funding to support a Homekey project identified through the RFP. Sources may include Measure P or HOME-ARP funds, depending on funding availability and compatibility with the proposed projects.

Background

Homekey is a State program that provides government entities with funding to purchase and rehabilitate properties, including hotels, motels, and vacant apartment buildings, and convert them into interim or permanent housing. Homekey projects serve people experiencing homelessness or who are also at risk of becoming homeless. The program typically provides funding of up to \$200,000 per unit (depending on unit type), and may increase the subsidy if there are local matching funds.

In 2021, the City submitted a successful joint Homekey application with Bay Area Community Services (BACS) and Memar Properties for the Golden Bear Inn. The Golden Bear is located at 1620 San Pablo Avenue, and was formerly operated as a 44-room hotel. The project received \$16M of Homekey funding in addition to \$8.46M from the City (a combination of \$7.32M from Measure P and \$1.14M from the City's Permanent Local Housing Allocation). The hotel was renovated by the former owner, and the City and State Homekey funds are supporting accessibility upgrades and the addition of a new modular building with a community room and service office. The project reached full occupancy in January 2023, and serves chronically homeless households, with services provided by BACS.

Alternative Actions Considered

The Housing Advisory Commission could recommend that Council approve up to \$17M in Measure P funding for both the Rodeway Inn and the Russell Street project, as well as \$1M to operate the Rodeway Inn as interim housing prior to permanent housing conversion.

Internal



CALENDAR
01/23/2023

To: Housing Advisory Commission

From: Libby Lee Egan, Chair and Leah Simon-Weisberg, Commissioner

Submitted by: Libby Lee-Egan, Chairperson, and Leah Simon-Weisberg Commissioner,
Housing Advisory Commission

Subject: Fair Access and Transparency in the Residential Application Process Study
Session

BACKGROUND

The HAC's discussion around housing preference policy naturally revolved around vulnerable communities who have the most difficulty finding adequate housing in Berkeley. There are so many barriers for many individuals to become housed and Commissioners celebrated the removal of criminal history from rental applications. Therefore, more unfair barriers to housing need to be removed to make sure residents are happily housed here. Several commissioners expressed interest in learning more about these policies.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has hit low-income renters the hardest, exacerbating the existing housing crisis and placing more people at risk of homelessness. Specifically, the pandemic has resulted in increased debts and decreased incomes for many households, especially in communities of color, which has compounded existing racial inequities in housing access, including denial of housing due to a criminal history. These ordinances will increase access to housing by ensuring that (1) the rental application process is transparent and fair and (2) factors that are unrelated to an applicant's current ability to pay their rent do not prevent them from accessing housing.

At a time when so many are recovering from the financial challenges of the pandemic, we must remove unjust and unlawful barriers to housing, do what we can to proactively level the playing field for those who have been historically excluded from housing access, and end discrimination in rental housing.

FAIR ACCESS AND TRANSPARENCY POLICIES

Rental Access: This ordinance would prohibit landlords from asking about or using certain criteria in evaluating a rental application:

- a tenant's failure to pay rent or utility bills during the COVID-19 emergency
- a tenant's participation in a rental assistance program
- a tenant's eviction history
- a tenant's credit score or credit history

The ordinance also would prohibit landlords from using an automated tenant screening or evaluation service, which typically include the prohibited criteria

Rental Transparency and Accessibility Ordinance: This ordinance would require landlords to have uniform screening criteria for rental applications and to disclose those criteria up-front to potential applicants. This ordinance also would require landlords to disclose the reason for denying a rental application.

Factors like credit scores and eviction history often have discriminatory impact

Credit scores and eviction history are factors that indicate whether an applicant has the present ability to pay the requested rent. There is ample evidence that consideration of these factors perpetuates racial discrimination because there are stark racial disparities baked into each of these factors.¹

Credit Scores

Numerous studies have shown that Black and Latinx communities have lower credit scores as a group than White communities, due to centuries of discrimination which have contributed to a wide wealth gap between these groups.²

Credit scores also are not an appropriate or relevant proxy for a tenant's ability to pay rent. Most significantly, rental payments are not reported to credit monitoring agencies, so a tenant's history of on-time rental payments are not factored into credit scores. Many tenants prioritize paying their monthly rent over other expenses, leading to them taking on debt for food, transportation, and other necessities, which is factored into a credit score. Credit scores also consider certain medical debt and student loan debt. This makes a credit score an inappropriate and inaccurate indicator of both whether a tenant has paid their rent on-time in the past, and whether they have the ability to do so in the future.³ In fact, many tenants may forgo other payments - hurting their credit score in the process - to ensure they are able to make their rental

¹ Reosti, A. (2021). The Costs of Seeking Shelter for Renters With Discrediting Background Records. *City & Community*, 20(3), 235–259. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15356841211012483>

² https://www.nclc.org/images/pdf/credit_discrimination/Past_Imperfect050616.pdf (citing to several studies); https://www.urban.org/research/publication/explaining-black-white-homeownership-gap-closer-look-disparities-across-local-markets/view/full_report (More than 50 percent of white households have a FICO credit score above 700, compared with only 20.6 percent of black households. Thirty-three percent of black households with credit histories have insufficient credit and lack a credit score, while only 17.9 percent of white households have missing credit scores); <https://www.brookings.edu/research/analysis-of-financial-institutions-in-black-majority-communities-black-borrowers-and-depositors-face-considerable-challenges-in-accessing-banking-services/> (demonstrating disparity in average credit score by racial group and noting that Black consumers are more likely to be excluded from conventional financial services and pay higher service fees due to their credit scores); https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.suffolk.edu/dist/3/1172/files/2014/01/Rice-Swesnik_Lead.pdf (Discriminatory Effects of Credit Scoring on Communities of Color).

³ Rosen, E., Garboden, P. M. E., & Cossyleon, J. E. (2021). Racial Discrimination in Housing: How Landlords Use Algorithms and Home Visits to Screen Tenants. *American Sociological Review*, 86(5), 787–822. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224211029618>

payment on time. This should not be a factor that hurts a tenant's chance of obtaining housing in the future.

Eviction History

Landlords often reject tenants based upon eviction history no matter the context. This exclusion disproportionately impacts Black female renters.⁴ Eviction history is not representative of a tenant's present ability to pay rent or abide by the terms of a lease agreement. Many landlords will file eviction lawsuits against tenants for fraudulent or discriminatory reasons, in order to give the landlord more leverage to displace the tenant.⁵ Additionally eviction is disproportionately used by landlords renting in areas with high poverty rates and/or shares of African-American individuals.⁶ This spatial concentration illuminates the way in which eviction is more likely to occur where the tenant is already at a disadvantage and my struggle to access legal counsel, getting time off work to appear in court, and more.

Large landlords file evictions at two to three times the rates of small landlords, and this disparity is not driven by the characteristics of the tenants they rent to. Not only do large landlords file more often, but also over less money owed and more often as a rent collection strategy.⁷

Eviction cases are complicated, move fast and are highly technical; it is very difficult, if not impossible, to successfully defend an eviction case without a lawyer.⁸

When landlords file eviction lawsuits, tenants have five days to file an Answer,⁹ where they respond to landlord's allegations by noting substantive and technical deficiencies in the cases against them.

If tenants do not file an Answer in time, then their landlord can petition the court to enter a default judgment against them. Before approving a default judgment, courts hold "prove up hearings," where judges confirm landlords' allegations, though without requesting evidence to substantiate these allegations. Sometimes in as little as 90 seconds, judges enter default judgments and tenants lose their homes without opportunities to defend themselves in court.

⁴ Carter, C. (n.d.). *Salt in the Wound: How Eviction Records and Back Rent Haunt Tenant Screening Reports and Credit Scores*. 3. https://www.nclc.org/images/pdf/special_projects/covid-19/IB_Salt_in_the_Wound.pdf;

⁵ *Eviction Record Expungement Can Remove Barriers to Stable Housing—Center for American Progress*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 17, 2022, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/eviction-record-expungement-can-remove-barriers-stable-housing/>

⁶ Lens, M. C., Nelson, K., Gromis, A., & Kuai, Y. (2020). The Neighborhood Context of Eviction in Southern California. *City & Community*, n/a(n/a). <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12487>

⁷ Ferrer, Alex. 2021. *Beyond Wall Street Landlords: How Private Equity in the Rental Market Makes Housing Unaffordable, Unstable, and Unhealthy* (The Just Recovery Series). SAJE. https://www.saje.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Final_A-Just-Recovery-Series_Beyond_Wall_Street.pdf

⁸ Inglis, Aimee and Dean Preston. 2018. *California Evictions Are Fast and Frequent*. Rep. San Francisco, CA: Tenants Together.

⁹ California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1167. (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/27757.htm?rdeLocaleAttr=en>)

Evictions result from unequal power. When tenants are not represented by an attorney, they almost always lose, even if they have a valid legal defense. When tenants have legal representation, they achieve far more beneficial outcomes than tenants without representation.¹⁰ This illustrates the ways in which unequal access to legal representation and limited resources to navigate the fast and technical eviction process results in evictions; not wrongdoing on the part of the tenant.

Evictions Target People of Color and Low-Income Families. Low-income tenants, women of color, and families with children comprise a majority of tenants facing eviction. It is a well-documented fact that **evictions disproportionately impact Black and female-headed households**. Decades of analysis demonstrate that the higher the percentage of Black persons and children living in female headed households, the higher the eviction rate.¹¹

There is a direct mechanism connection that ties eviction to gentrification. In this case, landlords are so convinced of their ability to obtain higher value (via increased rents or property or land sales) that they initiate an eviction proceeding with or without cause. This phenomenon can be especially pronounced when corporate landlords and institutional investors are involved.¹²

Default Evictions

Between 2010-2019, California landlords filed almost 1.5 million evictions against tenants, approximately 166,000 annually. The most common eviction outcome was default, where the tenant lost their case before being assigned a court date. According to an analysis of unsealed statewide eviction records, 70.4% of cases statewide culminated in default judgments including 83.7% of cases in Monterey County, 82.4% in Butte, 76.9% in Fresno, 73.9% in Alameda, and 71.9% in Kern.¹³

Default occurs when a tenant does not appear in court. Meaning that unlike in criminal court, where a defendant cannot be convicted in their absence, the court in an eviction action can order the tenant to be evicted and left with an eviction record even if the tenant never appeared in court. Default occurs far too often for tenants facing eviction and says nothing about whether the tenant committed wrongdoing.¹⁴ When tenants default, they are evicted and their case records are unsealed. Credit reporting agencies collect data on unsealed eviction case records.

¹⁰ Blasi, Gary. 2004. "How Much Access-How Much Justice." *Fordham Law Rev.* 73:865; <https://www.cssny.org/news/entry/right-to-counsel-new-york-tenants-lawyers-evictions>

¹¹ Heskin, Alan David and Keith Davidson. 1993. "Residential Evictions in the City of Berkeley: Ethnicity and Gender." Unpublished paper. Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning: University of California, Berkeley.

¹² Lens, M. C., Nelson, K., Gromis, A., & Kuai, Y. (2020). The Neighborhood Context of Eviction in Southern California. *City & Community*, n/a(n/a). <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12487>; Immergluck, Dan, Jeff Ernsthansen, Stephanie Earl, and Allison Powell. 2019. "Evictions, Large Owners, and Serial Filings: Findings from Atlanta." *Housing Studies* <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2019.1639635>; Raymond, Elora, Richard Duckworth, Benjamin Miller, Michael Lucas, and Shiraj Pokharel. 2018. "From Foreclosure to Eviction: Housing Insecurity in Corporate-Owned Single Family Rentals." *Citiescape* 2(3):159–88.

¹³ Montano, Kyle Nelson. Forthcoming 2022. "Losing by Default". Berkeley Right to Counsel Coalition.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

If a tenant wins an eviction lawsuit or the case ends in any way other than a judgment in favor of the landlord, California law requires the case record to be “sealed,”¹⁵ an acknowledgement that such eviction actions are not relevant to a tenant’s ability to pay or comply with a lease. When landlords ask questions about involvement in our eviction system (instead of relying on what records are publicly-available), they are circumventing the intention of state law to prevent this kind of eviction history from being used against a tenant.

Other ways that credit reports, and eviction histories are flawed

Research has shown that credit reports, criminal records, and eviction histories are often rife with extreme errors. For example, a recent study of consumer credit reports revealed that a third of reports contained at least one error.¹⁶ These errors are not minimal - there are media reports and anecdotes of multiple tenants having been erroneously identified as being on a terrorist watch list,¹⁷ resulting in housing denials. By prohibiting consideration of these factors—and the use of tenant screening services that incorporate these factors—the policy seeks to make sure that applicants are not denied housing due to mistakes on a report.

The problem with tenant screening services

Historically, tenant screening has been a simple, straightforward process based on income information and conversations between the prospective landlord and applicant. However, in recent years, landlords have increasingly asked applicants for voluminous information, verifications and records, and utilized third party screening services to check public records and outsource the screening process. These services frequently utilize flawed or inaccurate public records, including erroneously using records which do not even apply to the applicant in question.¹⁸ The services then characterize tenants as “good” or “bad” tenants and issue an automated recommendation to the landlord about whether to accept that tenant’s application. This automated and arbitrary characterization of tenants limits their ability to know why they were rejected and discuss that reason with landlords, and the landlord themselves may not even know the basis for the recommendation to deny an applicant.¹⁹ These services exacerbate challenges to housing access, often render inappropriate and/or inaccurate decisions, and could

¹⁵ Code of Civil Procedure § 1161.2.

¹⁶ Preventing and Removing Barriers to Housing Security for People With Criminal Convictions. (n.d.). *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved May 17, 2022, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/preventing-removing-barriers-housing-security-people-criminal-convictions/>; *More Than a Third of Volunteers in a Consumer Reports Study Found Errors in Their Credit Reports*. (n.d.). *Consumer Reports*. Retrieved May 17, 2022, from <https://www.consumerreports.org/credit-scores-reports/consumers-found-errors-in-their-credit-reports-a6996937910/>.

¹⁷ Kirchner, L., & Goldstein, M. (2020, May 28). How Automated Background Checks Freeze Out Renters. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/business/renters-background-checks.html>

¹⁸ Kleysteuber, R. (2006). Tenant Screening Thirty Years Later: A Statutory Proposal to Protect Public Records Note. *Yale Law Journal*, 116(6), 1344–1388.

¹⁹ Vogell, E. S., Heather. (n.d.). *How Your Shadow Credit Score Could Decide Whether You Get an Apartment*. ProPublica. Retrieved May 17, 2022, from https://www.propublica.org/article/how-your-shadow-credit-score-could-decide-whether-you-get-an-apartment?token=l8mgMae53zU3XpjaqkIAGwk_ytL5O1GN

frustrate the goals of the Fair Access for Renters policies by allowing landlords to consider banned factors through a third party.²⁰

These policies would not stop landlords from asking relevant questions to come to their own conclusions; they simply prevent landlords from relying solely on the conclusions of third-party services that may not properly vet information, base their decisions on irrelevant or extraneous information, or don't allow landlords and tenants to know what information a decision has been based on.

This policy supports renters with pandemic-related hardship

Renters should not be penalized for pandemic-related hardship when they need housing in the future. Hundreds of thousands of renters accessed emergency rental assistance, and many others went into debt to be able to pay their rent during the pandemic. This policy will ensure that seeking rental assistance—or the negative credit consequences of pandemic-related debt—do not prevent applicants from accessing housing. This is a key component of pandemic recovery. It is fundamentally unfair for the unprecedented financial crisis caused by the pandemic to be a long-term obstacle to housing.

This policy helps families or individuals with housing vouchers find housing

Once an eligible family on the waitlist is issued a voucher, they typically are only given about 60 days to successfully find and lease housing with their assistance. If they are unable to meet this timeline, the assistance is revoked. Even when families can afford the rent being asked for with their rental assistance, they often have a difficult time finding housing due to irrelevant hits on a credit check, such as old medical debt. This policy would help families with vouchers access housing and use their voucher timely, allowing the City to leverage federal assistance in combating homelessness.

What information can landlords ask for to evaluate potential tenants without the prohibited criteria?

Landlords should be able to ask for information that relates to a tenant's ability to pay the rent. More specifically, landlords can still ask for:

- Current income (pay stubs, account balances)
- Current employer and employment history
- Rental history and references from previous landlords
- Proof of on-time rental payments
- Applicable personal information: household size, pets, personal statement, etc.
- Any other information reasonably related to the tenancy which is not prohibited by these policies or other discrimination or fair housing laws

²⁰ *Ibid.*

ELEMENTS OF FAIR ACCESS AND EXAMPLES FROM OTHER CITIES

Cities and states throughout the country, including Philadelphia, Washington D.C, Seattle, and Washington State, all have enacted various laws that include some of the protections of the Fair Access for Renters package.

Reduce the amount of security deposit that can be charged to only the equivalent of one month

This is already in place in Portland as stated in City Code Section 30.01.087 Security Deposits; Pre-paid Rent (<https://www.portland.gov/code/30/01/087>). This is also already present in Seattle as stated in City Code 7.24.035 - Security deposits and nonrefundable move-in fees (https://library.municode.com/wa/seattle/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=TIT7COPR_CH7.24REAGRE_7.24.035SEDENOMOF&showChanges=true).

Landlord must provide written reasons why the tenant was not offered housing.

This is already in place in Philadelphia as stated in Philadelphia Code Sections 9-1108 (3) and (4), Section 9-810, and the Philadelphia Renters Access Act (https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/0-0-0-278660, https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/0-0-0-278115, <https://www.phila.gov/media/20211014090131/Renters-Access-Act-tenant-screening-guidelines-20211013-rev2.pdf>).

This is also currently in place in Seattle as stated in RCW 59.18.257 (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=59.18.257>). This is also stated in Portland in the Portland Rental Housing Application and Screening Administrative Rule (<https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/policies/hou-3.06-rental-housing-application-and-screening-03-29-21-filed-for-inclusion-03-29-21.pdf>).

May not request a credit report.

This is currently in place in Philadelphia, as stated in Philadelphia Code Section 9-810 (https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/0-0-0-27811). This is also currently present in Portland as stated in City Code 30.01.086 - Evaluation of Applicants for Dwelling Units (<https://www.portland.gov/code/30/01/086>).

A Landlord may only require income, prior landlord contact, and personal reference.

- This is currently present in Philadelphia as stated in Philadelphia Code Sections 9-1108 (3) and (4), Section 9-810, and the Philadelphia Renters Access Act (https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/0-0-0-278660https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/

0-0-0-278115, <https://www.phila.gov/media/20211014090131/Renters-Access-Act-tenant-screening-guidelines-20211013-rev2.pdf>).

- This is also present in Portland as stated in in the Portland Rental Housing Application and Screening Administrative Rule (<https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/policies/hou-3.06-rental-housing-application-and-screening-03-29-21-filed-for-inclusion-03-29-21.pdf>).
- This is also currently present in Seattle, as stated in RCW 59.18.257 (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=59.18.257>).

A landlord cannot inquire about a prospective tenant’s failure to pay rent during the Local Emergency.

This is currently present in Portland as stated in Senate Bill 282

(<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB0282/Enrolled>).

This is also present in Philadelphia as stated in Philadelphia Code Section 9-810

(https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/philadelphia/latest/philadelphia_pa/0-0-0-278115



City Clerk Department

January 19, 2023

To: Members of Berkeley Boards & Commissioners
From: Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Subject: Update – Return to In-Person Meetings

This memo provides an update on the return to in-person meetings for City boards and commissions.

The Governor stated that the Declaration of Emergency by the State of California for COVID-19 will end on February 28, 2023. The end of the Declaration of Emergency means that the exemptions to the Brown Act that allowed for virtual-only meetings of legislative bodies will also end. Starting on March 1, 2023, all legislative bodies in the State of California must meet in-person. There is no authority for any local jurisdiction to override or appeal this requirement in state law.

The responses from commissioners in the November 2022 survey regarding in-person meetings have been very helpful in determining the primary concerns of commissioners and what the City may be able to do to accommodate them. There was a range of responses and the City will not be able to accommodate every preference.

At this time, the City does not have the technical capabilities for commissions to meet in a hybrid format. All participation will be in-person at a physical meeting location. Information was provided to all commission secretaries regarding meeting locations that have large rooms in order to facilitate distancing and air flow. Larger meeting spaces was one of the top requests in the commissioner survey. Some commissions will have a new meeting location from where they met pre-pandemic. In addition, the North Berkeley Senior Center is serving as a warming center for unhoused persons through April and is not available for commission meetings until May.

More information will be provided at a later date regarding the recommended health and safety protocols for in-person commission meetings. These protocols will take into

Update – Return to In-Person Meetings

account the responses of the survey, the recommendations of the Public Health Officer, and the protocols that have been used for recent in-person meetings of the City Council.

Ad-hoc subcommittees of City commissions are not considered legislative bodies under the Brown Act. Subcommittees do not have noticing requirements and may continue to meet virtually.

We understand that this is a significant change from the temporary virtual meeting format and procedures for commissioners, many of which may have joined commissions during the pandemic. The City will support your commission and your secretary in any manner possible within the constraints of state law and available resources.

cc: Department Directors
Commission Secretaries