



PARKS, RECREATION, AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 7:00 P.M.
2800 Park St, Berkeley, CA 94703
(Frances Albrier Community Center – Auditorium)

Parks and Waterfront Commission

Agenda

The Commissions may discuss any items listed on the agenda, but may take action only on items identified as Action.

1. **Call to Order** (Chair).
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary).
3. **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.
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair).
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for November 8, 2023 (Chair).*
6. **Public Comment.**
7. **Chair's Report.**
8. **Director's Report** (Ferris): PRW Divisions: Recreation; Parks; Waterfront; Capital; Budget.
9. **Discussion/Action: Approval of the 2024 PRW Commission meeting calendar** (chair).*
10. **Discussion: Inclusionary Playgrounds** (Cox).
11. **Discussion: Waterfront projects ribbon-cutting and APWA Women in Construction video** (Ferris).**
12. **Discussion: New City Parks** (Ferris).
13. **Discussion/Action: Issues of Trash Pickup in Parks** (Kawczynska).
14. **Discussion/Action: Updates to Waiver of Berth Fees Reso No. 66,544-N.S.** (Ferris).*
15. **Discussion: Upcoming Waterfront Parking Study** (Kawczynska).*
16. **Discussion: Update on Waterfront Specific Plan** (Ferris).
17. **Information: Recent Council Reports.***
18. **Future Agenda Items:** Election of Officers; Public Art in Aquatic Park (Lavvorn); Priorities for parks capital projects FY2023-24; PRW Commission Workplan 2024; Parks Development Fee; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Berth Fee Waivers for community service organizations; Locations for Dog Parks.
19. **Communications.*** a) Communication with a link to the 11/8/2024 PRW Comm mtg recording (Kawczynska); b) Native Grass Restoration Project on 12-09-23, Cesar Chavez Park, (Kawczynska); c) Gordon Stout Ltr, 01-02-2024; d) Martin Nicolaus ltr, 11-27-2023; e) NY Times, Warblers - Redlining and urban biodiversity, 03-2024 (Kawczynska); f) PRW Commission Report to Council Requesting Community Survey of Parks Tax Increase (Kawczynska/ Wozniak), 12-12-2023.
20. **Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024 (in-person).
21. **Adjournment.**

* document is attached to agenda packet and on the commission website.

** document will be provided at the meeting.

ADA Disclaimer: This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request disability-related accommodations to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

SB343 Disclaimer: Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA.

Communications Disclaimer: 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.** All communications to the Commission should be received at least 10 days before the meeting date. 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 relevant board, commission or committee. 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 to the commission or committee for further information.

Commission Information: The agenda packets for the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Waterfront Commission are available for review at www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions; the Berkeley Main Library and the Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street –3rd Floor, during their normal business hours. If you have questions, call Commission Secretary, Roger Miller at 981-6704 at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 or by email at rmiller@cityofberkeley.info.

MISSION STATEMENT – PARKS AND WATERFRONT: Reviews and advises the City Council on issues related to all City/public parks, open space, greenery, pools, programs, recreation centers, the Waterfront, and resident camps: their physical conditions, policies, projects, programs, planning efforts, activities, and funding; early childhood education programs; and animal care issues in parks.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mayor- Gordon Wozniak	District 3 - Gianna Ranuzzi	District 6 -
District 1 - Reichi Lee	District 4 - Erin Diehm	District 7 - Alyssa Hurtado
District 2 - Claudia Kawczynska	District 5 - Brennan Cox	District 8 - Allan Abshez

Current assignments

Subcomm on Marina Fund (12-14-2022)
Subcomm on dogs and parks (02-08-2023)

Liaison - Civic Center Planning – Erin Diehm
Liaison - Civic Arts in Parks – Brennan Cox

2024 Commission Meeting Dates

Name of Commission: Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

Commission Secretary: Roger Miller

Location: Frances Albrier Community Center, 2800 Park St

Month	Meeting Day and Date (2 nd Wednesday per month)	Time	Notes
2024			
January	Wednesday, January 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
February	Wednesday, February 14	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
March	Wednesday, March 13	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
April	Wednesday, April 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
May	Wednesday, May 8	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
June	Wednesday, June 12	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
July	Wednesday, July 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
August	No meeting		
September	Wednesday, September 11	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
October	Wednesday, October 9	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
November	Wednesday, November 13	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg
December	No Meeting		
2025			
January	<i>Wednesday, January 8</i>	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Regular Mtg</i>

**PARKS AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 7:00 P.M., Live Oak Community Ctr, Fireside Room

Minutes – Draft

The Commissions may discuss any items listed on the agenda, but may take action only on items identified as Action.

1. **Call to Order** (Chair). 7pm.
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary). Present: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Absent: Hurtado.
3. **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.
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair) and move item 13 to after item 10. (M/S/C: Kawczynska/Wozniak/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado.
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for October 11, 2023 (Chair) with corrections.* (M/S/C: Kawczynska/Wozniak/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado.
6. **Public Comment.** a) Steve Tracy, Erosion control and trash at Cordonices Park; b) Gina Rieger, the bad condition of parks; c) Kelly Hammargren, Waterfront Specific Plan; d) Jim McGrath, Waterfront Specific Plan; e) Sam Reifsnyder, Non-profit use of berths for the Bay Area Kayak Polo club; f) Nicolas Waton, Cal Sailing Club, Waterfront Specific Plan.
7. **Chair's Report.** Forum on Waterfront at Berkeley Yacht Club was well attended (Kawczynska); How to report missed trash pickup (Wozniak); Harvest Festival was well-attended on Oct 21 (Diehm); Berkeley Bird Festival was well-attended (Diehm).
8. **Director's Report** (Ferris): PRW Divisions: Recreation; Parks; Waterfront; Capital; Budget. Update was provided.
9. **Discussion/Action: Communication to Council to Update Resolution No. 66,544-N.S., a Policy for the Use of Berths at the Berkeley Marina by Non-Profit Organizations Providing Community Service** (Kawczynska).* Action was taken to update the name to the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission (M/S/C: Kawczynska/Wozniak/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado. Public Comment: Jim McGrath.
10. **Discussion/Action: Approve Proposed New Historic Plaque at Presentation Park** (Hal Reynolds).* Plaque was approved: (M/S/C: Wozniak/Cox/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado.

- 11. Discussion/Action: Report on Possible Parks Tax Increase (Wozniak).*** (M/S/C to send PRW Commission Report recommending Parks Tax increase to Council: Avellar/Kawczynska/Cox/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Lee; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado.
- 12. Discussion/Action: Update on the Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) (Ferris).** See link at <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/WSP-DRAFT-2023-10-30.pdf> Discussion was held.
- 13. Discussion/Action: PRW Commission Addendum to the Commission Recommendations Report on the WSP (Kawczynska/Diehm).*** Discussion was held.
- 14. Discussion: Update on 600 Addison Project (Diehm).*** Update on project was provided; Update on building signage was given.
- 15. Information: Recent Council Reports.***
- 16. Future Agenda Items:** Public Art (Lavvorn); Priorities for parks capital projects FY2023-24; PRW Commission Workplan 2023; Parks Development Fee; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Berth Fee Waivers for community service organizations; Locations for Dog Parks
- 17. Communications.*** a) In Maine, a return of tribal land shows how conservation can work best - The Washington Post, 11-01-2023 (Diehm); b) Why dozens of bird species are losing human names linked to racists - The Washington Post, 11-01-2023 (Diehm).
- 18. Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, January 10, 2024 (in-person).
- 19. Adjournment:** 9:35pm.

* document is attached to agenda packet and on the commission website.

** document will be provided at the meeting.

- Commissioners in attendance: 8 of 9 appointed.
- Public in attendance: 15
- Public speakers: 4

***Note:** For any handouts distributed at the meeting, please see the Draft Minutes for November 8, 2023 on the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission webpage at the following link online:

<https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/parks-recreation-and-waterfront-commission>

MEMO

Date: January 10, 2024

To: Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

From: Scott Ferris

Re: Updates to Resolution No. 66,544-N.S. regarding the waiver of marina berth fees for community service agencies

Proposed changes to Resolution No. 66,544-N.S. can include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Update the name of the reviewing commission in the resolution to the "Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission".
- b. Discuss the idea of changing the length of the waiver of berth fees from annual to every four years.
- c. Discuss a process for new organizations to apply for a waiver of berth fees.
- d. Discuss the criteria for "community service" that meets the requirements of the resolution to waive the marina berth fees.
- e. Other

Attachment: Resolution No. 66,544-N.S.

RESOLUTION NO. 66,544–N.S.

POLICY FOR THE USE OF BERTHS AT THE BERKELEY MARINA BY NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

WHEREAS, on March 14, 1997, Council adopted Resolution No. 58,859-N.S. that established the policy by which non-profit organizations at the Berkeley Marina can receive a waiver of annual berth fees if they are found to provide community service that exceeds the value of the berths they occupy at the Berkeley Marina, along with other community service criteria; and

WHEREAS, the procedures for obtaining such waivers involved a review by the Waterfront Commission of the applicant's annual report, annual finances, and by-laws related to their non-discrimination policies and their community outreach efforts to under-served populations; and

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2012, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Waterfront Commission were consolidated into a single commission called the Parks and Waterfront Commission; and

WHEREAS, as a housekeeping matter, Resolution No. 58,859-N.S. must be updated to change the name of the "Waterfront Commission" in the policy to the "Parks and Waterfront Commission."

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the following policy is hereby established for the use of berths at the Berkeley Marina by non-profit organizations that provide community service:

A. QUALIFYING ORGANIZATIONS: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

1. Only those organizations that meet the following criteria shall be eligible to receive berth spaces in exchange for community service:
 - a. The purpose of the organization is to supply a beneficial public service.
 - b. The organization must conduct an activity on a regular and on-going basis.
 - c. The organization must clearly demonstrate that its presence in the Marina or its service to the community, as evidenced by a cost/benefit analysis provided by the non-profit, greatly exceeds the value of the berth.
 - d. The organization must provide a service not duplicated by a private business operator.
2. Only those organizations that demonstrate that they promote cultural and ethnic diversity, as evidenced by the following criteria, shall be eligible for consideration:
 - a. Membership policy and practices.
 - b. Recruitment strategy.

- c. Outreach to under-represented populations.
- d. Mission statement, if any.

The Berkeley Marina advocates and practices equal opportunity in terms of access to its berthing facilities. Availability and use of the facilities will not be predicated on a person's race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, disability or medical condition.

B. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Non-profit applicants for berths at the Berkeley Marina must make written application to the Waterfront Manager stipulating the following:
 - a. Name and address of organization
 - b. Name, address & telephone number of person responsible for business affairs of the group
 - c. Type of organization
 - d. Number of members in organization
 - e. Level of participation of members
 - f. Age-level of members of organization and/or participants
 - g. Contribution to community including hours of service (if applicable) and activities
 - h. Reason and justification for request
 - i. Time period/duration for use of Marina (indefinite or specific time period)
 - j. Copy of bylaws (if any)
 - k. List of completed and planned community projects
 - l. Financial statement for prior year
2. The Parks and Waterfront Commission shall review the application and make a recommendation to the Council that the provision of community services warrants berthing compensation commensurate with the public benefit.

C. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, COMPLIANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION

1. All organizations that receive berthing space compensation in consideration for community services at the Berkeley Marina must comply with the following provisions:
 - a. On February 1 of each year, each organization must submit a report to the Waterfront Manager detailing the organization's community service for the prior calendar year, including the following:
 - 1) Number of members of the organization and/or level of participation.
 - 2) Number and type of community activities.
 - 3) Number of persons participating in each activity both from the membership and from the community, if different.
 - 4) Plans for the upcoming year for community service.

- b. On February 1 of each year, each organization must submit a financial statement for the prior calendar year to the Waterfront Manager.
 - c. No later than the February meeting of the Parks and Waterfront Commission, or at its next meeting in the event there is no February meeting, each organization must appear before the Parks and Waterfront Commission and describe its activities in the prior calendar year, as described in this section.
 - d. On August 1 of each year, each organization must submit to the Waterfront Manager a semi-annual report containing the information described herein for the first six months of the calendar year.
 - e. Any organization failing to provide the prescribed information and reports by the listed deadlines will be required to pay the normal fee charged for its berth or remove its vessel or material from the Marina within thirty (30) days notice by the Waterfront Manager.
2. Organizations that comply with the requirements of this policy and other applicable City ordinances and/or policies shall have any applicable berthing compensation renewed annually by the Council after a review and recommendation by the Parks and Waterfront Commission.
 3. When the owner of a private vessel requests a berth that is occupied by a vessel owned by a non-profit organization receiving berthing compensation for community services, the Waterfront Manager may require, with thirty (30) days advance notice, the vessel owned by the non-profit organization to move to another berth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution No. 58,859-N.S. is hereby rescinded.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on April 29, 2014 by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Moore, Wengraf, Worthington, Wozniak and Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: Maio.



Tom Bates, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numainville, CMC, City Clerk



Parks, Recreation and Waterfront

CITY OF BERKELEY MEMORANDUM

To: On-Call Transportation Consultants

From: Liza McNulty, Capital Improvement Program Manager

Date: December 4, 2023

Subject: Berkeley Water Transportation Pier-Ferry Project – Parking & Transportation Demand Management Request for Proposal

The City of Berkeley completed the Feasibility Study for Ferry Facility at Berkeley Municipal Pier (Feasibility Study) in June, 2022 and is now beginning detailed engineering and environmental studies for the Water Transportation Pier-Ferry (WTPF) Project.

Introduction of ferry service at the Berkeley waterfront is expected to bring new users and new parking demands to the area. During the Feasibility Study, stakeholders expressed concerns regarding parking management at the Waterfront. The City is conducting competitive procurement for engineering and environmental studies and detailed design of the WTPF Project. Given the level of concern expressed by stakeholders regarding parking and transportation demand management, and given the unique overlap between parking analyses and design, recreation, and other non-ferry existing and future uses of the Waterfront, the City desires to utilize an on-call contract to conduct a parking and transportation demand management (TDM) plan for the Pier-Ferry Project. Use of an on-call contract allows the City to initiate work on this study in a focused manner as quickly as possible. Given the inter-related and proximate land uses at the Waterfront, a WTPF analysis must consider Marina-wide parking availability and utilization for both baseline and buildout scenarios. The intent is to create a technical memorandum that will serve as the basis for future design decisions and CEQA findings.

The selected contractor would not be conflicted from joining other teams for future work on the design or environmental analyses for this Project.

1 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Interested and qualified on-call consultants should submit the following information in a proposal format:

- Firm Name
- Proposed Project Manager name and contact information
- Sub-consultants proposed, if any
- Relevant Experience: Brief description of at least 3 Projects completed in the past 7 years demonstrating similar scope / scale.

- Approach to Scope: See proposed scope of work below. Provide a brief narrative of how you would approach this scope, including any additional tasks not identified that you foresee as required to complete the scope.
- Cost Proposal: Broken down by sub-task (i.e. Task 1, Task 2, Task 3). Billing for this work will be Time & Materials with a not-to-exceed total. Invoices shall be billed on the sub-task level.
- Local Business: Identify what portion of the work, if any, will be completed by an Alameda County Transportation Commission certified local business enterprise (LBE) and/or small local business enterprise (SLBE). This percentage should be based on the cost proposal.

Proposals shall be emailed to Project Manager Liza McNulty at LMcNulty@berkeleyca.gov by 5 pm on Friday, December 15th, 2023. Any questions regarding this request for proposals should be directed to Liza McNulty via email.

The Task Order issued for this work will include additional contractual provisions that apply to work performed under this task order, including (underlined text represents changes from the existing on-call boilerplate contract):

- Alameda County Transportation Commission, and its governing body, officers, employees and consultants as well as City, and its directors, officers, partners, representatives, employees, consultants, subconsultants and agents, shall be named as additional insureds, but only with respect to liability arising out of the activities of the named insured, and there shall be a waiver of subrogation as to each named and additional insured.
- Consultant agrees to maintain and make available to City during business hours accurate books and accounting records relative to its activities under this Agreement. Consultant shall permit City to audit, examine and make copies, excerpts and transcripts from such books and records, and to make audits of all invoices, materials, payrolls, records or personnel and other data related to all other matters covered by this Agreement, whether funded in whole or in part under this Agreement. Consultant shall maintain such data and records in an accessible location and condition for a period of not less than five years after final payment under this Agreement or until after final audit has been resolved, whichever is later. The State of California, Alameda County and any federal agency having an interest in the subject of this Agreement shall have the same rights conferred upon City by this Paragraph.
- Consultant shall not deny benefits to any person on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status, nor shall they discriminate unlawfully against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status. The Consultant shall insure that the evaluation and treatment of employees and applicants for employment are free of such discrimination. Consultant shall comply with the provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act (Gov. Code §12900 et seq.), the regulations promulgated thereunder (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, §11000 et seq.), the provisions of Article 9.5, Chapter 1, Part 1, Division 3, Title 2 of the Government Code (Gov. Code §§11135-11139.5), and the regulations or standards adopted by the Conservancy to implement such article. The Consultant shall permit access by representatives of the Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Conservancy upon reasonable notice at any time during the normal business hours, but in no case less than 24 hours' notice, to such of its books,

records, accounts, and all other sources of information and its facilities as said Department or the California State Coastal Conservancy shall require to ascertain compliance with this clause. The Consultant shall give written notice of their obligations under this clause to labor organizations with which they have a collective bargaining or other agreement. (See Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, §11105.)

2 PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK

TASK 1: Existing Conditions

Update previous analyses and metrics to reflect current existing conditions related to visitor management infrastructure and utilization.

Task 1.1: Existing Visitor Management Facilities

Summarize existing data (and collect additional data as necessary) to establish existing baseline conditions, including but not limited to:

- Number of parking spaces by type, location, etc.
- Bicycle facilities (bike travel routes by type, bike parking by type)
- Existing transit routes, stops & schedules.

Much of this data has been gathered and presented in the reference files. This task includes review, confirmation and update of the previously gathered information to reflect any changes in the existing condition. Develop and/or update tables and figures to communicate the data. Assume one online meeting with City staff under this task.

Task 1.2: Existing Visitor Utilization of Facilities

Update previous analyses regarding current use of Marina facilities including but not limited to changes in small ferry service, leaseholders and parking lot uses. Update data regarding utilization of existing facilities for weekday, weekend, and routine peak periods. Proposal should include proposed method/sources for this data collection (i.e. satellite data, cellphone data, etc.). Assume two online meetings with City staff under this task.

This task does not include additional stakeholder engagement or surveys. It is expected that previous public outreach and survey results will be referenced as needed to reflect stakeholder concerns.

TASK 2: BERKELEY WATER TRANSPORTATION PIER FERRY – YEAR 1

Baseline operation assumes that 250 parking spaces within the currently closed HS Lordship Parking Lot will be allocated for Ferry riders. WETA projects total ridership of 1,830 on an average weekday in year one¹. This value is total number of one-way boardings, including both Berkeley and San Francisco origination.

There is the need to update the strategies outlined in the Feasibility Study to (1) account for the updated ridership projections from WETA; (2) ensure resiliency in the strategies to account for actual mode shares differing from the projections and (3) develop specific actionable measures to be incorporated into Project plans to implement these strategies.

The goal of this task is to answer the following questions:

¹ WETA Berkeley Ferry Service Business Plan Version 1.0

- Develop specific, implementable TDM strategies with local and/or regional precedence for effective use.
- After incorporation of all feasible TDM strategies, what is the resulting Travel Mode for weekday and weekend riders projected for Year 1?
- How do the results of this analysis impact the WTPF Project construction scope?
 - What specific constructed elements needs to be included in the Project to implement the TDM strategies (i.e. number of new bike parking spaces, gates for parking areas, signage etc.)
- What operational / management measures are required to implement the TDM strategies?
 - Develop specific, implementable strategies for how Ferry Parking spaces may be reserved for / utilized by Ferry users.
 - Develop specific, implementable strategies for how non-Ferry Parking spaces may be protected from use by ferry riders.
- What is the strategy for management of over-flow parking? In the event that all ferry parking spaces are full and additional ferry passengers arrive by car – where will they go, and how will this be implemented?

Assume a total of four virtual meetings for this task.

TASK 3: MARINA FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PARKING & TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Task 3.1: Future Ferry Ridership

Determine reasonably foreseeable future ridership scenarios and develop specific management strategies and criteria for implementation of these strategies to account for the projected Ferry ridership through 2040.

Assume one virtual meeting for this task.

Task 3.2: Future Marina Development

The schedule and scope of future development within the Waterfront is unknown. The City of Berkeley has published a [Draft Waterfront Specific Plan](#), and the City is in the process of determining the next step for this document based on public input received to date. Whether or not the Waterfront Specific Plan is adopted by the City of Berkeley, the Draft document provides a hypothetical maximum build out scenario for the Waterfront.

Data from this hypothetical build-out will be provided, including building location, type (i.e. hotel, office, food & beverage, etc.) and square footage. Using this data, calculate number/type of visitors and projected travel modes to each of these facilities.

The phasing of any future development at the Waterfront (i.e. which developments would occur in which order over what timeline) is unknown. The Waterfront Specific Plan [Parking and Mobility Framework](#) (January 2022) provides general recommendations for strategies to consider for the build-out scenario. The goal of this task is to provide specific, implementable strategies and identify criteria for implementation / phasing of the identified strategies.

Assume a total of four virtual meetings for this task.

3 REFERENCES

Berkeley Marina Ferry Parking & Transportation Demand Management Strategy (Nelson Nygaard, October 2021), including Appendix A, Revised Short-Term Recommendations for Waterfront Parking Management – DRAFT – September 11, 2018, Nelson Nygaard (Appendix to the [Ferry Terminal Facility Feasibility Study](#))

[WETA Berkeley Ferry Service, Business Plan Version 1.0](#)

[Parking and Mobility Framework](#), Draft, Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan, January 2022

[Draft Waterfront Specific Plan](#), November 2, 2023.

Traffic Assessment of University Avenue Concept Study, December, 2017. Parisi Transportation Consulting. Available by request.

Agenda Item 17. Recent Council Reports**PARKS AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION****RECENT COUNCIL REPORTS**

The following recent PRW council reports can be accessed from the City Council Website by using the following URL's:

December 12, 2023 (regular)

9.-Grant Application – State Parks Outdoor Equity Grants Program (OEP)

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2009%20Grant%20Application%20%E2%80%93%20State%20Parks.pdf>

10.-Grant Application – California Air Resources Board (CARB) Advanced Technology Demonstration and Pilots Program for New Electric Boat and Charging Station

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2010%20Grant%20Application%20%E2%80%93%20California%20Air.pdf>

11.-Contract: Buhler Commercial for Willard Park Clubhouse and Restroom Replacement Project

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2011%20Contract%20%20Buhler%20Commercial.pdf>

12.-Donation: Memorial Bench at Cesar Chavez Park in memory of Ronald Henry Klein

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2012%20Donation%20Memorial%20Bench.pdf>

13.-Donation: Memorial Bench at Cesar Chavez Park in memory of Ramakant Tulsian

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2013%20Donation%20Memorial%20Bench.pdf>

23.-Council Referral – Request for City Community Survey for placing a Modest Increase in the Parks Tax on the November 2024 Ballot

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-12%20Item%2023%20Council%20Referral%20%E2%80%93%20Request%20for%20City.pdf>

December 5, 2023 (regular)

7.-Grant Contract: Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the MLK Youth Services Center Seismic Upgrade Project

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-05%20Item%2007%20Grant%20Contract%20%20Housing%20and%20Urban%20Development%20%28HUD%29.pdf>

8.-Donation from the Friends of the Berkeley Rose Garden

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-05%20Item%2008%20Donation%20from%20the%20Friends%20of%20the%20Berkeley%20Rose%20Garden.pdf>

Agenda Item 17. Recent Council Reports

10.-Nancy Skinner Municipal Pier Resolution

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-05%20Item%2010%20Nancy%20Skinner%20Municipal%20Pier%20Resolution.pdf>

November 28, 2023 (regular)

14.-Designating Open Space Adjacent to the Ninth St Greenway between Heinz Ave and the Berkeley-Emeryville border as a Linear City Park Pursuant to BMC 6.42

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-11-28%20Item%2014%20Designating%20Open%20Space%20Adjacent.pdf>

November 7, 2023 (regular)

16.-Budget Referral: Refer \$800,000 to the November 2023 AAO #1 for Matching Funds to Repair Eight Deficient Tide Tubes to Avoid Catastrophic Structural Failure and Escalating Construction Costs

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-11-07%20Item%2016%20Budget%20Referral%20Refer%20800%2C000.pdf>

Revised material (Supp 1)

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-11-07%20Item%2016%20Tide%20Tubes%20Harrison%20-%20Rev1.pdf>

COMMUNICATION (Kawczynska)

A full recording of the November 8, 2023, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission meeting is available from Chair, Claudia Kawczynska's Dropbox account (see link below). This recording was made using Otter.ai, a recording and transcription app and was made using the Chair's laptop. It is best listened to wearing headphones.

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/em49p3i34d6xlpnp6jp7s/Note_20240103_1529_otter_ai.mp3?rlkey=49mp06zcxlaxghknifyhta9v5&dl=0

Chair’s Report January 10, 2024, Item 7 (Kawczynska)

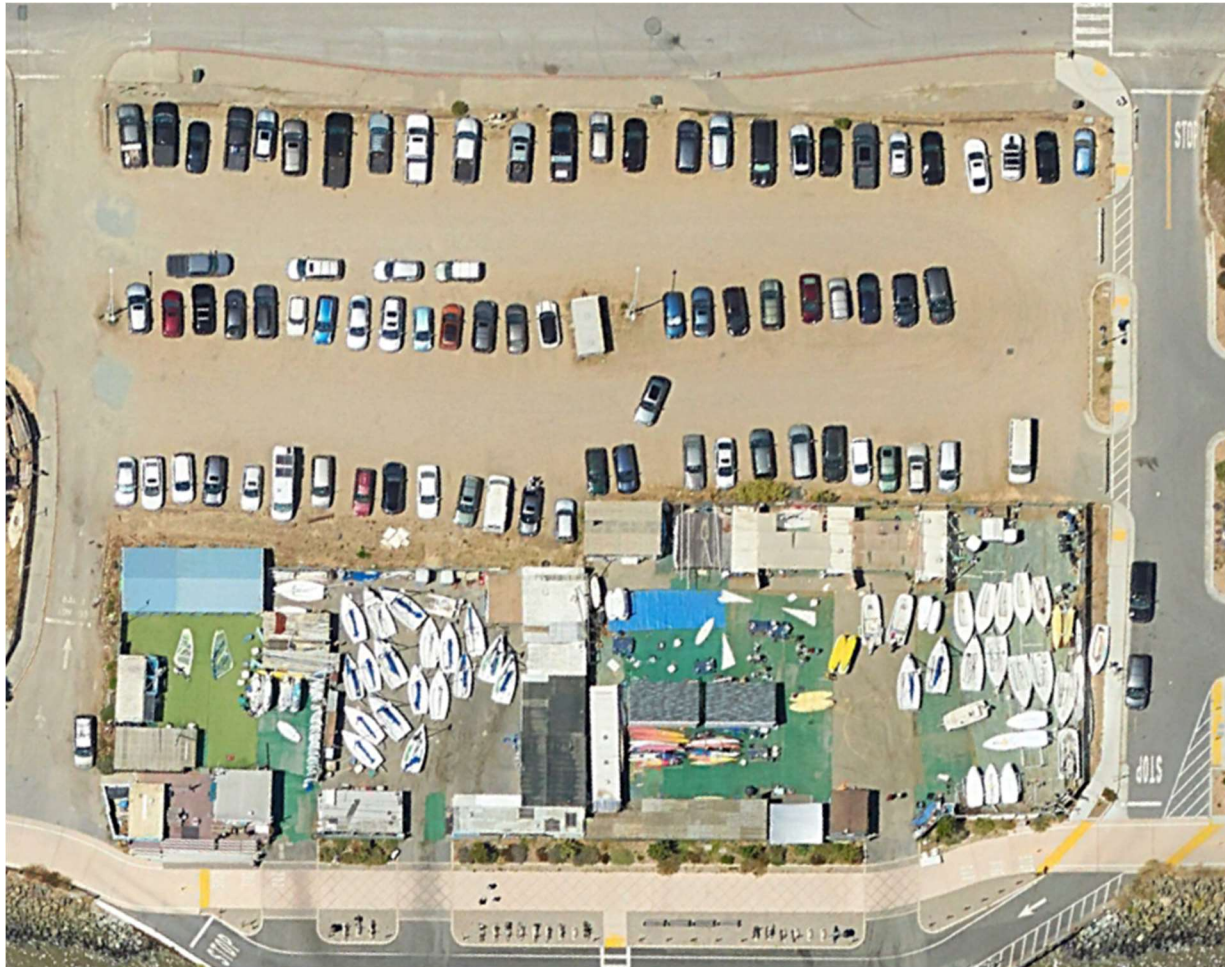
Native Grass Restoration Project – OLA in César Chávez Park

On Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023 volunteers from the OLA dog walking community and CCCOLA spent their mornings helping to over seed and top dressed rye and festuca grasses on the southern side of the main OLA hill. This initiative was organized by Jacob Several, Landscape Gardener Supervisor, Marina. And together we spread 60 lbs. of Elymus glaucus (Blue wildrye), 35 lbs. of Elymus triticoides (Creeping wildrye), 30 lbs. of Festuca idahoensis (Idaho fescue-native Cal.) plus seed Jeff Malmuth purchased and then additionally top dressing with 3 cubic yards of compost. Rains since that time have inspired the seeds to germinate and hopefully get established. The goal is for native grasses to outcompete with the non-natives, especially the foxtail grasses that are very harmful to dogs and other species (including humans). If this proves to be successful, it is hoped that more sections of the OLA can also be restored with native grasses.



Parking in the South Cove West Parking Lot

From: Gordon Stout



This is a Google Earth picture of the South Cove West parking lot. As shown, with three rows of parking spaces, it has room for about 80 cars. Because the lot is not striped, cars can be parked in front of or behind the middle row cars, making a fourth row with room for up to 30 more cars.

The photos on pages 4 through 6 below were taken early in the morning of Tuesday, November 28, sunny and calm with no recreational use evident in the South Basin. The very last space in the third row of the lot was filled at 9:04 am. I watched people leaving the parking lot and hurrying across to the ferry on K-dock, which had its gate unlocked for the ferry riders.

This is a significant change for this lot. Last summer, the north row of cars and part of the middle row would fill up on weekday mornings with the cars of ferry and fishing charter riders, but not this full. Even so, the parking lot would often fill up completely when recreational users arrived for the afternoon winds.

On Thursday, November 30 the lot was somewhat less full, and on Tuesday December 5 and Tuesday December 12 the lot again had three rows fairly full. A chronic situation like last summer, but worse—this parking lot is too full. **If the South Cove lot is filled by all-day ferry or fishing charter parking, there won't be enough space left for recreational users. What can we do to maintain recreational access to the South Cove?**

Genentech Ferry

The people I saw on Tuesday November 28 were dressed for white-collar jobs, probably Genentech ferry riders. I see this on the web: <https://oysterpointmobility.com/bus-ferry-share/> Looks like Genentech is expanding their ferry service to include other Oyster Point companies.

We note that the BCDC Bay Plan has this to say about ferry terminals, parking , and recreational use, page 73:

"Ferry terminals may be allowed in waterfront park priority use areas and marinas and near fishing piers and launching lanes, **provided the development and operations of the ferry facilities do not interfere with current or future park and recreational uses**, and navigational safety can be assured. Terminal configuration and operation should not disrupt continuous shoreline access. **Facilities provided for park and marina patrons, such as parking, should not be usurped by ferry patrons.** Shared parking arrangements should be provided to minimize the amount of shoreline area needed for parking." (boldface added)

The link below downloads a PDF version of the BCDC Bay Plan with pagination to make references easy.

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiSufqubyAAxVOAjQIHsILBTIQFnoECBQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bcdc.ca.gov%2Fpdf%2Fbayplan%2Fbayplan.pdf&usq=AOvVaw2rDGQYzyLDHly9iJsQuBUp&opi=89978449>

Possible steps to deal with Genentech ferry parking:

- Impress upon Genentech the importance of the BCDC requirement to not interfere with recreational parking, solicit their cooperation in keeping ferry riders' cars out of the South Cove lots.
- Encourage ferry riders to bike, walk, carpool, or take the bus.
- Make sure that bus schedules mesh well with ferry departure and arrival times.
- Re-open the 199 Seawall parking lot, and direct ferry riders to park there.
- Allow parallel parking on the north and south sides of lower University Avenue.
- Get the City of Berkeley vehicles out of the L-Dock parking lot.



Ferry leaving in the fog, December 5, 2023

Fishing Charter Boats I see reports of boats fishing for Dungeness Crab, I believe on November 28: https://www.sportfishingreport.com/dock_totals/?date=2023-11-28 shows 41 people fishing for crab off one of the Berkeley charter boats.

Last summer during the halibut/salmon run, many boatloads of anglers left from Berkeley, and it had a significant impact on parking in the South Cove (see below).

Fish Counts by Boat - July 12, 2022 Total 69 anglers

Berkeley Fish Counts			
Boat	Trip Details	Dock Totals	Audio
California Dawn California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	17 Anglers Full Day	47 California Halibut (up to 22 pounds)	
California Dawn II California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	24 Anglers Full Day	48 King Salmon (up to 28 pounds)	
El Dorado Berkeley Charter Boats Berkeley, CA	17 Anglers Full Day	34 King Salmon (up to 25 pounds)	
Haha Kai Berkeley Charter Boats Berkeley, CA	11 Anglers Full Day	22 King Salmon (up to 27 pounds)	

Fish Counts by Boat - July 13, 2022 Total 39 anglers

Berkeley Fish Counts			
Boat	Trip Details	Dock Totals	Audio
California Dawn California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	16 Anglers Full Day	28 California Halibut (up to 24 pounds), 5 Striped Bass	
California Dawn II California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	23 Anglers Full Day	30 King Salmon (up to 30 pounds)	

Fish Counts by Boat - July 14, 2022 Total 28 anglers

Berkeley Fish Counts			
Boat	Trip Details	Dock Totals	Audio
California Dawn California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	8 Anglers Full Day	13 California Halibut, 5 King Salmon	
California Dawn II California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	20 Anglers Full Day	14 King Salmon (up to 31 pounds)	

Fish Counts by Boat - July 15, 2022 Total 57 anglers

Berkeley Fish Counts			
Boat	Trip Details	Dock Totals	Audio
California Dawn California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	20 Anglers Full Day	15 King Salmon	
California Dawn II California Dawn Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	20 Anglers Full Day	15 King Salmon (up to 25 pounds)	
Happy Hooker Happy Hooker Sportfishing Berkeley, CA	17 Anglers Full Day	13 Halibut, 27 Lingcod, 150 Rockfish, 40 Halibut Released, 35 Lingcod Released, 100 Rockfish Released	

Fishing is a recreational use, and is therefore not in the same BCDC category as ferries, so we need to share the parking between charter boat anglers and other recreational users. .

First, there must be an overflow lot, because the South Cove West lot is not big enough for all the cars that need to use it. Probably this should be the 199 Seawall lot and/or the Skates lot, which ideally should be opened before the 5:00 am departure time of some of the fishing boats.

Anglers need to bring tackle in the morning, and take fish home at the end of the day. Other recreational users may have kids and strollers, or windsurfing/kayaking equipment and wetsuits to carry. Balancing these interests will take some thought and diplomatic effort.

The Marina should probably not rent berths to additional fishing charter boats without considering how to provide parking for the anglers that will use the boats. For what it's worth, 2022 income from charter boats was estimated at \$70,000.

Parking pictures from Tuesday, November 28, 2023:



South Cove West Parking lot on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from the north side of University Avenue.



South Cove West Parking lot on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from the west end of the lot.



Southeast corner of the South Cove West Parking lot on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, as cars pull into the last empty spaces of the third parking row at 9:04 am.

Comments on Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan, Third Draft

Martin Nicolaus
CEO, Chavez Park Conservancy

The City of Berkeley has spent \$1.1 million to hire a set of consultants headed by the Hargreave Jones firm to produce recommendations for the future of the Berkeley waterfront. Their initial report in March 2022, captioned the Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan (BMASP), contained proposals for commercial development in Cesar Chavez Park that aroused strong and widespread popular opposition. See “[Love Letters to the Park](#).” The City formally backed off these proposals in August 2022 and initiated a new round of proposals under the revised heading of Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP). The first WSP draft came out on September 8 2023. I published comments on that draft [here](#). A second draft was published on [September 22](#); my comments are [here](#). On October 30, the City published its [third draft](#). This document is my response to the third draft. While I am identified as CEO of the Chavez Park Conservancy, this writing is not an organizational document but represents my personal opinions.

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1. The Waterfront as a Whole

1.1 The Waterfront Is Part of Berkeley

After reviewing the need for repairs and new construction at the Waterfront, the draft says, “the long-term viability of the Waterfront will be dependent on creating a consistent revenue stream to fund these maintenance and capital replacements over time.” P. 46. This is true, but it is a fundamental mistake to assume that this revenue stream must arise from the Waterfront itself. As the historical section points out, the notion of a self-sustaining Waterfront was embodied in the creation of the Marina Fund in 1964. P. 48. If we have learned anything in the decades since, it is that this notion was a pipedream of the sixties.

The authors of this third draft should cut through the years of accumulated official fictions and state frankly what is now obvious: the idea of the Marina Fund as the main revenue source for the Waterfront is unsound. We have seen in previous analyses, which the draft should but doesn't reference, that the Marina Fund is an accounting mess. A major source of revenue generated on the Waterfront, the Hotel Occupancy Tax, is not credited to the Marina Fund. Major road repair, garbage pickup, and landscaping expenses treated as City General Fund items everywhere else in the City are treated as Marina Fund costs on the Waterfront. Parks Tax funds can flow everywhere in Berkeley but not to the Marina Fund. One version of the Marina Fund, using cash method accounting, shows it in deficit. Another version, using the accrual method, shows it in vigorous surplus. It is a matter of controversy whether the Waterfront is an operational drain on the City or a cash cow. A City cannot be operated this way without losing credibility in its management. The Marina Fund was a mistake. The Waterfront is not and cannot be handled as if it were a separate city. The Marina Fund needs to be killed. All the assets and expenses of the Waterfront need to be merged with the City budget and the City administration. The Waterfront needs to be treated as what it is: part of the City.

After avoiding the issue in the earlier pages, the draft comes back to it in Section 2.6, “Fiscal Sustainability” p. 188. There it finally admits, as it should have done 140 pages earlier, that “we know that it is not possible to generate all the revenue needed at the Waterfront.” There the draft lists a number of revenue options, such as General Fund subsidies, a Parks Tax increase, a new City or regional tax, bond measure, private financing, grants, and user fees. None of these options will work so long as the Waterfront is treated as an economic sovereignty separate from the City of Berkeley. These issues should be front and center in the draft, not buried far down the road where few will reach it.

1.2 The Ferry Black Hole

In Section 2.3.3 at p. 128, the draft takes up the Berkeley Pier and the “Ferry Access Project” in one page that reads like a City handout. There's no look at the decade without inspections or maintenance that preceded the pier closure. The fierce ongoing controversy about the proposed ferry project doesn't exist. Everything is peachy, or will be peachy when the ferry begins service in 2028. Why are we paying tax money to consultants who write fluff like this?

It isn't until 30 and then 60 pages later that a little bit of reality creeps in. In a table on p. 154, the draft suggests that repairing the pier without ferry access might cost in the range of \$37M, while

adding ferry access would at least double the cost, with actual numbers totally up in the air, depending on unspecified future grants and an undetermined WETA contribution in 2028.

Also up in the air is the amount of parking that would be required for the ferry. The whole "Parking" treatment in the draft centers on this huge black hole. The table of land allocations on p. 199 shows blanks with the legend "TBD" for the "Ferry Access Project." As a result, all the land allocation percentages are fuzzy.

There is no discussion of ferry operating costs. Previous estimates indicate that ferry fares at market rates would require heavy subsidies. Who will pay them? There are no commitments from anyone. The impact of ferry traffic on local business is unknowable. The amount of expected ferry passenger traffic is a matter of ever-changing conjecture. The impact of ferry traffic on BART ridership is unmentioned. The project looks less like a business plan and more like a fantasy.

The City has recently received a grant to study the project, which will take years. The consultants would inspire confidence by admitting that a Waterfront *Specific* Plan is currently not possible because the parameters of the ferry project -- potentially a major component of the Waterfront -- are unknowable at this time.

It would make sense for the City to repair the pier at this time, as soon as possible, and to leave the ferry project to a future date when the series of financial questions about it may be answered. To leave the pier dead and closed while waiting on possible ferry financing condemns the south side of the Marina to at least five more years of stagnation and decay.

On the ferry issue, the draft is weak on analysis and on speaking truth. What we are getting is blurring, coverup, salesmanship.

1.3 Where is the Garbage?

The draft correctly points out on p. 34 that future development projects have to consider subsurface conditions. It's known that erecting a building over decomposing garbage carries risks of settlement, instability, and landfill gas venting. The map on that page displays the Cesar Chavez Park area as "Capped Landfill" and the rest of the Waterfront, including the Eastshore State Park, as "Construction Spoils." Construction spoils, by contrast, offer firmness, stability, and no gas problem. Development there should be free of subsurface issues.

This map is inaccurate. The history of the Waterfront area is a history of garbage deposition. Only the Chavez Park area was expressly developed as a garbage dump, but garbage was the chief material that created almost all of the waterfront land.

A case in point is the University Avenue strip between the freeway overpass and the Marina. This was a wooden pier where Berkeley residents dumped uncountable tons of garbage under and alongside the posts and beams. Everyone who drove the eastbound lane prior to the 2021 renovation knows that this became a washboard due to garbage settlement. The consultants missed this.

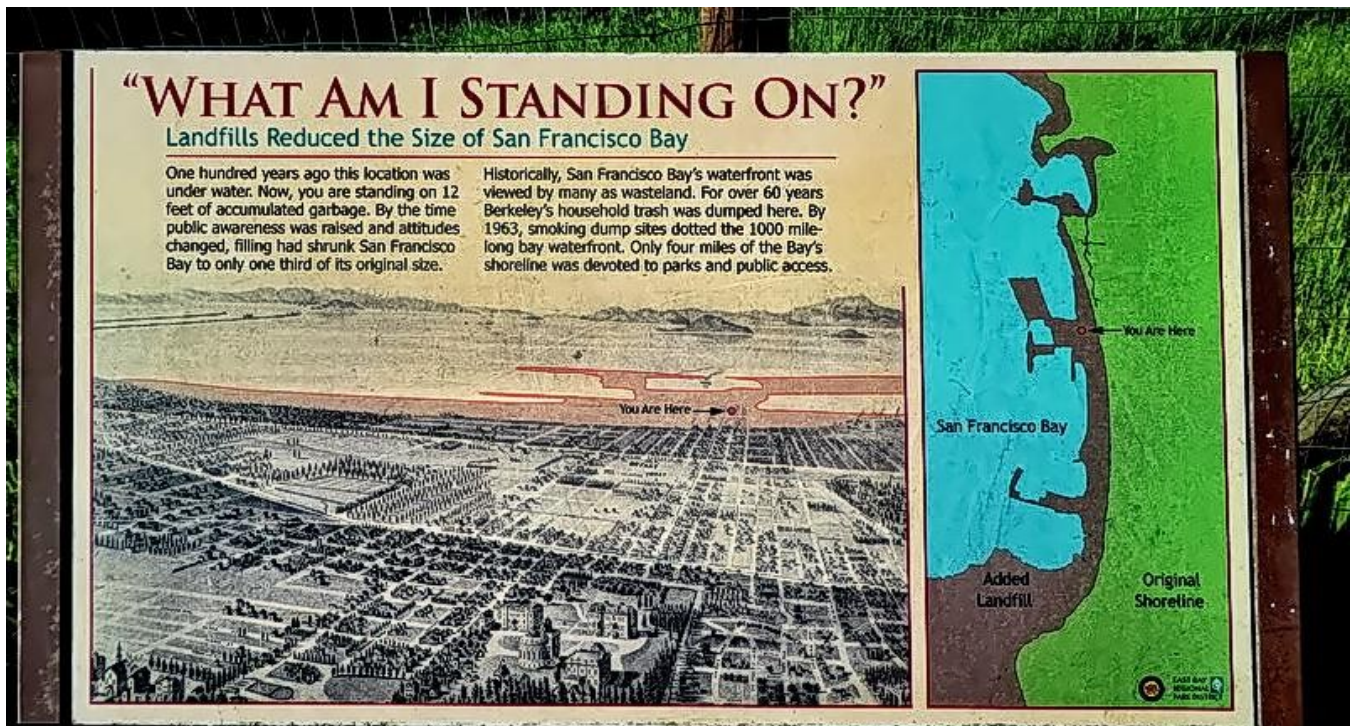
The North Basin Strip, the former Berkeley Meadow, and the envelope around the boat basin are all constructed on a foundation of garbage. The only exception is today's Brickyard Cove Park, where construction and demolition debris forms the principal basis.

It would not have taken the Hargreave Jones firm, principal authors of the draft, a deep dive into the historical record to draw a more accurate map. The 2003 Marina Master Plan, predecessor of the current effort, says at p. 24:

The fill that comprises the waterfront sites are of two general types: 1) partly incinerated refuse consisting of brick, glass, metal, and organic material underlies the Meadow, North Basin Strip and Cesar Chavez Park; and 2) rubble consisting of a mixture of brick, concrete and clay soil underlies the Brickyard.

The area formerly known as the Berkeley Meadow, now McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, was identified as a garbage deposit as early as the 1986 Specific Master Plan. The EIR addressed "ground settlement, ground shaking and ignition of methane in the soil." By way of mitigation, "development has been removed entirely from the Meadow area, strict requirements are placed ... for protection from groundshaking and settlement, ... and incorporation of special measures to insure adequate venting of subsurface methane are required of all development."

But if reviewing these old documents was too much, the consultants had only to walk the Berkeley Meadow, where they would encounter this sign:

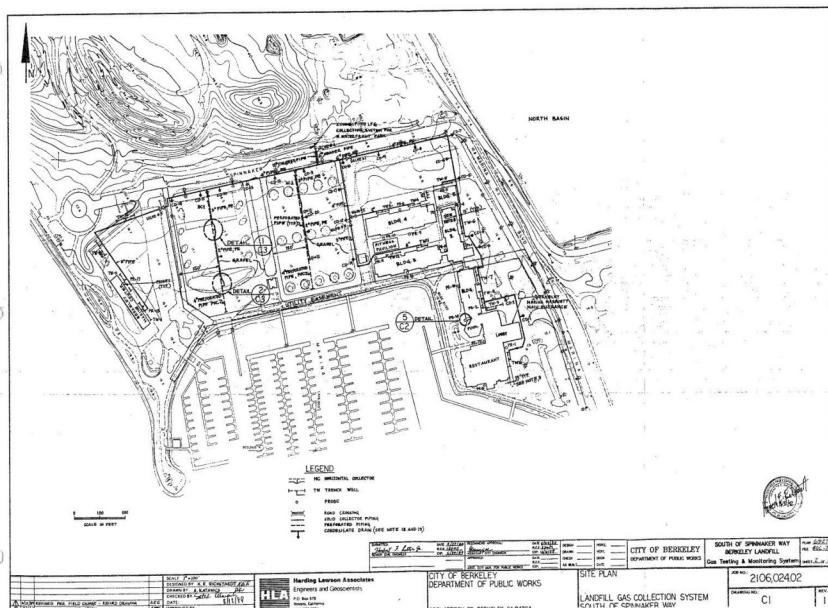


"You are standing on 12 feet of accumulated garbage." The history of the Berkeley waterfront since European settlement, but particularly in the 20th century, was one of trashing the beaches. "For over 60 years Berkeley's household trash was dumped here." Reviewing these well known facts, it is

striking that the word “garbage” appears in the consultants’ draft only once, in connection with Chavez Park. Reading the consultants’ version of history, it’s difficult to understand why the Save the Bay movement arose -- and in fact this movement, which profoundly changed land use at the Waterfront and around the whole Bay, is not mentioned in the consultants’ work.

The location of garbage infill is of particular interest in the strip south of Spinnaker Way, between Spinnaker Way and the northern edge of the boat basin. The Hilton Doubletree hotel sits here. The consultants would like to “densify” this hotel by adding more floors and more buildings. On the west side of this strip currently sits the Marine Center, a working boatyard. The consultants would like to put a four-story hotel here. If the foundation fill is “construction spoils,” no problem. But if it

were construction spoils, why would the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the City of Berkeley’s Public Works Department have required installation of a Landfill Gas Collection system south of Spinnaker Way? The main buildings of the hotel and of the Marine Center sit atop a network of landfill gas collection wells detailed in this architectural drawing (left).



The schematic below shows that the landfill gas collection system south of Spinnaker Way consists

of 18 monitoring probes, 14 trench wells, and 2 horizontal collectors, for a total of 34 gas collection devices. Two of the probes and four of the trench wells are located under the Marine Center. The two horizontal collectors are located under the parking lots between the Marine Center and the hotel. The remaining 26 gas collectors are located under and around various buildings of the hotel.

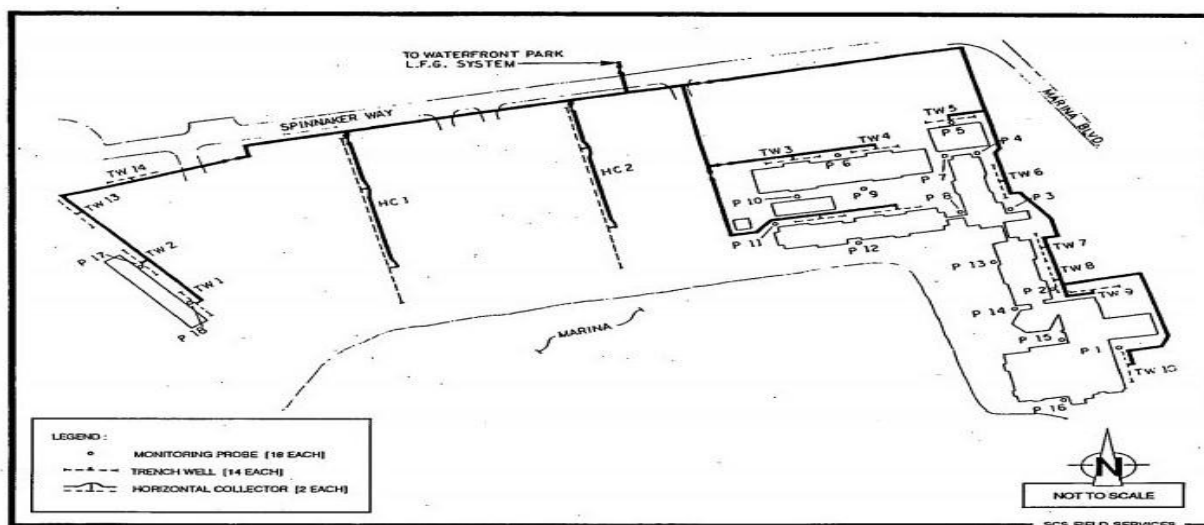
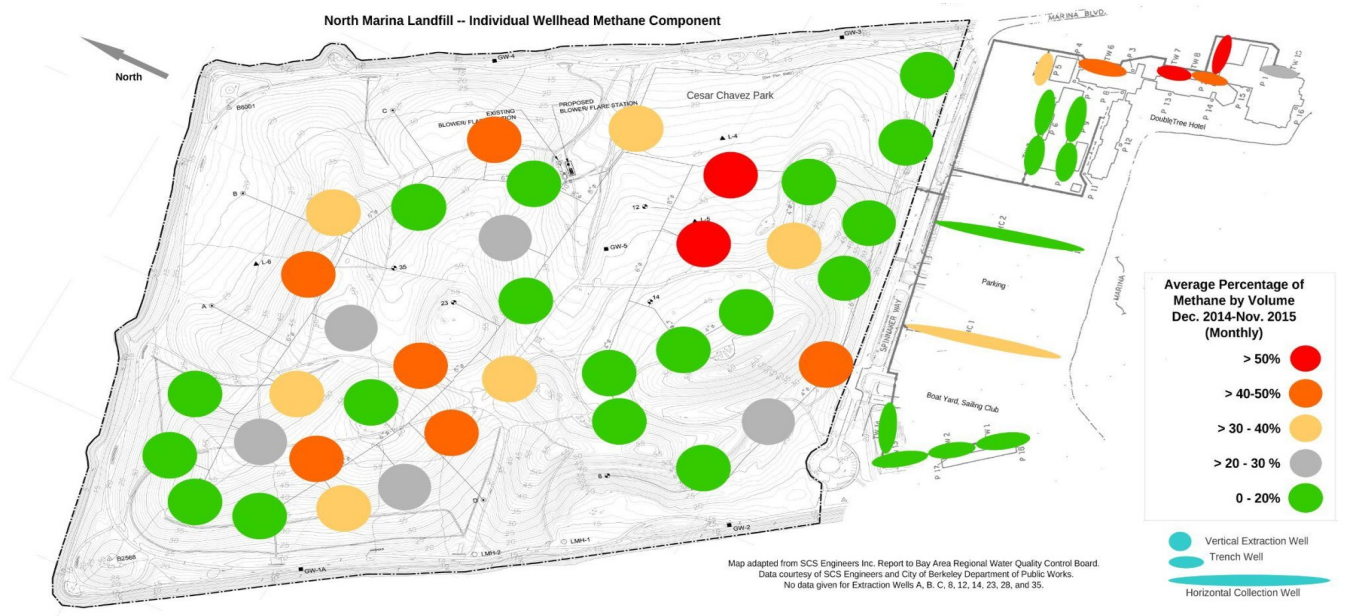


Figure 1. LFG Extraction System, South of Spinnaker Way.

Moreover, the hotel has installed methane monitoring devices inside its buildings to detect possible leakage not vented by the collection system. No methane leakage has been reported inside a hotel building. However, there has been active gas generation under the hotel grounds, with the highest methane concentrations reported from the collectors around the hotel lobby area (upper right corner of the graphic):



In summary, the consultants' map of subsurface conditions on page 34 raises troubling concerns. The authors of the draft have not done their homework. They are not aware that University Avenue eastbound was built on garbage, even though anyone who drove that stretch of washboard road before 2022 would have been put on notice. They have not walked the former Berkeley Meadow and seen the signs advising that it was built on garbage. They have not read two previous waterfront master plans detailing where the garbage is distributed. They have not seen the architectural drawings or the engineer's schematics showing the landfill gas collection system south of Spinnaker Way. Densifying the existing hotel and adding a new four-story building in this strip raises subsurface issues that the map on p. 34 covers up.

1.4 Design Criteria

Section 3.5 on Design Guidelines (p. 218) says that new structures “are designed to recede through careful massing, facade articulation, and material selection.” Yet the proposed buildings shown in the numerous graphics throughout the draft are mostly glass boxes. The one point about facade articulation and material selection that could make a difference, namely bird-safe glass, is not mentioned.

Similarly, the section on lighting, p. 183, reveals zero awareness of the negative impacts of night lighting on wildlife. These gaps are typical of the ecologically insensitive Hargreave Jones firm, as we saw from their 2022 proposals for commercial development in Chavez Park. See the book “[Love Letters to the Park](#).” Nothing in the past 30 years of growing environmental awareness has penetrated the Hargreave Jones consciousness.

2. Cesar Chavez Park

The keynote of the draft's coverage of Cesar Chavez Park is what it leaves out. There is no repetition of the commercial development proposals in the [Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan \(BMASP\) of early 2022](#). There is no talk of a concert venue in the central grassland nor of a zip line and ropes course in the Native Plant Area. These omissions are thoroughly welcome. It is clear that last summer's strong and broad public movement to preserve the park from commercial development (see the book "[Love Letters to the Park](#)") has left an impact. Commercial development in Chavez Park is off the agenda. Unless ...

2.1 The Million Dollar Master Plan

In a table on page 154, there is the amount of \$1M for a Master Plan for Cesar Chavez Park. Earlier, at p. 84, the draft points out that a Master Plan would be necessary only if big changes to the park were contemplated. What changes are contemplated?

The planned changes that the draft signals are three: repairs to the perimeter trail, one bathroom, and changes to interior trails.

- Perimeter trail: \$2.1M financed by a State of California grant, bottom of p. 156.
- One permanent park restroom, \$445K in 2025, table on pp. 50-51.
- "Interior Pathways Improvements and Amenities - Phase 2," \$2.9M, table on p. 154.

The perimeter trail has had no repairs for 30 years. There is no question that a renovation is necessary.

The amount budgeted for a permanent restroom continues the City management's obsession with [expensive custom-built restroom buildings](#). Perfectly functioning and attractive prefab structures can be had for a fraction of the cost. With that budget number, three and possibly four permanent restrooms could be built in the park, using innovative vendors such as [Portland Loo](#) and [GreenFlush Restrooms](#).

The sum of \$2.9M for interior pathways "and amenities" makes a surprise appearance here. The Parks administration has not published ideas for interior pathway updates and has not asked for public input on such a project. If Parks is serious about this item, a public process is called for.

Taken together, these three items do not amount to the kind of major park changes that call for a million-dollar Master Plan. If the City has bigger ideas that warrant the expenditure, it should say so

clearly and promptly. Is this Master Plan a Trojan horse for reintroducing commercial development in the park? If there are no big ideas lurking in the Master Plan proposal, the million dollar expenditure should be applied to more productive projects.

2.2 The Myth of Special Events Revenue

In Section 2.3.4 at page 132, the draft repeats the mistake of previous drafts by describing large events like the Kite Fest and July 4th as revenue sources. Public records and news reports with which the consultants ought to be familiar make it clear that these events drain city coffers and are revenue negative. The draft wrongly describes these events as ongoing and continuing when in fact they have been killed due to their excessive cost.

The map on p. 133 mistakenly labels approximately the southern half of Chavez Park in pink as a festival area for “Festivals, Concerts, Scenic Walking Tours, Large Picnic Rentals.” Let’s look at these in detail.

- The Kite Fest was held in this area, but was discontinued due to high costs.
- There is no venue for “Concerts” in the park, other than by pop-up small bands and individual artist volunteers. A proposal to build a concert stage in the park aroused strong and widespread opposition in the summer of 2022; see the book “[Love Letters to the Park](#)”
- Scenic walking tours have been and are held in the whole park seasonally but require no buildout and generate no revenues for the City.
- Large picnics occur occasionally but picnic areas are free and are not rented. A proposal to require rental fees for picnic areas is certain to face strong opposition.

The draft also proposes to put food trucks in two areas adjacent to Chavez Park. Food trucks are notorious generators of trash and litter. If food trucks are allowed, the food truck permit fees must include a cost to hire City staff for wide area cleanup afterward.

2.3 What’s In the Park?

In two maps of Chavez Park on p. 85 and 86, some key features are missing.

- While including one public art installation, the Open Circle construction on the east side, it misses the Sky Window artwork and the Peace Symbol on the west side.
- A major landscape feature, the [Native Plant Area](#), remains without a label.

Some labels are not quite right.

- The “Cesar Chavez Memorial Solar Calendar” is now the Chavez/Huerta Tribute Site.
- The “Owl Habitat” label marks the seasonal Burrowing Owl Sanctuary. But Burrowing Owls have settled also in the Protected Nature Area and in the shoreline margin north of the perimeter trail. This too is “owl habitat.”
- Most of the trees shown scattered over the northern and eastern portion of the map on p. 86 don’t exist.

There is an infrastructure map on p. 155 showing, among other things, water lines. This map omits Chavez Park. There is a water line system feeding the half dozen red standpipes for firefighters in the southern half of the park. There is an extensive but now largely abandoned and broken irrigation system. There are working pipes that supply the four water fountains. There is an extensive landfill gas pipe network, also not shown. There is a network of buried electrical cables, not shown.

Missing from the depictions of the paved perimeter trail in Cut 1E and 1F on p. 164 are the side trails used by runners. Runners are one of the key user groups in the park.

The maps and schematics of the park give the distinct impression that the artists haven’t actually set foot in the park, or not very much.

This same remoteness colors the discussion of fences. On p. 221, the draft says that “fencing is not allowed, with exceptions for screening utilities and waste storage areas.” The drafters forget that there are dogs in the park, many of them off leash. After years of violations which drew media attention, the City in March 2020 felt compelled to build a fence separating the Off Leash Area from the Protected Nature Area on the north side. The “Owl Habitat” in the northeast corner has a substandard fence that enables off-leash dog attacks on the owls. This fence needs to be upgraded. Consultants who had any degree of on-the-ground engagement with the park would be familiar with these issues.

On the positive side, Section 2.5.5 (Placemaking and Wayfinding) calls for an overhaul of signage in the park. This would be welcome if done right. The existing signs installed in the last decade are ordinary street signs. They do not have a park style or set a park atmosphere. This is quite apart from issues of sign placement to mark area boundaries, where numerous gaps exist.

The draft also mentions trash receptacles. Chavez Park currently uses many open 55-gal barrels that are unattractive and that provide food for an overpopulation of crows and rats. Many of the receptacles are beat up. There is no separate disposal for recyclables. Improvements would be welcome.

2.4 Flyover Ecology

One could frost a three-tier wedding cake with the sugary platitudes in the “Nature and Shoreline Ecology” section beginning on p. 94. It’s “diversify” and “resilience” and “environmental benefits” and “broad and inclusive approach” and “sustainable” and “adaptable” and “richness” and more of the same. This bath of virtuous generalities concludes on p. 109 with a full page photo featuring Red Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*), an exotic, aggressively invasive weed.

In that entire span, the reader never finds out what plants actually grow in the park, only what plants typically grow in “Central Coast plant communities.” The chavezpark.org website contains an exhaustive [list of plants](#) spotted and identified in the park in the past five years. It doesn’t look like the authors of the draft consulted this inventory in any depth, and they certainly did no field work on their own. Field investigation would show the consultants in a short time that their four distinct “Coastal Plant Communities” are in reality scrambled and compressed all over the waterfront, including in Chavez Park. Landscaping in the park has a chaotic history, with a great variety of topsoils dumped at random, hydroseeding that failed, widespread trench digging for the landfill gas system that attracted invasive grasses and ruderals, broken and abandoned irrigation, years of deferred maintenance, and other issues. Records of this history are available, but the consultants didn’t do homework.

The consultants’ report particularly ignores the grasslands that make up the great majority of the park’s land area. Grasslands provide the primary habitat for much of the wildlife found in the park. Creeping wild rye and purple needlegrass are important native plant species here. Western Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows, Northern Harriers, American Pipits and White-tailed Kites extensively depend on grasslands, and most of their numbers are diminishing. Instead of native grasslands, the consultants (at page 101) propose irrigation “at select lawns ... such as the southeast quadrant of Cesar Chavez Park.” There are no lawns in Chavez Park, not in the southeast corner nor anywhere else, and installing irrigation to create lawns is a non-starter. The scraping, rolling, reseeded, watering, fertilizing, and chemical spraying required to make and maintain lawns would eat up the park budget, poison the soil, and carry zero benefits for park wildlife.

The consultants recommend a list of trees and other native plants that should be introduced, but no specific locations, budgets, or timelines for doing anything. Even the list of recommended native species is faulty. Chavez Park Conservancy director Jutta Burger Ph.D. points out that the list of native trees on page 104 omits the lovely Hollyleaf Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*). Among native shrubs, it forgets the attractive Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), the aromatic Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*), California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Santa Cruz Island Buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*), and California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), among others. It wrongly classifies California Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*) as a shrub. Among grasses, it wrongly lists *Sisyrinchium bellum* as a grass, when it is a flower, and it forgets about Creeping Wild Rye (*Leymos triticoides*) and Purple Needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), the California state grass. It omits at least four important native flowers that grow in Chavez Park: California Bee Plant (*Scrophularia californica*), Coast Buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*), Western Goldenrod (*Euthamia occidentalis*), and the Gumplant varieties (*Grindelia spp.*)

The consultants also present a list of existing plants that are not native and should be “managed or not planted.” This list, like the rest of the presentation, is entirely abstract, without any action component. Should Myoporum and Acacia be removed and replaced with natives? Should the lessons of the No Mow movement be applied here? Is there too much or too little mowing in the east side meadow? Are we preserving or destroying habitat for ground-nesting birds like Savannah Sparrows and Western Meadowlarks, the most threatened bird category? What can be done about the persistence of foxtails that injure dogs? What can we do about loose dogs that flush ground-dwelling birds and dig holes that enlarge Ground Squirrel burrow entrances? How much Fennel should be permitted in the park, if any? Would we attract more wildlife if we planted more trees? Are we landscaping the Burrowing Owl Sanctuary correctly to attract and protect owls? Are Barn Owl boxes effective in attracting these nocturnal raptors? Should we build elevated platforms to attract nesting Ospreys? Where else in the park should native plant pollinator habitats be built? These are the kinds of specific practical questions that engage people on the ground. Not a whiff of this appears in the draft.

Most revealing is the draft’s non-recognition of the [Native Plant Area](#) in the park. Members of Design Associates Working With Nature (DAWN), with grants from the City of Berkeley and the California Coastal Conservancy, established this historic plant community in the early 1980s. It has drawn statewide attention as proof of concept that native plant communities could thrive on an exposed coastal landfill. Decades later, dozens of volunteers with the local nonprofit [Chavez Park Conservancy](#) have built a native plant pollinator habitat in this area, and spent donated charitable funds and hundreds of hours of labor tending and watering these plants. The draft doesn’t mention it. In last year’s BMASP plan, the Hargreave Jones firm proposed to destroy the Native Plant Area by converting it to a commercial zip line and ropes course. In this draft the consultants are pretending the Native Plant Area isn’t there. Similarly, the Chavez Park Conservancy is ghosted from the list of “Waterfront Organizations and Businesses” listed on page 40.



Chavez Park Conservancy volunteers at work in the Native Plant Area

The quality of this consulting work is disappointing. The purported description of current conditions is loosely copied out of textbooks and could have been generated by a student intern in half a day, or by an AI app in half a minute. It lacks the earthy smell of fieldwork. We should not be spending tax money on flyover consulting like this.

3. Park Neighbors

The draft contains recommendations regarding the park's neighbor on the southwest, namely the Marine Center boat repair yard. The consultants want to shrink and relocate the boatyard, put up a 4-story hotel in its place, and set up a "beer garden" facing the Bay.

3.1 The Vanishing Marine Center

In its first approach, the draft is vague about the Marine Center. On p. 72, it speaks of "redevelopment of the existing Marine Center with a new Marine Center." But 70 pages later, in the graphic on p. 141, the boatyard is off the map. In its place, in a graphic on p. 145, sits a new "North Bayfront Hotel," 3-4 stories tall. Still later, on p. 147, another map shows a "Reduced Marine Center" that's only slightly bigger than the restroom building near the B docks. On page 198, the new Marine Center is reduced by more than half of its building space and shows no yard space or boat storage space at all. The authors do not ask whether a boatyard is economically feasible at this reduced scale. There is no evidence that anyone consulted the boatyard owners and operators how they felt about their proposed shrinkage. No soundings were made about the number of skilled boat repair jobs lost. No investigation was made of the importance of the boatyard to the Marina's berth holders and to boaters from around the Bay. As one of the other consulting firms found, the boatyard is one of the key features that makes the Berkeley Marina a favored boating destination (p. 80). The draft is not interested in these issues. Its priority is to put up a big hotel.

3.2 A Half-Car Hotel

On page 145, the consultants describe the proposed "North Bayfront Hotel" as having parking for 0.5 cars per room. That is, there is parking for half a car for each room, or for half the rooms to have guests with a car and half the rooms having guests with no car. Presumably the guests without cars will rely on services such as Uber or Lyft to arrive, to sightsee, to take restaurant meals, to run errands, and to depart again. The draft does not explain how the pricing of the rooms will be adjusted to reflect these extra costs that do not occur with competing hotel operations. The draft would be more persuasive if a lodging expert were to explain the economics of a half-car hotel.

3.3 Beer v. Bay as Destination

On Pages 72-74, the draft introduces the proposal for a beer bar on an outdoor patio on the north side, next to the parking circle, across Spinnaker Way from Chavez Park. It has not occurred to these planners to ask why an outdoor cafe or restaurant does not already exist in this area. It would be an easy matter for the Marine Center to set it up in part of its yard. But boat people know why this would not work. The reason is the prevailing wind. There are some nice days, but there are many more days when this area is raked by a chill Pacific Ocean gale that punishes outdoor seating.

By way of an object lesson, the recent [Roaming Bean](#) coffee tent that was set up in this area in July 2023 lasted just eleven weeks before the wind forced it to withdraw to the south side of the Marina. That was in the height of the summer park visiting season, with a clientele that mostly walked away with a coffee cup in hand. A sit-down place would have folded in less than a month.

The purpose of the proposed outdoor drinking place is so that “visitors will stay longer because of expanded amenities.” P. 72. On p. 140, the outdoor tavern gets promoted to a “new visitor destination where there currently is none.” Yet, even though there is allegedly no destination here, the parking circle at the proposed drinking site is usually full and on weekends is filled to overflowing, as Figure 2-66 on page 175 correctly indicates. Locating a retail business here would take away parking slots that park visitors currently rely on. The photo in the center of page 11 of the draft (right) shows a typical weekend crowd at this spot. No beer was needed to bring them here. The Bay alone is the prime destination, offering spectacular views of the City of San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge, Mt. Tamalpais, and other attractions.



The draft says that the beer garden “would attract visitors to the Waterfront to stop and stay, who may otherwise just be passing through.” P.140. The draft authors seem unaware that Spinnaker Way is a dead end street. “Passing through” is not a big issue here. What is a real issue is that tavern visitors, after their stay, would be taking the wheel of their cars on Spinnaker Way. The tavern proposal invites a higher incidence of driving under the influence in an area with a 10 mph speed limit and with numerous families and dogs using and crossing the narrow roadway. If nothing else, considerations of public safety speak against the outdoor tavern proposal in this location.

Why Warblers Flock to Wealthier Neighborhoods

In the unequal distribution of birds and other species, ecologists are tracing the impact of bigoted urban policies adopted decades ago.

By **Hillary Rosner**

Nov. 21, 2023

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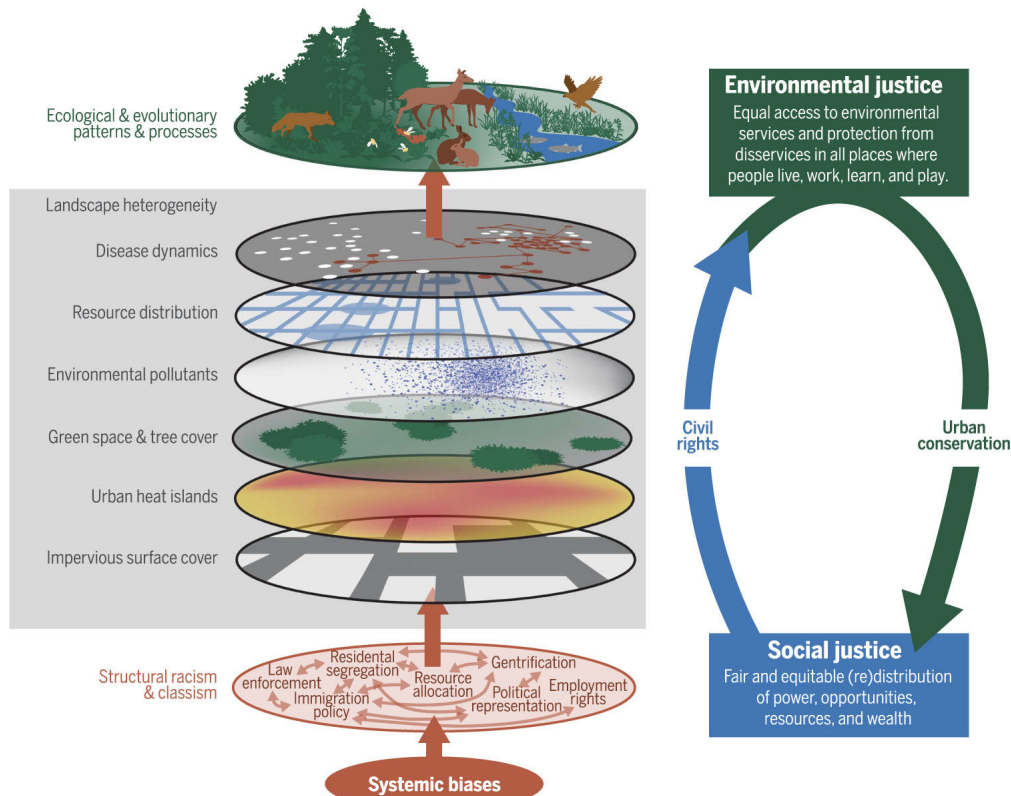
At a meeting of urban wildlife researchers in Washington, D.C., in June, one diagram made it into so many PowerPoint presentations that its recurrence became a running joke. The subject, though, was serious: The diagram illustrated the links between structural racism, pernicious landscape features such as urban heat islands, and impacts to biodiversity, and it came from a study published in the fall of 2020 in the journal Science.

That study was “Ecological and evolutionary consequences of systemic racism in urban environments,” led by Christopher J. Schell, an ecologist at the University of California, Berkeley. It synthesized what a handful of urban ecologists around the country had begun demonstrating: that patterns of bigotry and inequality affect how other species experience life in cities.

Dr. Schell, who is Black and from Los Angeles, said he grew up with an understanding that “there is a ton of heterogeneity that exists in a city, and it’s not by accident that it’s that way.” Those variations could include the numbers of parks and street trees in different neighborhoods, whether a highway or rail line ripped through a community or whether an oil refinery spewed toxins into the air.

Racism and the Environment

A diagram from the journal Science illustrates the links between structural racism, urban landscape features and their impacts on biodiversity.



As a discipline, urban ecology is only about a quarter-century old, and until very recently its practitioners tended to treat cities mainly as a contrast to rural areas, without considering the wild disparities between and within cities. Dr. Schell wanted to show that urban heterogeneity in turn “is driven by systemic inequities,” he said, like “oppression, residential segregation, gentrification and displacement, unjust zoning laws, homelessness, so on, so on, so on.” Those issues don’t only impact people, he added: “How we operate influences the rest of the natural world as well as the social world.”

Over the past few years, a widening group of urban ecologists has been fanning out to study the overlap between environmental justice and biodiversity conservation, fields that had previously tended to keep to their own corners. Dr. Schell said that, in his lab, researchers “oftentimes do our own version of ‘six degrees of separation from Kevin Bacon’” to show how human actions ripple out to wildlife.

“Air pollution isn’t just restricted to people,” he said. “Other animals have lungs. Why would we not expect them to also be inhaling the same amount of pollutants that we generate?”

Madhusudan Katti, an ecologist at North Carolina State University who has worked at the intersection of biodiversity conservation and human well-being for most of his career, agreed. “Often the interests of other species and marginalized humans align,” he said. “It’s very much a colonial perspective to think about humans and wildlife as separate. We need to start thinking about humans and wildlife together in the landscape and mitigate things that will help both.”



An American robin in East End Park in Durham, N.C. As a discipline, urban ecology is only about a quarter-century old. Cornell Watson for The New York Times

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Dr. Katti and his Ph.D. student Jin Bai. While birding in formerly redlined neighborhoods, Mr. Bai has documented several surprising species, including a yellow-billed cuckoo, an American redstart and a magnolia warbler. Cornell Watson for The New York Times

Ecological fingerprints

This growth of urban ecology has been aided, in part, by Mapping Inequality, a sprawling, multiuniversity project from the University of Richmond's Digital Scholarship Lab. It created a digital archive of "redlining," the New Deal-era housing policy that enforced and perpetuated neighborhood segregation in the United States.

In 1933, the federal government created the Home Owners Loan Corporation, or HOLC, whose intent was to help Americans recover from the Depression. HOLC issued accessible home loans or refinanced mortgages to prevent default. To do this, it mapped more than 200 U.S. cities based on the perceived risk of lending money in various areas, grading neighborhoods from A to D and outlining them in corresponding colors, from green to red. Grades were based on the condition of the housing stock and on the race, ethnicity and income of residents. Neighborhoods with newer homes and more U.S.-born, white residents were usually graded A and outlined in green. Those with older homes and more immigrants and people of color were generally graded D and outlined in red. The redlined neighborhoods were deemed "hazardous" to invest in.

Ninety years later, nearly three-quarters of the redlined neighborhoods are still struggling financially, and nearly two-thirds are "majority minority," according to a study from 2018. The human legacy of redlining is vast: poverty, unemployment, health problems, decades of lost wealth and opportunities.

The policy also left ecological fingerprints on many cities, effects that urban ecologists are now eagerly bringing to light. "There are just more people who have hardcore wildlife training who are starting to look at cities as a place to do their work," said Eric M. Wood, an ornithologist and urban ecologist with California State University in Los Angeles and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. "If you'd told me as a Ph.D. student, 'Go study birds in L.A.,' I'd have said, 'No way. I'm going to Borneo.'"



Eric Wood, an ornithologist and urban ecologist at California State University, exploring the landscape of a former greenlined neighborhood in Pasadena. Tracy Nguyen for The New York Times



A feather from a bird in a formerly redlined neighborhood in Los Angeles. Tracy Nguyen for The New York Times

When Dr. Wood first moved to Los Angeles in 2015, he was keen to apply his field skills in a big city. “I’m a birder and a natural history person, and for 25 years I’d gone out and identified all the birds and plants and insects,” he said. He planned to do the same thing in Los Angeles. To measure biological diversity in a given landscape, an ecologist needs to capture the range of environmental variability there — the heterogeneity. In a natural setting, that might mean looking at different elevations, hills that face north versus south or areas with wetter or drier soil. In Los Angeles, Dr. Wood soon found, the environmental variability was also based on neighborhoods’ socioeconomic status.

He and others recently surveyed birds across the sprawling metropolis and analyzed the findings against redlining maps. They found that predominantly white neighborhoods, which were often the ones “greenlined” on the HOLC maps, hosted a greater abundance of birds that generally live in forests, such as warblers, wrens and bluebirds.

In contrast, areas that today are predominantly Hispanic and were previously redlined have fewer of those forest birds and more “synanthropic” species, those often found in dense urban areas. (These include pigeons and sparrows but also crows and ravens, mourning doves, house finches and even a type of hummingbird.) In an article last month in the journal *Ornithological Applications*, the researchers wrote that the distribution of birds in Los Angeles today reflected “patterns of income inequality, both past and present, that carry over to influence urban biodiversity.”

As examples, Dr. Wood compared Beverly Hills, where the average home price is more than \$3.6 million, according to Zillow, with Boyle Heights, a largely Hispanic neighborhood where the average home price is \$628,000; it shows up as a large red blob on the HOLC map and has far fewer trees and green spaces. “You get loads of these birds that require insects for their life history, and they go to a place like Beverly Hills because there are trees and flowers,” he said.

These differing landscapes clearly matter to the birds. But is it important to people if they share their neighborhoods with a common raven rather than a yellow-rumped warbler? “The point is that there are just so many differences” between communities like Beverly Hills and Boyle Heights, Dr. Wood said. The birds were “an indicator of these broader conditions that are effectively bad for people.”



Dr. Wood and his colleagues found that predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods that were previously redlined had fewer forest birds such as warblers, wrens and bluebirds. Tracy Nguyen for The New York Times



“You get loads of these birds that require insects for their life history, and they go to a place like Beverly Hills because there are trees and flowers,” Dr. Wood said. Tracy Nguyen for The New York Times

Another study, published in 2022, used publicly available genetic data from nearly 7,700 individual animals belonging to 39 species of vertebrates. It found that across 268 urban locations in the United States, the wildlife in neighborhoods with greater proportions of white residents had higher levels of genetic diversity and more evidence of connected populations of animals, which interbreed and exchange DNA. Genetic diversity is essential for wildlife populations to weather a catastrophe like a pandemic or a wildfire.

The finding revealed a blunt truth: Like a wall or a highway, systemic racism creates a barrier to wildlife movement. “The whole process changes your view of the world, honestly,” Chloé Schmidt, the paper’s lead author and a senior scientist at the German Center for Integrative Biodiversity Research, said of the study.

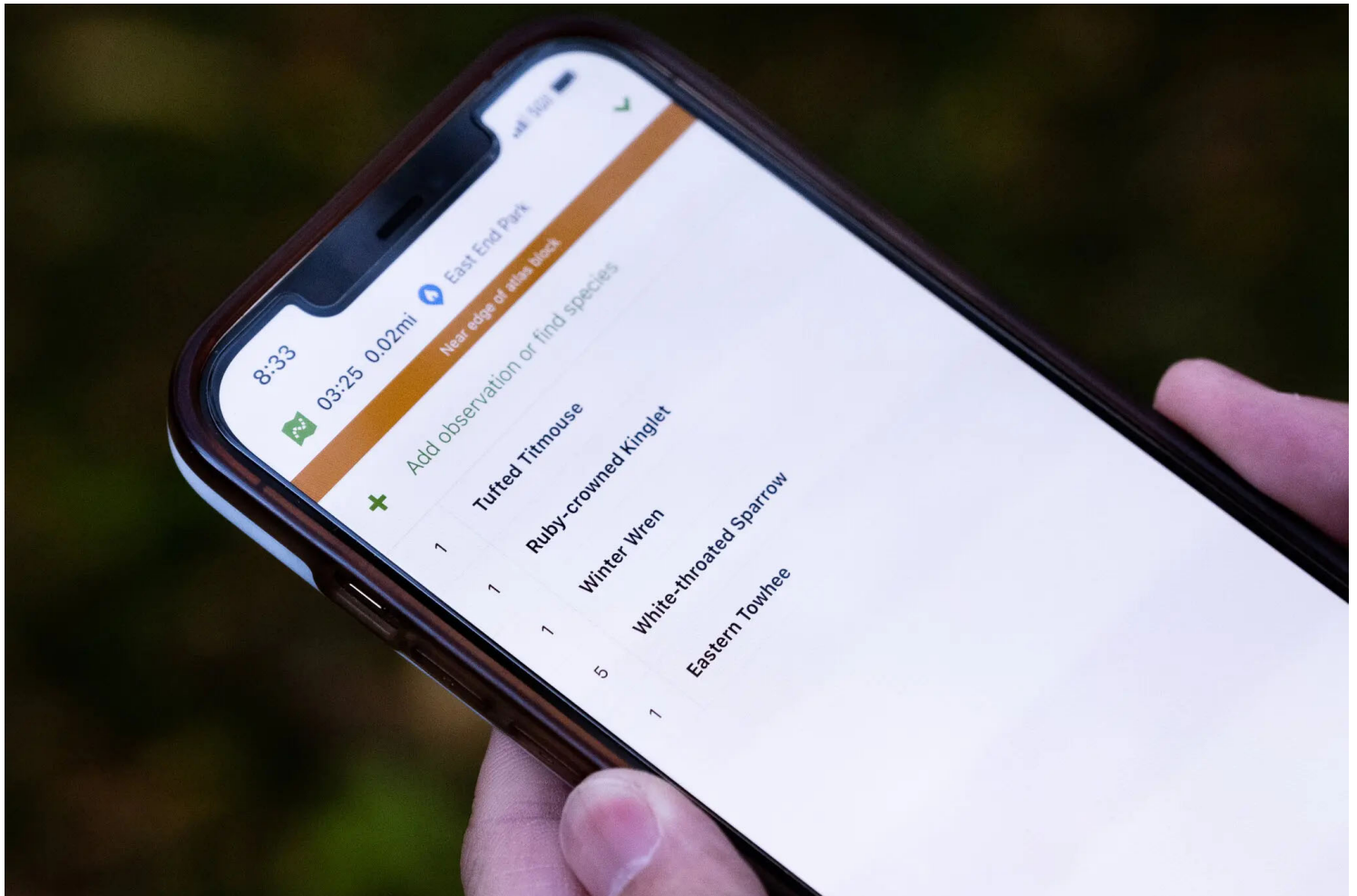
Dr. Schmidt, who is of mixed race, said that when she was growing up in New Jersey, her parents sometimes mentioned that the original deed to their house “said Black people couldn’t live there.” For her Ph.D. research, she had been assembling a database of genetic information about biodiversity, and when she read Dr. Schell’s paper, she realized that she had the data to test his ideas. “Redlining was so consistently practiced for so long in the U.S., we thought we could find a signal,” she said. Still, she was surprised by her own findings. “It was like, oh, god, how bad must this have been to still find a signal even when redlining was stopped in the ’60s,” she said.

From red line to redstart

Since the Industrial Revolution, wildlife across the planet has lost about 6 percent of its genetic diversity. The evolutionary effects of redlining are percolating through urban wildlife populations, but they are not yet set in stone. “There is still time to make positive change with environmental interventions that promote gene flow from more genetically diverse populations

across the urban racial mosaic,” Dr. Schmidt wrote in a 2022 paper.

One way to spur that change, Dr. Katti and others argue, is to recognize and remedy a related problem: inequity in wildlife observation. Not only does the composition of wildlife differ between neighborhoods, but so does the incidence of people looking for wildlife. Diego Ellis Soto, a Ph.D. student at Yale, found that across the country, historically redlined neighborhoods were the least studied areas for bird diversity. Mr. Ellis Soto, who is from Uruguay, said he was shocked when he arrived in New Haven and saw how segregated the city was. In research published last month in the journal Nature Human Behavior, he found that neighborhoods that had been graded D had 74 percent fewer bird observations than those graded A, a fact that could affect conservation agendas. “How can we protect what we don’t have information for?” Mr. Ellis Soto said.



An app called eBird, developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, enables birders to log their sightings and add them to a research database. Cornell Watson for The New York Times



Dr. Katti and Mr. Bai spotted a blue jay harassing an American kestrel in East End Park. Cornell Watson for The New York Times

Dr. Katti, who has organized local bird counts in three urban areas during his career, has found ways around this challenge. Because birders tend to be white, with higher incomes, data from both National Audubon Society counts and the popular citizen-science birding app eBird are “skewed spatially in representation of higher-income neighborhoods,” Dr. Katti said. While eBird does receive a lot of data from urban sites, “it’s very patchy and unequal sampling,” he said.

The methodology for Audubon’s annual Christmas Bird Count varies by location, but in most places coordinators divide a count area into blocks and let volunteers pick a location anywhere within that block. “It’s all up to the volunteer where they want to visit,” said Jin Bai, a Ph.D. student in Dr. Katti’s lab. “And most likely, they want to visit somewhere more natural like a preserve, or somewhere away from people.” If you’re going out for a morning of birding, you’re unlikely to go to the park by the train tracks with trucks rumbling by. Unless you’re Mr. Bai: He goes birding in many formerly redlined neighborhoods and has documented several surprising species, including a yellow-billed cuckoo, an American redstart and a magnolia warbler.

Data recorded on eBird is widely used in scientific research and conservation, affecting projects like habitat restoration or captive breeding and decisions about whether to allow infrastructure. So gaps in bird observations based on socioeconomic factors have huge implications.

“The point we’re trying to make,” Dr. Katti said, “is that to use it for any kind of planning decisions, the data set is not reliable.” His bird-count methodology divides an urban area into grids of one square kilometer and then randomly chooses one point in each grid — and that’s where the volunteers go.

The influx of urban ecologists fanning out across these understudied landscapes is likely to shed new light on the twinned fates of humans and their nonhuman neighbors. Practitioners of urban ecology say their discipline is brimming with the potential to make discoveries with real-world impact. Mr. Ellis Soto, for example, is working with students in underserved New Haven schools, making hip-hop and bachata music from bird songs as a way to connect youngsters to the wildlife living around them.

“Now people are saying, ‘Heck yeah, I want to work in the toughest neighborhoods,’” Dr. Wood said.

A version of this article appears in print on , Section D, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Redlining Warblers



Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 12, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission
 Submitted by: Claudia Kawczynska, Chairperson
 Subject: Council Referral – Request for City Community Survey for placing a Modest Increase in the Parks Tax on the November 2024 Ballot

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission recommends that the City Council include in upcoming community survey for possible 2024 ballot measures, a measure to increase the Parks Tax by 4ct/ft² or ~20%, and appropriate funding for the survey.

CITY MANAGER

City Manager concurs with the recommendation contained in this report.

The City Manager also requests that Council consider re-allocating the \$100,000 identified in the FY2024 Budget for the “Vision 2050 Complete Streets Parcel Tax Community Engagement and Program Plan” to a “community survey” for this and any other potential ballot measures.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City’s Parks system is facing three major challenges:

- I. **Unfunded Major Maintenance and Capital Liabilities**
 With all Measure T1 bond funds spent or allocated, the \$1M of the Parks Tax reserved for annual major maintenance/capital funding is insufficient to address the \$60 million in unfunded park capital needs. While there are federal and state grant opportunities, providing leverage of city taxpayer dollars from 1/1 to 5/1, the PRW Department does not have the matching funds required for many grants.

- II. **Declining Urban Forest**
 Due to increased storm damage, old age, and lack of funding there are 10,000 empty tree spaces in City parks and the public right-of-way. In Berkeley, tree planting relies mainly on grant funding and volunteerism, resulting in little progress in filling empty tree spaces. While the existing urban forest coverage is adequate in the hill area, where it ranges from 20% - 50%,

it is inadequate in the flatlands, where it is 10% or less. A healthy urban forest can help address the impacts of Climate Change, by cooling urban spaces and mitigating the Heat Island Effect. The existing urban forest consists primarily of non-native trees, which do not support insect populations and the bird species that feed on them. By prioritizing native species and also using funds to increase the number of native-plant habitat gardens, the urban forest and park spaces can also help address Biodiversity Declines.

III. Unequal Funding Across Parks

The City has 53 parks with a total of 250 acres. The 150 acres east of I-80 are maintained by the Parks Tax. West of I-80, the 100 acres of waterfront parks (Cesar Chavez, Shorebird and Horseshoe) are maintained by the much smaller Marina Fund, which has no reserves and has a structural deficit, causing the infrastructure in these parks to deteriorate.

At the City Council's March 20, 2023 Worksession, Staff suggested that while the current Parks Tax revenue cannot adequately fund maintenance costs, a voter-approved tax measure to increase the Parks Tax could unburden the Marina Fund and help close its structural deficit.

Consolidating ALL City Parks funding into the Parks Tax would ensure adequate funding for the three Waterfront Parks that comprise 40% of the City's total park acreage.

IV. Solution

Addressing these problems will require additional funding, which could be provided by a modest increase in the Parks Tax that is comparable to the 17% increase approved by the voters in 2014. The estimated \$3.5M in annual revenue for this proposed new increase in November 2024 would be used to:

1. Double major maintenance/capital project funding
2. Increase grant matching funds to leverage city taxpayer dollars
3. Create a dedicated Urban Forest Unit to build a healthy urban forest of native trees.
4. Adequately fund the major/minor maintenance of the three waterfront parks.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At a regular meeting on November 8, 2023, the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission approved a motion to communicate a recommendation to Council to include an increase in the Parks Tax by 4cts/SF or ~20% in a community survey for possible November 2024 ballot measures. The estimated \$3.5M annually, would be split equally between: major maintenance/capital projects, Urban Forest restoration, and consolidation of three Waterfront Parks into City Park system.

M/S/C (Avellar/Kawczynska/U). Ayes: Abshez; Avellar; Cox; Diehm; Kawczynska; Lee; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Noes: None; Absent: Hurtado; Leave of Absence: None.

Council Referral from PRW Commission – Request for City Polling for placing a Modest Increase in the Parks Tax on the November 2024 Ballot

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 12, 2023

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

A modest increase in the Parks Tax can help the City maintain a healthy urban forest and City parks to better address the impacts of Climate Change, by cooling urban spaces and mitigating the Heat Island Effect.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

See body of the report.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CONTACT PERSON

Roger Miller, Secretary, Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission, 510-981-6704
Claudia Kawczynska, Chairperson, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission