



## PARKS, RECREATION, AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION

### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, July 12, 2023, 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 Chochoyeno (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 June 21, 2023 (Chair).\*
6. **Public Comment.**
7. **Chair's Report.**
8. **Director's Report** (Ferris): PRW Divisions: Recreation; Parks; Waterfront; Capital; Budget.
9. **Discussion: Update on \$5.5 million loan for D&E Dock Project** (Ferris).\*\*
10. **Discussion: Update on Marina Fund fiscal gap FY2024** (Ferris).\*\*
11. **Discussion/Action: Waterfront Specific Plan subcommittee report** (Abshez/ Diehm/ Kawczynska).\*
12. **Discussion/Action: PRW Commission Workplan 2023 (DRAFT) and approval of new liaisons** (Kawczynska/Diehm).\*
13. **Information: Recent Council Reports.**\*
14. **Future Agenda Items:** Priorities for parks capital projects FY2023-24; PRW Commission Workplan 2023; Parks Development Fee; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Dogs in Parks; Berth Fee Waivers for community service organizations.
15. **Communications.** Corporate Landscaping, NY Times (Kawczynska); Letters re: Cesar Chavez Park OLA (multiple ltrs).
16. **Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, September 13, 2023 (in-person).
17. **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](http://www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions); the Berkeley Main Library and the Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street –3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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**

<b>Mayor-</b> Gordon Wozniak	<b>District 3 -</b> Gianna Ranuzzi	<b>District 6 -</b> Anna Avellar
<b>District 1 -</b> Reichi Lee	<b>District 4 -</b> Erin Diehm	<b>District 7 -</b>
<b>District 2 -</b> Claudia Kawczynska	<b>District 5 -</b> Brennan Cox	<b>District 8 -</b> 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  
 Liaison - Commission on Aging – Anna Avellar

## 2023 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 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday per month)	Time	Notes
<b>2023</b>			
<b>January</b>	Wednesday, January 11	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg (Zoom)
<b>February</b>	Wednesday, February 8	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg (Zoom)
<b>March</b>	Wednesday, March 8	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg– Albrier Ctr
<b>April</b>	Wednesday, April 12	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Live Oak Ctr
<b>May</b>	Wednesday, May 10	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>June</b>	Wednesday, June 21	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>July</b>	Wednesday, July 12	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>August</b>	No meeting		
<b>September</b>	Wednesday, September 13	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>October</b>	Wednesday, October 11	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>November</b>	Wednesday, November 8	7:00 p.m.	Regular Mtg – Albrier Ctr
<b>December</b>	No Meeting		
<b>2024</b>			
<b>January</b>	<i>Wednesday, January 10</i>	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Regular Mtg</i>

**PARKS AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, June 21, 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).
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary). Present: Abshez; Avallar; Cox; Diehm; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Absent: Lee.
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** [and move Item 13 before Item 12] (Chair). (M/S/C: Wozniak/Avallar/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avallar; Cox; Diehm; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Absent: Lee.
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for May 10, 2023 (and correct label on Item 17 to show council reports for June 6, instead of June 23. (Chair).\* (M/S/C: Ranuzzi/Wozniak/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avallar; Cox; Diehm; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Absent: Lee.
6. **Public Comment.** a) Alisa Carter, George Florence Park; b) Rebecca Grove, Waterside Workshops; c) Tom Caronna, Off Leash Dog Park; d) Susan Schwartz, Toilet & Sanitation; e) Gordon Stout, Parking;
7. **Chair's Report.** The Update on the Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) from staff to Council has been moved from July 19 to late September/October (tbd) (Kawczynska); Outdoors For All Initiative from Governor Newsom (Kawczynska).
8. **Director's Report** (Miller): PRW Divisions: Recreation; Parks; Waterfront; Capital; Budget. Update was provided.
9. **Discussion: Update on DBAW loan for D&E Dock Project** (Miller).\*\* Update was provided. Public Comment: Jim McGrath.
10. **Discussion: Update on Marina Fund fiscal gap FY2024** (Miller).\*\* Update was provided.
11. **Discussion: Update on Aquatic Park Capital Projects** (Miller)). See link: <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/capital-projects/aquatic-park-capital-improvement-projects> Update was provided.
12. **Discussion: Waterfront Specific Plan subcommittee report** (Abshez/ Cox/ Diehm/ Kawczynska).\* Discussion was held. Public Comment: a) Jim McGrath; Martin Nicolaus.
13. **Discussion: Parking at the Berkeley Waterfront** (Kawczynska).\* Discussion was held. Public Comment: Jim McGrath; Carla Woodworth. It was M/S/C to dedicate the PRW



Commission meeting to the memory of Alex Goldfarb (Ranuzzi/Diehm/U): Ayes: Abshez; Avallar; Cox; Diehm; Kawczynska; Ranuzzi; Wozniak; Absent: Lee.

- 14. Discussion: Update on Pier and Water Transportation Ferry Project** (Miller). Update was provided.
- 15. Discussion: Update on Civic Center Vision Plan Project** (Diehm). Update was provided.
- 16. Discussion/Action: PRW Commission Workplan 2023 (DRAFT) and approval of new liaisons** (Kawczynska/Diehm).\* Item was held over.
- 17. Information: Recent Council Reports.**\*
- 18. Future Agenda Items:** Priorities for parks capital projects FY2023-24; PRW Commission Workplan 2023; Parks Development Fee; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Dogs in Parks; Berth Fee Waivers for community service organizations.
- 19. Communications.** McGrath parking letter, 60-08-23; Skate Park Survey of Parks, 05-10-2023; G. Stout Comments on Berkeley Marina, 05-03-2023.
- 20. Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 (in-person).
- 21. Adjournment:** 9:30pm.

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

\*\* document will be provided at the meeting.

- Commissioners in attendance: 7 of 8 appointed.
- Public in attendance: 8
- Public speakers: 10

**\*Note:** For any handouts distributed at the meeting, please see the Draft Minutes for June 12, 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>

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION  
MEMO & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL  
REGARDING  
BERKELEY WATERFRONT SPECIFIC PLAN**

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DRAFT

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Based on its participation in the workshops and focus groups conducted by Staff regarding the proposed Waterfront Area Specific Plan, and the public hearings it has conducted, the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission submits the following recommendations to the City Council.

**I. The Specific Plan Should be Organized Around a Long-Term Vision for the Berkeley Waterfront Area—Not a Market Study**

The Waterfront Area Specific Plan must be more than a regulatory document with design criteria. It must reflect a long-term vision for the Berkeley Waterfront Area. The Berkeley Waterfront Area is a municipal treasure and regional asset reflecting years of public investment, community initiative, creativity and activism. The contributions and interests of existing Waterfront Area organizations and users to the vitality and existing experience of the Waterfront Area should be celebrated and supported. The Waterfront also lies within a global biodiversity hotspot and various areas of the Waterfront have significant ecological value that should be protected and enhanced. The Waterfront Area lies adjacent to a half a million East Bay Residents whose access to the Bay is blocked by I-80 and at most points is limited to a narrow strip between the shoreline highway and the Bay. The Waterfront is one of the few areas of Berkeley that extends deep into the Bay that provides a myriad of water and Bayfront experiences on an equitable basis.

The Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission is concerned that the Specific Plan process has become confused and the object of public concern because the role of adding commercial/retail uses to the Waterfront Area has not been properly communicated. The Market Study prepared by Keyser Marston and its conclusion that the Waterfront Area could foreseeably support up to 200 new hotel rooms and 12,000 square feet of cafes has been misunderstood as a rationale or vision for the Specific Plan, while it should not be. Rather, the Keyser Marston report should be understood for just what it is—a market study of the foreseeable demand for only two types of uses that might be added to the Waterfront Area and the revenue they might produce; not more than that. Specific Planning should not revolve around the Keyser Marston study.

Notwithstanding its strengths, the Waterfront Area lacks a comprehensive vision, supported by a plan that would enable its recreational, environmental, tourism, and economic development potential for the Berkeley community to be more fully realized. The Waterfront Area is presently comprised of loosely organized stand-alone 'nodes' of activity (Doubletree Hotel; Marina offices; Marine Center/Boat Launch; Cesar Chavez Park; Cal Sailing Club/Cal Adventures; Shorebird Park/Nature Center; Abandoned Pier; Seawall Drive Parking Strip). Some of these nodes of activity don't integrate with one another as they might, and the connectivity and synergy between them should be improved.

The Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission believes that a well-crafted Specific Plan can expand the appeal of the Berkeley Waterfront Area beyond its current user groups, to attract new visitors towards becoming a resource with the broad appeal to the entire community

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comparable to public recreation areas like Presidio/Tunnel Tops/Crissy Field by focusing on the following objectives:

- Protect open space and enhance habitat and biological resources;
- Enhance and revitalize the Waterfront Area’s current nodes of activity;
- Discover and reveal the synergies between the nodes of activity;
- Link the nodes of activity together (through bike, pedestrian, water taxi, shuttle connections, or new uses), and by introducing an array of complementary new uses, services and activities that will make the Waterfront Area not only a destination for discrete stand-alone activities, but also a place where new and diverse users will be attracted, as well as a place where residents, families and visitors will want to spend the entire day (or lodge) exploring and enjoying its multiple dimensions.

A successful Specific Plan should build upon, protect and enhance the best aspects of the existing Waterfront Area experience, acknowledge and correct its weaknesses, and add responsibly planned uses and activities that will invite new and diverse users. This approach will attract and invite the additional public and private investment that is necessary to maintain and enhance the Waterfront Area’s utility, attractiveness and environmental value for the entire Berkeley community, the residents of the East Bay, and visitors to the area.

Activities and festivals that build upon those strengths will promote broader awareness and appreciation of Waterfront Area as a “place.” For example, the Berkeley Kite Festival is recognized as one of the greatest kite festivals in the United States. It ought to be supported by the City of Berkeley. The once popular annual Berkeley fishing derby should be restarted. An annual festival that highlights a thriving ecosystem (e.g. a springtime wildflower superbloom festival) might be created in Cesar Chavez Park. Summertime weekend afternoon lawn concerts should be produced in Shorebird Park. Community businesses and brands should be featured throughout the Waterfront Area to reinforce the Waterfront Area’s Berkeley identity and to promote Berkeley as a destination and as a wonderful place to live, work and play.

**II. The Marina Fund should not be Burdened by non-Marina Expenses**

The Commission is concerned that the Marina Fund concept is unsustainable as it presently exists. It has insufficient operating revenues to meet its operational expenses and inadequate capital funds for capital projects. Revenue from new uses enabled by the Specific Plan will take significant time to arrive and, in any event, will not be sufficient to address even the current fiscal of the Marina needs. Moreover, a significant amount of the Marina Fund is being diverted to non-Marina purposes. According to the recent analysis by the Division of Boating and Waterways, boating related activities provide 67% of the revenue for the Marina Fund, but only 45% of the Marina Fund is expended for Marina-specific purposes. The remainder of the Marina Fund is expended for non-Marina purposes, including street/parking lot/path maintenance, trash collection, the maintenance of Cesar Chavez Park, landscaping throughout the Waterfront, recreational programs, and charges by other departments for special events expenses.

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The Marina Fund should not be burdened by non-Marina expenses. Though it is treated differently, the Waterfront Area is in effect another business district of the City of Berkeley. It includes 100 acres of parks, miles of public streets & sidewalks and 20 acres of parking lots that are basic public infrastructure and are not Marina-related. In other business districts the costs of maintaining such basic public infrastructure are assigned to Parks Department, Public Works Department and the General Fund budgets.

Non-Marina-related costs should be reassigned to Parks Department, Public Works Department and the General Fund budgets. A life-cycle Asset Management Program including a capital reserve for the Marina assets should be created. Net revenue from Marina commercial uses, slip rentals, and Marina hotel operations (including Transient Occupancy and Sales Taxes) should be dedicated to the Marina Fund and the Asset Management Program.

**III. The Specific Plan should be Organized Around the Following Planning Principles**

A. The Specific Plan Should Be Flexible Administrative Simple to Implement: The Specific Plan should be designed to be flexible and adaptable to community interests and opportunities that emerge or change over time without having to be frequently reopened. Planning and siting guidelines and design standards should ensure the preservation of the Waterfront Area’s scenic and ecological values, but should be sufficiently flexible to attract and enable the consideration of creative proposals that would be evaluated during future site-specific project review. The Specific Plan should be administratively easy to navigate and implement.

B. The Specific Plan Should Embody Ecologically Sensitive Planning: Areas of particular ecological value throughout the Waterfront Area should be identified, protected and enhanced. New development should be consistent with the highest design and environmental standards and should complement and actively protect the nearby natural environment. Observation and education stations should be planned at appropriate locations. More biodiverse green spaces are a public health benefit, and deliver greater benefits for children’s cognitive development. Increasing the biodiversity and ecological value of the Waterfront Area (including Cesar Chavez Park) is particularly important because North America bird populations have declined 29% since the 1970s, and two-thirds of the remaining birds are at risk of extinction. Several threatened avian species are documented to seasonally frequent the Waterfront Area. There has also been a 33% decline of butterflies and moth populations since 1999, with an ongoing decline of 2% per year, and global declines of insects up to 75% or more. Birding is also a multi-billion dollar industry that can attract new visitors.

C. The Specific Plan Should Attract More and Diverse Users to the Waterfront Area: A broader variety of recreational activities, visitor-serving and hospitality uses that complement the waterfront setting and its natural resources should be encouraged and accommodated. As discussed below, such activities include, but are not limited to, food service and lodging. Access to the water and shoreline should be expanded for members of the general public without boating skills. A family-friendly bike rental facility should be centrally-located to encourage bicycling at the Waterfront Area and can



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function as an East Bay focal point of the nearby Bay Trail. A kayak rental and launch facility should also be provided

D. The Specific Plan Should Encourage, State-of-the-Art, Sustainable and Biophilic Design throughout the Waterfront Area: The Specific Plan should encourage creative and state-of-the-art design ideas, including community-based contributions. Thoughtful design can be a problem solver as well as an attraction. Biophilic design principles in building and landscape design should nurture the relationship between people and nature. The implications of climate change and sea level rise should be considered in designing and implementing the Specific Plan. Opportunities to make the Berkeley Waterfront Area carbon-neutral through alternative energy sources (solar and wind) power should be pursued.

E. The Specific Plan Should Prioritize Key Infrastructure Investments: The Specific Plan should recognize key infrastructure fiscal investments that must be prioritized. The Marina Harbor entrances and South Sailing Basin must be periodically dredged to be functional. The closed, seismically unsafe, pier must be replaced with a new pier. The roads, sidewalks, bike paths, and parking lots must be paved or suitably surfaced to be functional.

F. Connectivity and Circulation within the Waterfront Area Should Be Improved: To link the Waterfront Area's nodes of activity together and encourage longer visits, all areas of the Waterfront Area should be connected with easy-to-navigate pedestrian, ADA and bicycle pathways, including a continuous shoreline trail with connection to Aquatic Park. Pathways should be activated with amenities and appropriate uses to link nodes of activity and encourage non-automotive movement around the Waterfront Area. The dirt pathway along Marina Boulevard should be improved and made ADA accessible. BCDC's planting guide should inform landscaping and access decisions along the trail corridor. A central bicycle hub and rental facility should be developed with connection to the East Bay Shoreline regional bike trail. Bike share and e-scooters pick-up/drop-off locations should also be established near activity centers. A circulating shuttle service should be explored. A pedestrian and bicycle ferry or water taxi across the 100-yard wide Marina Harbor Channel could link the Pier to Cesar Chavez Park and create a popular public attraction in the process. The amount of revetment-fronting parking along Seawall Drive should be reduced (while maintaining accessible ADA parking) and replaced with a landscaped pedestrian promenade with appropriate visitor-serving uses located close to the Pier.

G. The Specific Plan Should Recognize the Vision of Open Space and its Benefits: As Berkeley continues to densify open spaces like those at the Waterfront become even more essential. They give the public places to unplug, slow down, and relax, and should be a guiding principal for much of the planning process.

**IV. A Comprehensive Master Plan and Landscape Plan for Cesar Chavez Park should be included in the Specific Plan**

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A. Cesar Chavez Park should be one of the Anchors of the Specific Plan: At approximately 90 acres, Cesar Chavez Park is the City's largest park and is also the most utilized public attraction within the Waterfront Area. It offers many features, including trails, a native plant area, solar calendar, an Off-Leash Dog Area (OLA), a protected area for endangered Burrowing Owls, a Nature Area, lawns for kite flying, picnic tables, benches, and more. Unlike the Waterfront Area's private and semi-public facilities, the enjoyment of Cesar Chavez Park does not require membership in an organization, special equipment or training. Accordingly, it should not be left out of the Specific Plan. Rather, it should be treated as a centerpiece of the Specific Plan; and one that can attract complementary investment and nearby synergistic uses. To this end, Cesar Chavez Park requires and deserves public investment. Accordingly, the Specific Plan should include a comprehensive Master Plan for the Park, including a Landscape Plan that will increase the Park's biodiversity, scenic attraction, and the number of sheltered areas. Access to nature is a social-equity issue, and increasing access to, the attractiveness of, and use of Cesar Chavez Park by more and diverse users will promote social-equity. A list of permitted and prohibited activities and programs should be included in the Master Plan.

B. The Off-Leash Area (OLA) should be Maintained and Improved: The 17-acre Off-Leash Area of Cesar Chavez Park is an important City-wide amenity, and a core use of Cesar Chavez Park. Its boundaries should be appropriately demarcated to protect sensitive ecological areas and marked to deter off-leash activity in park areas not intended for that purpose. Bulletin board improvements, including maps depicting the boundaries of the OLA should be added. A mowing plan and schedule should be adopted for the OLA, and a viable and sustainable foxtail management program and reseeding plan should be implemented. Consideration should be given to dedicating the OLA to the memory of Cesar Chavez's dogs, Boycott and Huelga (Strike), with a public artwork memorial. Seating amenities, including boulders, straw bales, and appropriately located seating walls and artwork should be located at hilltops with panoramic view opportunities. The use of wood chips should be minimized in the OLA, as it makes many areas unusable for dogs and people and covers native burrowing bee habitats. Other plantings, such as trees and shrubs should be considered for this area.

C. The Biodiversity of Cesar Chavez Park should be Increased: Conservation and access to nature are also core uses of Cesar Chavez Park. The Landscape Plan for the Park should increase its biodiversity to improve its ecological value, scenic diversity, and attractiveness. The Waterfront Area is biologically rich, with more than 946 unique species documented to date, including 215 species of birds and 151 species of insects. The Waterfront Area is also ecologically connected with nearby Aquatic Park, McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, the Albany Bulb and beyond, and landscape and aquatic connectivity to these adjacent areas should be a key design principle of the Park Master Plan and Landscape Plan.

The Landscape Plan for Cesar Chavez Park should create unstructured natural spaces filled with native vegetation that reflect California's 30x30 and Biodiversity Initiative guidelines and goals. These initiatives highlight the essential role of locally native plants and tree species to "enrich our lives and sustain our environment by supporting wildlife,

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clean air and water, soil retention, and carbon storage, providing a helpful indicator of the health of the state’s biodiversity.” Observational stations, wayfaring and interpretative signage, such as bird and wildlife identification, as well as panoramic landmark signage should be provided along perimeter trail and elsewhere. Working with the Shorebird Nature Center (and utilizing citizen science platforms like iNaturalist and eBird), identify a list of insect, bird, and amphibian—abundant and declining/disappeared—species to support through the Landscape Plan component of the Park’s Master Plan.

D. Great Design Should be a Key Feature of Cesar Chavez Park: Cesar Chavez Park’s current picnicking areas are not inviting. More and better picnicking and seating amenities—reflecting the best aspects of contemporary park design—should be provided in appropriate locations; integrated with landscaping and topography to provide shade and shelter from windy conditions. As part of the Master Plan, a superior solution should be found to the concrete drainage swales that crisscross the Park. ADA access to the Park should be improved and new ADA trails should be added. The Park should be enlivened with public art. The land/water edge of the Park should be softened in areas where it is appropriate, and opportunities to engage the water should be provided.

E. Cesar Chavez Park Should be Enhanced with Additional Public Uses and Amenities: As Berkeley’s largest public park at approximately 90 acres, Cesar Chavez Park is large enough to preserve existing areas and experiences, while accommodating new ones that increase the Park’s attractiveness and utility. In this regard, the Commission notes that the City’s initial plan for the Park envisioned that a variety of experiences could be accommodated in the Park and identified three potential ‘zones’ of use: a Natural Zone (including a wildlife sanctuary); a Transition Zone and a Recreation Zone.<sup>1</sup> These concepts should be reevaluated as part of the Master Plan for the Park. The Specific Plan should permit the consideration of well-planned festivals and events on a case-by-case basis by the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (for example, the Berkeley Kite Festival or an annual wildflower “Superbloom Festival”). The Master Plan for the Park should also facilitate uses and amenities (including temporary and pop-up uses and amenities) in, or proximate to, the Park that complement and support existing uses, and that invite broader use of the Park by a diverse public, including parents and children. For example:

- A public café
- A nature/art/science interpretive and education center akin to the ‘Field Station’ at the Tunnel Tops
- Public bike rental and support facilities
- A kayak rental facility and launch ramp
- An outdoor activity and adventure center for children and teens; perhaps including outdoor camping opportunities, and

<sup>1</sup> North Waterfront Park Land Use Plan, Environmental Impact Report, November 1978, pp. 7-9.

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- Areas for outdoor weddings and other celebrations.

Public safety groups, such as the ham radio operators, who provide such a valuable safety service to the City, should be permitted to use certain areas of the Park for their annual practice sessions as they used to do.

**V. The Defunct Pier and Seawall Drive should be Centerpieces of the Specific Plan**

A new or reconstructed Berkeley pier should be a Centerpiece of the Specific Plan. The now-closed and unsafe Berkeley Pier was a key feature of the Waterfront Area since its construction in 1926, and originally extended from University Avenue and Second Street. The pier, which is an important amenity for area fisherman, should be replaced or repaired. Surface parking fronting the Bay occupies almost the entirety of Seawall Drive south of the Pier (approximately 330 yards). The amount of revetment-fronting parking along Seawall Drive should be significantly reduced while maintaining accessible ADA parking (with displaced spaces located landward), and the majority of the area now devoted to surface parking should be transformed into a landscaped pedestrian promenade and bikeway, with appropriate visitor-serving and recreational uses located close to the Pier. A sandy beach accessible to children and swimmers should be enlarged and enhanced at Shorebird Park, and a dedicated windsurfing launch facility should be considered nearby.

**VI. Waterfront Area Development Should Support Realizing the Long-Term Vision Specific Plan**

The role of new commercial uses within the Waterfront Area should be to further the realization of the Specific Plan’s vision for the Waterfront Area as discussed in Section I, above. While additional uses may provide new net revenue to the Marina Fund, development for the sake of new net revenue should not be an objective of the Specific Plan or drive development within the Waterfront Area. The Keyser Marston report should be understood for just what it is— a market study of the foreseeable demand for only two types of uses that might be added to the Waterfront Area and the revenue they might produce; not more than that. Specific Planning should not revolve around the Keyser Marston study.

The overall quantity of commercial development should be appropriately limited, but a broad variety of well-planned visitor-serving uses that would complement and enhance the Waterfront Area experience should be permitted. The DoubleTree Hotel is comprised of 378 hotel rooms, 24 meeting rooms and 14,000 square feet of event space, with capacity for 850 guests. Other existing development (public, privately operated, marine servicing, and non-profit association) needs to be accurately quantified to establish a baseline so that a reasonable amount of new development, sufficient to support the Specific Plan vision, can be evaluated for CEQA purposes and authorized by the Specific Plan.<sup>2</sup>

Besides food service and lodging, these include outdoor-activity rental and sale (kite shop/bike rental/kayak); wellness facilities (yoga, pilates, gymnasium); nature, book and art

<sup>2</sup> The existing consultant reports do not accurately quantify existing uses and the square footage of buildings in the Waterfront Area, or present the information in a simple table format.

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studios/stores; museums; marine equipment and services; waterside cafes, beer gardens and entertainment; as well as other creative uses that would broaden and enhance public enjoyment of the Waterfront Area. Berkeley businesses, brands and arts should be encouraged to have a presence in the Waterfront Area so that they can play a central role in promoting the Waterfront Area's identity as an expression of the Berkeley community.

Use proposals, their siting and the structures that house them should be consistent with the Planning Principles set forth in Section II, above, and should complement the Specific Plan vision by:

- Protecting open space and enhancing habitat and biological resources;
- Enhancing and/or revitalizing the Waterfront Area's current nodes of activity;
- Creating synergies with current nodes of activity;
- Helping to link the nodes of activity together; and
- Attracting new and diverse users and helping to make the Waterfront Area a place where residents, families and visitors will want to spend the entire day (or lodge) exploring and enjoying its multiple dimensions.

Individual use proposals, their siting outside of park areas, and proposed design should be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Commission to evaluate how they would contribute to the enhancement of the Waterfront Area and its enjoyment by the public. Siting in areas that are subject to BCDC jurisdiction should not be excluded provided that the use is consistent with the existing Bay Plan. A limited amount of sensitively planned food service, educational retail, and recreational uses in Cesar Chavez Park and other park areas should be permissible subject to the review and approval of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission.

Planning and siting guidelines and design standards should ensure the preservation of the Waterfront Area's scenic and ecological values, but should be sufficiently flexible to attract and enable creative design proposals. The Specific Plan should establish appropriate height limit zones to guide future site-specific proposals. Until permanent commercial services are established, pop-up rentals and food-trucks should be authorized pursuant to Use Permit.

Existing leases should not be prematurely terminated. Marine services (boatyard, chandlery, fuel dock) should be optimized for more efficient use of land area and retained. Long term leases for areas that may be the subject of redevelopment should not be entered into or extended.

**VII. The Berkeley Marina Docks Should be Modernized to Respond to Market Demand and an Asset Management Plan Should be Created**

The Berkeley Marina has 15 publicly owned docks with more than 1000 slips. The Berkeley Marine Center leases A Dock, which contains 44 slips, from the City. Recreational



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vessels in California and Alameda have decreased by 20%. Berkeley Marina’s slips are generally smaller, and 48% of them are less than 30 ft. in length. The market trend is towards larger vessels. Accordingly, the Parks Recreation and Waterfront Commission recommends that as docks reach the end of their useful life, that the slips be reconfigured to address this market demand for boats greater than 35 ft. in length. As discussed earlier, an asset management plan, as well as a Marina Area 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan, should be created.

**VIII. TDM and Parking Management Strategies Should be Introduced & Waterfront Area Circulation should be Improved**

Regrettably, after the 90 acres of Cesar Chavez Park, surface parking lots are the biggest consumer of land area in the Waterfront Area. Consistent with the City’s climate and transportation demand management goals, parking as a land use should not predominate a significant percentage of the Waterfront Area, and over time the amount of parking provided at the Waterfront Area should be reduced. In the meantime, existing parking should be used more efficiently by implementing a shared parking strategy as recommended by Nelson/Nygaard. Though free parking in the closest and most convenient location is viewed as a ‘personal right’ by many, if not most, of the Waterfront Area’s current users, Nelson/Nygaard also argues that paid parking would better support the City’s equity and sustainability goals; that it better reflects the true public cost of parking in the Waterfront Area; and that it can create a revenue stream which can be used to fund multimodal investments and rebalance the local transportation network.

TDM strategies recommended in Nelson/Nygaard report should be pursued including: Free transfers with AC Transit bus service; secure and well-designed bicycle parking throughout the waterfront; a circulator shuttle connecting waterfront destinations and parking locations; shared mobility services such as car share, bike share, and e-scooters; and pick-up/drop-off locations in central locations near activity centers. Establishing a pedestrian and bicycle ferry or water taxi across the 100-yard wide Marina Harbor Channel would link the Pier to Cesar Chavez Park and create a popular public attraction in the process.

**IX. Recommended Specific Plan Procedures**

The Specific Plan (including the recommended Master Plan for Cesar Chavez Park) should become the primary land use regulatory document and ‘zoning’ for the Waterfront Area. To attract and guide its implementation, they should be transparent and easy to navigate. The layering of approvals by different administrative bodies should be avoided. Uses authorized by the Specific Plan outside of park areas should be subject to site-specific review and approval by the Planning Commission, with lease review by the City Council. New public recreation uses and amenities within park areas should be subject to review and approval by the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, with lease review by the City Council. Temporary activities, events and concerts in park areas should be subject to review and approval by the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission.

**Parks and Waterfront Commission 2023-2024 Work Plan**

**DRAFT**

**FUNCTION**

(BMC 3.26.040) The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission shall be an advisory board and shall review the following 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, and shall advise the City Council on these matters.

**LIAISONS**

- Civic Center Planning - Erin Diehm
- Berkeley Animal Care Service - Claudia Kawczynska

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- Fiscal Matters - understand challenges facing Waterfront and identify solutions
- Fiscal Matters - requesting funds from City - develop a Prioritized list of funds needed for PRW to be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee for regular review
- Fiscal Matters - bringing in funds for Parks - Parks Development Fee, Increased Parks Tax, Development Impact fees, Philanthropy
- Dogs in Parks
- Promoting Equity and Inclusivity in the Parks
- Promoting Nature into Our Parks (Aquatic Park, Birdability, Habitat Gardens, Biodiversity Initiative)
- Adding amenities in our parks targeted specifically to seniors

**WORK ITEMS**

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>LEAD</b>
WSP	Ongoing, subcommittee	Evaluate proposed development strategies while ensuring recreational availability to current and future stakeholders	WSP subcommittee established Mar '23
Liaisons	Ongoing		
T1 Phase 2 oversight	Ongoing		
Waterfront Fiscal	Established Dec '22 Non-operative		Subcommittee: Gordon Wozniak, Allan Abshez, Claudia Kawczynska



Dogs in Parks	Initiated Q1-23	Establishing a dogs in park subcommittee to review new opportunities for off leash recreation.	Subcommittee: Claudia Kawczynska, Anna Avellar,
Budgetary Priority List		Development of a priority list of projects for funding and to be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee for regular review	Gordon Wozniak, Erin Diehm, Allan Abshez
Promoting Nature in Our Parks		Explore opportunities to promote nature in our parks and accessibility (e.g. Birdability, Habitat Gardens, Aquatic Park)	Erin Diehm
Fundraising Opportunities		Bringing in funds for Parks - Parks Development Fee, Increased Parks Tax, Philanthropy	Gordon Wozniak, Claudia Kawczynska
Promoting Equity and Inclusivity in the Parks Including playgrounds		Meet with community based nonprofits, and playground design based on inclusive design such as promoted by Magic Bridge	Reichi Lee, Brennan Cox, Claudia Kawczynska
BUSD and Parks		Exploring opportunities to expand cooperative agreements for green space usage	Reichi Lee

**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:

**July 11, 2023** (regular)

**17.-Accepting grant funds from the Alameda County Transportation Commission for the Berkeley Pier Water Transportation / Ferry Project**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-07-11%20Item%2017%20Accepting%20grant%20funds%20from%20the%20Alameda.pdf>

**18.-Contract No. 32000188 Amendment: GSI Environmental Inc. for On-Call Environmental Consulting Services**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-07-11%20Item%2018%20Contract%20No.%2032000188%20Amendment.pdf>

**June 27, 2023** (regular)

**9.-FY 2024 Tax Rate: Fund the Maintenance of Parks, City Trees and Landscaping**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-27%20Item%2009%20Ordinance%207872.pdf>

**28.-Contract: R.X. Lodge, Inc. for the West Side Aquatic Park Tree Planting and Irrigation Project**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-27%20Item%2028%20Contract%20R.X.%20Lodge%2C%20Inc.%20for%20the%20West.pdf>

**29.-Grant Application: USDA Forest Service – Berkeley Urban Forestry Project**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-27%20Item%2029%20Grant%20Application%20USDA%20Forest%20Service.pdf>

**30.-Donation: Two Memorial Benches at Cesar Chavez Park in memory of Richard & Gloria Crocker**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-27%20Item%2030%20Donation%20Two%20Memorial%20Benches%20at%20Cesar.pdf>

**June 13, 2023** (regular)

**11.-FY 2024 Tax Rate: Fund the Maintenance of Parks, City Trees and Landscaping**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-13%20Item%2011%20FY%202024%20Tax%20Rate%20Fund%20the%20Maintenance.pdf>

**19.-Contract: Chemical Procurement Services, LLC for King and West Campus Swim Centers**

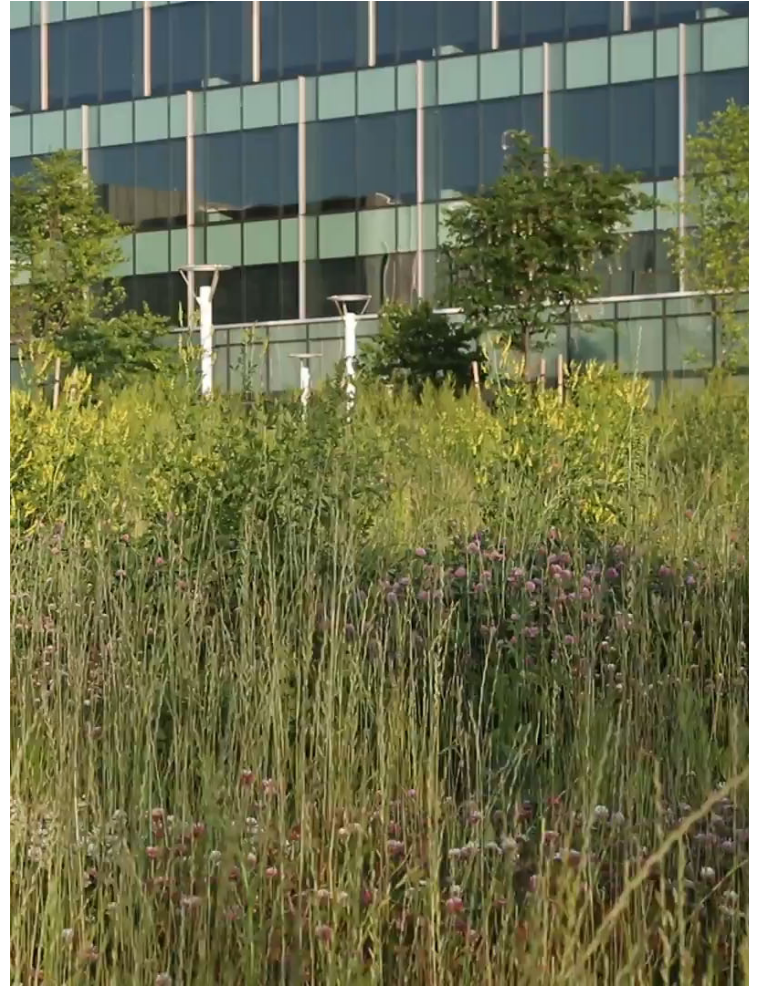
URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-13%20Item%2019%20Contract%20Chemical%20Procurement%20Services.pdf>

**25.-Provide Direction on Closing the Funding Gap to Complete Remaining Measure T1 Projects**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-13%20Item%2025%20Provide%20Direction%20on%20Closing.pdf>

**Revised material (Supp 2)**

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06-13%20Item%2025%20Measure%20T1%20Kesarwani%20Rev2.pdf>



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SQUARE FEET

## *Corporate Landscaping Lets Its Hair Down*

More companies are eschewing manicured grass in favor of native plants, a shift driven by the environmental costs of installing and maintaining lawns.

By Jane Margolies

Published July 4, 2023 Updated July 6, 2023

At its former headquarters in eastern Pennsylvania, Air Products had a neatly manicured lawn and boxwood hedges. But when the industrial gases company moved to nearby Allentown recently and erected a new office building, it tried something different.

Rather than plant grass that would need constant watering, mowing and fertilizing, it turned to native plants that pretty much took care of themselves. Today, shoulder-high grasses wave in the wind and attract wildlife.

“One plant had yellow finches all around it,” said Patrick J. Garay, vice president of strategic projects at Air Products.

Forget the fuss. Corporate landscapes are going natural these days.

The shift — mirroring what’s happening at public parks, on university campuses and in homeowners’ backyards — is being driven by a growing awareness of the environmental costs of installing and maintaining lawns, clipped hedges and tidy flower borders. New laws ban the use of water for “useless” grass in drought-prone areas, and company sustainability programs encompass the land the buildings sit on. Apps calculate the carbon footprint of landscapes in much the same way that buildings are monitored for greenhouse gas emissions.

“There’s a lot more science and ecological rigor behind planting design,” said Michael Grove, the chair of landscape architecture, civil engineering and ecology at Sasaki, a design firm that has been involved in developing two carbon-tracking apps.

The pushback against conventional landscaping might surprise those who assume that all green plants must be equally good for the planet.



But as manicured lawns give way to meadows and borders of annuals are replaced by wild and woolly native plants, a looser, some might say messier, aesthetic is taking hold. Call it the horticultural equivalent of bedhead.

The new wave of landscape design is reacting to the image of a corporate campus from the mid-20th century. Buildings often sit in velvety emerald carpets that contribute to the more than 40 million acres of lawn in America. Can the public get used to the new look?

“It requires a significant mind-set shift,” said José Almiñana, a principal at Andropogon, the landscape architecture firm that designed Air Products’ site.

Kentucky bluegrass, a common lawn grass, draws carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. But propagating the same grass species everywhere comes at the expense of native plants that are in tune with the local climate and provide food and habitat for endangered birds, bees and butterflies. And then there’s the environmental cost of keeping lawns lush — the endless watering, weed killing, mowing and blowing.



A meadow at the Air Products headquarters in Allentown, Pa. Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times





Rather than plant grass that would need constant watering, mowing and fertilizing, the company turned to native plants that pretty much take care of themselves. Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times

Landscape equipment emits nearly 27 million tons of pollutants a year, according to estimates. One gas-powered leaf blower used for an hour generates the same amount of emissions as a car driving 1,100 miles.

As the climate crisis has grown increasingly dire, many companies have turned to their landscapes to help them hit sustainability targets and vaunt their environmental bona fides.

“The building reaches a private audience, but the landscape is visible to the public,” said Barbara Deutsch, chief executive of Landscape Architecture Foundation, a nonprofit organization.

At Ford Motor’s headquarters in Dearborn, Mich., lawn is everywhere. But after the company released a campus master plan that proposed more “natural environments,” it decided to rethink the 20 acres of grass at an arboretum. The lawn under and around the trees sometimes had to be mowed “multiple times a week,” said Christopher Small, Ford’s design manager for global campus master planning and architecture.

Working with the landscape architecture firm OJB, Ford expanded the arboretum site and regraded it to include ponds to capture and filter storm water. The company planted prairie grasses and wildflowers and threaded walking paths through the foot-high meadow that now needs mowing only twice a year.

“Fifteen years ago when we proposed something like that, we would get a lot of strange looks,” James Burnett, president of OJB, said. “It’s a much easier sell now.”

In a 2021 survey of more than 500 members of the American Society of Landscape Architects, a professional organization, three-quarters said they had more clients requesting design solutions to address climate change than they did the previous year.

State and local regulations are also promoting change.

Storm water management requirements have spurred the creation of vegetated ditches known as bioswales to reduce runoff when it rains. A new Nevada law will prohibit using water from the Colorado River, which has been shrinking from decades of overuse and drought worsened by climate change, to irrigate “nonfunctional, or “useless,” grass. Property owners who replace nonnative grass, shrubs and trees with desert plants can get rebates on their water bills.



Los Angeles has enrolled 298 commercial, industrial and institutional customers in its own rebate program since 2015, with companies getting \$5 per square foot to swap out turf for California poppies and other drought-tolerant and native plants, said Terrence McCarthy, manager of the city's water resources policy. Companies that made the switch no longer have to run sprinklers all the time, reducing their water bills, he added.



A green roof at the Air Products headquarters. Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times





The campus attracts wildlife, including deer. Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times

The U.S. Green Building Council, which administers the LEED certification for sustainable buildings, has a comparable program, SITES, for landscapes that promote biodiversity, conserve resources and protect ecosystems. Of the 317 projects enrolled in the program, 11 percent are commercial, Danielle Pieranunzi, the program’s director, said. “It’s not just designing for aesthetics,” she added.

Hewlett-Packard received a SITES certification for its Boise, Idaho, campus after working with the landscape architecture firm Stack Rock Group to replace turf grass with a native seed mix that reduced water use and mowing — cutting landscaping costs nearly 50 percent and emissions 90 percent. One thing that increased: honey production for the campus beekeeping club, presumably because the pollinating insects had a buffet to feast on. HP then spent \$404,000 overhauling its campus in Corvallis, Ore., earning SITES certification for that property, too.

These new landscapes may not instantly be carefree, however. Until the natives spread, invasive plants may need to be weeded out. And establishing a meadow is not necessarily cheaper than putting in lawn and flower borders.

But the environmental gains can be significant. Meadows benefit pollinators and enrich soil, according to new research. Some landscapes are being designed to be “climate positive,” drawing from the atmosphere more carbon than what was emitted in their installation and maintenance.

Pamela Conrad, a landscape architect, developed a carbon-tracking app that provided guidance for ways site planners could sock away more carbon. So far, 787 projects have been put through their paces on the app, with last year’s projects reducing their carbon footprint 12 percent, Ms. Conrad said.

“If you add paving, your number score goes down and it will take 50 years to offset your carbon footprint,” she said. “If you add trees, it will only take 10 years.”

Even companies embracing ecological approaches still often want some lawn for throwing a Frisbee or working outdoors. But many are keeping lawns to a minimum, using native grasses or simply mowing less.

The reaction to the shaggier look appears to be mixed. In places where property owners observe “No Mow May” — leaving mowers idle until June — irate neighbors have come over with their own machines. One Maryland couple fought their homeowner association over their decision to grow sunflowers and phlox instead of grass. (Their battle ended up changing state law.)



“There’s a perception that if it looks a little wild, it looks like it’s not taken care of,” said Chris Guillard, a principal at the landscape architecture firm CMG.



Landscape architects say more clients are asking for design solutions to address climate change. Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times

At its new Allentown site, Air Products encountered “questions about what we had done,” Mr. Garay said, especially when the meadows had just been planted and “looked like a weed field.”

Air Products explained its new approach in a company newsletter and posted signs around its property. Mr. Garay spoke at a community meeting about how meadows could benefit the environment.

“Once people hear the why, you can see them nodding their heads,” he said. “People are beginning to understand that these little impacts add up.”

A version of this article appears in print on , Section B, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Native Plants Go Wild at the Office As Companies Shift Their Priorities

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Michael Mascarenhas <mascarenhas@berkeley.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 07, 2023 7:50 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing with respect to a proposal I have heard about to reduce and/or fence-in the Off-Leash Area (OLA) at Cesar Chavez Park. I am strongly opposed to this proposal.

I use the park almost everyday. I walk my dog in the mornings and frequently come to the park with my children to walk, ride bikes, picnic, and fly kites. The diversity of compatible uses available to our family in the parks open spaces makes this area a true treasure in the City of Berkeley.

I am a Professor in the Environmental Science, Policy and Management Department at UC Berkeley. I also Chair the Social Science Research Team for the San Francisco Estuary Blueprint, which includes the East Bay. And I can advise that research continues to affirm the ecological and social benefits of maintaining and expanding open access to urban parks. These are invaluable places for ecological diversity, climate resilience, and community building. Limiting access to these places goes against current environmental science and public health policy.

I am happy to provide more details and assistance on the parks future plans, if useful.

Sincerely,

Michael Mascarenhas  
[michael.j.mascarenhas@gmail.com](mailto:michael.j.mascarenhas@gmail.com)

856 Jones St.  
Berkeley, CA  
94710

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Melanie Moore <melaniemoorekubo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 9:24 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioners:

I'm writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA). As a daily user of the OLA, I urge you to leave the area as it is -- preserve the area for off-leash dog walking, and maintain the OLA at its current size.

I've been walking my dogs there for years, both mornings and afternoons, and on weekends. Even on a sunny, warm day, I have never once experienced a feeling of competition between park users walking their dogs in the OLA and park users in other areas flying kites or enjoying picnics. As the park is currently configured, there is plenty of space for off-leash dogs, and for those without canine companions to simultaneously enjoy the park. There is nothing that needs "fixing" about the size or configuration of the OLA, because it's not broken.

I take advantage of off-leash dog parks across the East Bay, and the Cesar Chavez Park OLA is by far my and my pups' favorite one because of the natural beauty and the people who walk there. The owners who walk in the OLA are respectful, responsible, mature, and care for the ecology of the park as much as they do the welfare of their pets. The community that has developed there is diverse in age and background, and provides sustaining human connection in these difficult times.

I urge you to preserve one of the Bay Area's true gems, and leave the OLA as it is.

Sincerely,  
Melanie Moore  
[melaniemoorekubo@gmail.com](mailto:melaniemoorekubo@gmail.com)

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Mud Hut <brokenbrokenrecord@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 7:58 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this with the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello-

Besides the inherent joy of dogs running and socializing freely, and the fact that at off leash areas like Cesar Chavez Park both the dogs and their owners, with very rare exception, behave responsibly, there is another reason why it's crucial to preserve open areas like this for dogs.

It's the least we can do.

We have domesticated these animals for our comfort and companionship, and for the most part in urban and suburban areas they spend their time indoors with little opportunity for real exercise and the free expression of their nature, often just waiting for our attention or engagement. It's the least we can do, once or twice a week, or once a day for the really lucky ones, to give them this opportunity to be free.

Thanks,

David Laskin  
Berkeley Resident  
Dog Owner

**Miller, Roger**

---

**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 4:01 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP; Save CC  
**Subject:** Fwd: Off leash dog park

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Tcaronna <tscaronna@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** Thu, Jul 6, 2023 at 3:04 PM  
**Subject:** Off leash dog park  
**To:** <savecc6@gmail.com>

I write to urge you to reject further changes, specifically additional fencing and/or reduction in size to the Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Dog Area in the Berkeley Waterfront.

It is one of my favorite places to walk with my dog, meet with friends and just plain chill. I use the off leash dog park at least 250 to 300 times per year.

Tom Caronna

Sent from my iPhone

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jed Hassell <jedhassell@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 3:37 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

Cesar Chavez Park has long been a symbol of unity and community in our city. However, recent discussions about limiting or even banning model airplane flying in the park have raised concerns among enthusiasts. Cesar Chavez Park serves as a hub for community engagement and recreational activities. Allowing model airplanes to be flown there adds vibrancy to the park, attracting enthusiasts of all ages. This shared passion for model aviation brings together people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of camaraderie and friendship. By preserving this activity, we ensure the park remains a place where families and individuals can gather, socialize, and engage in a unique hobby that promotes creativity and outdoor enjoyment. Model airplane flying offers more than just recreational benefits—it serves as an excellent tool for promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. By encouraging young people to explore the world of aerodynamics and aviation through model airplanes, we ignite their curiosity and inspire them to pursue careers in related fields. The park becomes an informal learning space where children and teenagers can grasp important scientific concepts through hands-on experience. The preservation of model airplane flying at Cesar Chavez Park will continue to inspire the next generation of engineers, pilots, and innovators. Cesar Chavez Park carries historical significance as a memorial to the influential labor and civil rights leader. By preserving the park as a space for model airplane flying, we not only honor his legacy but also maintain the spirit of inclusiveness and freedom he stood for. Just as Chavez fought for equal rights, the preservation of model airplane flying symbolizes the preservation of diverse recreational opportunities accessible to all members of the community. It represents a harmonious balance between honoring history and embracing progress, ensuring the park remains relevant and meaningful for future generations. Contrary to misconceptions, model airplanes can be flown in an environmentally responsible manner. Enthusiasts are committed to adhering to strict safety guidelines and respecting the park's natural environment. By maintaining a designated area for model airplane flying, potential conflicts with other park users can be minimized. Moreover, these hobbyists often organize clean-up initiatives and collaborate with local environmental organizations to ensure the preservation and protection of the park's ecosystem. By allowing model airplanes in Cesar Chavez Park, we can continue fostering a culture of environmental stewardship within the community.

Sincerely,  
Jed Hassell

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Diane Fagan <fagan52004@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 3:23 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

My name is Diane Fagan and I have been going to Cesar Chavez and using the off leash area to walk my dogs over the last 22 years. It is a wonderful opportunity for both people to community build and for dogs to exercise and socialize. I have heard that there are plans to decrease access for this very worthwhile community service. Please do not decrease the size of the area nor take away access for dogs to be able to run and the people to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Diane Fagan

Sent from my iPhone



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Tcaronna <tscaronna@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 3:03 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** CC off leash dog park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I write to urge you to reject further changes, specifically additional fencing and/or reduction in size to the Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Dog Area in the Berkeley Waterfront.

It is one of my favorite places to walk with my dog, meet with friends and just plain chill. I use the off leash dog park at least 250 to 300 times per year.

Sent from my iPhone

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Erica Rippe <erica.rippe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 2:58 PM  
**To:** BMASP; Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Chavez Park Public Comments - Share with PRW Commission

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Commissioners,

I urge you to reject changes to the off leash area, including fencing and/or reduction in size to the Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Dog Area (OLA) in the Berkeley Waterfront. The OLA achieves peak use as a casual, accessible gathering area for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, while providing a safe place for dog owners to walk, enjoy the scenery and get exercise.

As someone who visits the park multiple times per week in all seasons, I am pleased to see off-leash dogs co-exist with the many other groups who use the area - picnickers, kite-flyers, drone enthusiasts, and runners and walkers. The idea that "yelling dog owners" would disrupt the quiet enjoyment of the park is at odds with allowing drone use in the same area. Additionally, wind conditions often do not allow noise to carry in a disruptive way, as described in other unsubstantiated arguments. The bad behavior of a few dogs and owners is a painfully flawed way to demonstrate systematic "abuse" of the park that would warrant a reduction in the OLA size, limiting recreational opportunities for park users.

Many of us dog owners care for the park by watering trees, picking up trash and dog poop as part of a biannual "pick up poop" party. Many of us are environmentalists who care greatly for the health of the park ecosystem. We are proposing invasive plant management and bathroom improvements to avoid porto-potty tipovers like what has happened in the past.

Additional limitations on the OLA would diminish the park's character and ruin park aesthetics, while limiting recreational opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration of the community interests at stake.

Erica

--

Erica Rippe  
415-235-1331  
[erica.rippe@gmail.com](mailto:erica.rippe@gmail.com)

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Mary Barnsdale <marybarnsdale@att.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 2:21 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commissioners:

I've been a Cesar Chavez Park (CCP) user for more than 20 years. I applaud you for what you do to meet the needs of people (including people with dogs), wildlife, and the environment. The happy, healthy mix of uses at this urban park is a credit to Berkeley.

Thank you also for resisting pressure from special interest groups inappropriately trying to reduce recreation at CCP. Martin Nicolaus of Chavez Park Conservancy asserted to you in his June 14, 2023, letter that since (according to him) only 30 percent of park users use the off-leash area (OLA), it should be made smaller. The thinking and the math are puzzling.

First, 30 percent of park users in any park system is a very significant number. Second, the OLA is less than 20 percent of the park. There isn't a rational case for cramming one of the leading park user groups into an even smaller area.

As you know, the OLA offers a benefit that is unique among Berkeley's public parks: Recreational dog walkers *can hike with their dogs*. (In a traditional dog park, people typically watch their dogs run around while they sit still.) The mental and physical health benefits for people are enormous.

Thank you again for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Mary Barnsdale

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** antonio guzman <antonio.guzman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 2:07 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC; casey schumacher  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing because I feel that daily access to walk on the land by the Bay is one of the most important things in my life. I take my dog for outings daily and have done this since getting him 3 years ago.

I've always felt nourished and lifted up by the enormous spaces, the beauty of the sky, rain shine or fog, the plants, the birds. And *especially* in recent years it has been a source of connection, with open space, allowing for serendipitous encounters with other people walking there and neighbors I haven't seen.

In regards to the proposed changes to the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA). If anything was to change I would like it to be made bigger, I see many responsible dog owners using this space and it has been a godsend for us all.

The OLA has been amazing, for both my dog and my health, both mentally and physically. I think the proposed changes to shrink the park would be a great disservice to all the responsible dog owners who currently use and rely on this area. I've met and made so many great human and canine friends. Everyone has been super nice and amazing. I am surprised at how many dog related activities are held at this park. I would have never imagined I would attend a dog poop pick up party. However, both my dog and I have attended. I constantly strive to leave the park a better place than before we enter.

So I'm writing as someone who cherishes the Off-Leash area to ask that it be left as it is. I find it crucial to my emotional health, and so do my neighbors.

Thank you,  
Antonio

--

mobile US: 917.673.0733

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** cschmidt@lawbridges.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 11:38 AM  
**To:** BMASP; Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to you in support of keeping the current set-up of the off-leash area at the Berkeley Marina. I have used the area to walk my dog almost every morning for over 15 years. The park's off-leash area offers a unique environment for walking, conversations, and enjoying the company of pets. Its current size also allows for walks and enjoyment of the waterfront for those who do not seek the company of others or their dogs. Proponents of resizing the area purport that only a minority of park visitors use the area to walk dogs so that it should be modified, implying that the off-leash designation makes it not enjoyable for those who do not seek to walk their dog. Most dog owners that I have seen at the park are committed to ensuring that the off-leash area and surrounding areas are clean and safe. The current size and set-up of the off-leash area integrates it into the park. Separating and fencing it further would signal a use for dog-walking only and make the area unwelcoming to others. Modifications to the area over the years have already protected ecologically sensitive areas and wildlife. The current set up offers a variety of ways for locals to enjoy the park and protect its habitat. I, therefore, would like to see the current set-up preserved and open to all rather than redefining the overall park for more pronounced uses, preferring one use over another.

Thank you!

Christian Schmidt

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Heather Saulnier <h.saulnier@att.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 9:26 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)."

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom this may concern:

I have been walking my dog at the Cesar Chavez park for over a decade. When I first became a dog owner I searched out many different parks and off leash areas for dogs. They are not all created equal and the communities that surround them are not as supportive and concerned about the spaces they inhabit as this particular park. Many of the dog walkers that frequent this park are conscientious about their and their dogs footprint. I have seen people fill in holes, clean up poop, and talk politely with owners out of compliance with park rules. I have seen my dog grow old walking these paths as I have seen the blue heron eat gophers, kite birds fledge their young ones, snakes bask in the sun, and the grass turn from green to brown and back again over the ten years of walking. We understand how special the space is for ourselves and animal friends.

Please keep this community space open for off leash dog walkers.

Sincerely,

Heather Saulnier

Sent from my iPhone



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** rekunkel <rekunkel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 9:16 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP; savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

My name is Righter Kunkel and I wanted to voice my strong support for remote controlled aircraft, and drones at Cesar Chavez park.

The remote control aircraft hobby brings me great relaxation and I have met a whole new community of like minded people.

The wonderful unobstructed space of Cesar Chavez park is an excellent place for this wonderful community to come together.

Just the fact that remote controlled aircraft and drones may be banned, really disappoints me for the near cited approach to a great use for the park.

My ask is to not restrict this hobby from the park.

-Righter Kunkel

--

-Righter  
(954) 802-3817

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** kathruiz@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 8:40 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to register my sincere and strong opinion that any plan to reduce in size or confine the Off-Leash Area (OLA) of Cesar Chavez Park is a very poor idea. I have been regularly walking at Cesar Chavez park for more than 30 years; although since Covid and shelter in place in 2020, I walk daily in the early mornings and often return in the evening to enjoy the beauty of the sunsets.

I would like to emphasize that the OLA area is not only for the benefit of the dog and their owners!! Many of us that do not own dogs but love them, like myself, so look forward to and enjoy walking in this area to be around these wonderful 4 legged joyful creatures and their dedicated owners! Over all, I have observed that the dog owners are very responsible about their dogs and also believe in the beauty and integrity of the park as a whole. Over the past few years I have developed "park friends" that I see almost daily with their dogs; and this has been ever so important for me and others when so many of us felt isolated during Covid shutdowns. I also now walk regularly with friends of mine who were also feeling isolated over the past few years; and these morning walks and interacting with the dogs and their owners have improved my friends' sense of well being as well. The benefits multiply!!

Even though the society has "reopened", I cannot fathom returning to the gym in the mornings as I did prior to Covid, as walking at the park and interacting with the other walkers and the dog owners and dogs is an integral and important part of my days, for my physical health as well as emotional health!!

The community of dog owners and those of us who don't have dogs but benefit from the OLA area are dedicated to maintaining the beauty and the natural flora and fauna of the OLA area and the park as a whole.

I request and advocate that the OLA be allowed to remain as is for the benefit of us all, humans and domesticated and wild animals alike.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Ruiz  
Berkeley resident

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** John Kittredge <johnkittredge@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 7:13 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Taplin, Terry; savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Berkeley Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW):

I am writing to support keeping and even expanding the OLA @ César Chávez Park.

As a third-generation Berkeley resident, property owner, and frequent user of the Off Leash Area at César Chávez Park I am writing to both support the current OLA and suggest that on weekdays in the morning the entire park (except the waterfront pathway) could be an OLA with little impact on the users - the vast majority of whom are already dog walkers.

I remember when the park used to be the city dump, and that when it was turned into a park it was to be for all of us, together. In that spirit I would love for the park to be entirely off-leash and for every dog to be perfectly behaved. I don't think either of those things are reasonable, but I do find by daily experience that the vast majority of the dogs and their owners are friendly and respectful of the park whether in the on or off leash areas. In the 9 years I have been coming with my dog, Jackson, I have seen so few incidents of aggressiveness that I can remember none. It is true that it can get intense around the watering hole but the reality is you can't bring your dog to César Chávez Park if it is too wild specifically because it isn't fenced. The dogs we visit with every day come in all breeds and sizes but all are controllable enough to be there.

Contrast that with the city dog parks, Ohlone specifically, where the presence of the fence allows for much more aggressive dogs to be loose inside. César Chávez Park is the polar opposite of the fenced-in dog parks and to take away the freedom of the OLA is to deny the peaceful dogs of Berkeley an adequate place to actually be dogs running free.

To characterize the OLA as any sort of problem is a gross distortion of reality. To the contrary the dog walking community at César Chávez Park are some of the most consistent and vigilant stewards of the park there are. No one group of users is more unfailingly there than us and we know when something is amiss and we report it. Without the OLA César Chávez Park would see a serious decline in daily use and be a less safe place for it.

Can some dog owners be more responsible with poop? Sure, but we organize cleanups to make up for their lack of civility. And they are few and far between compared to the vast majority of dog walking users of César Chávez Park who do much more for the park than just picking up their own dog's poop.

I grew up here - expanding the OLA is way more "Berkeley" than reducing it, and rightly so.

Respectfully,  
John Kittredge

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Brigitta Bode <brigitta.bode@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 6:22 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com; Robert Johnson  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

My partner, Rob and I have been walking our dog at the Cesar Chavez Dog Park for just over 2 years. It is our favorite place, and the two (virtually daily) trips (morning and evening) are the highlights of our day. The Cesar Chavez Dog Park is special because of the beauty of the place with its vistas and views of the bay area. We always feel mentally and physically refreshed after our walks not only because of how amazing the park is, but also seeing how much our dog loves her walks.

It has also provided us the opportunity to meet amazing people (who love animals as much as we do) and we have made some very good friends here. It has been our experience that dog owners by and large obey the leash laws, pick up after their dogs, and respect the wildlife and plants that thrive in the park.

Please do not reduce the off leash area, but allow those of us who love to come here with our canine friends to continue to enjoy the park.

Respectfully,

Brigitta Bode

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Preston Guillory <pguillory@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 5:22 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Miller and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission:

I grew up in Oklahoma and was lucky enough to have basically infinite space in which to enjoy my childhood and develop my independence. Now that I'm raising my two boys in the Bay Area, I try to get them out in the world in the same way. We've gotten into RC planes, both building and flying them. They learn physics and electronics, they build things with their hands, we all get outside in the sunshine.

However, there are almost no places in the Bay Area where it's both safe and legal to fly RC planes. Everything that could be developed has buildings and roads and cars. All the big open spaces are state or national parks, which have banned drones and everything else that flies. Nearly all city parks have banned drones. The beaches have banned drones.

Let me tell you, my boys would be perfectly happy to sit inside playing videogames all day if we let them. It sometimes feels encouraged by society, actually. There are no rules to be broken, sitting in a dark room in front of a screen. But every field of grass has a sign next to it with a list of rules saying when you can be there and what you can do.

I submit that we've gotten all this backwards. If there should be rules, they should limit kids sitting at home playing videogames. We should give kids all the freedom in the world to go outside, run around and get into trouble. And we should have more spaces where they can do so.

Cesar Chavez Park is a rare gem. Somehow we managed to leave something relatively untouched and unregulated. Being there is being free. It's nearly the only place we can go fly our planes, and it's AMAZING for it. People fly drones and kites, and it's perfect for that too.

I've heard there are plans to develop CCP. I strongly hope they don't change its fundamental nature as a big, free, open space. It's very special just as it is. It's something we can preserve for the next generation.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Preston Guillory

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 5:17 PM  
**To:** Jacque & Yuri; Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Park, Recreation and Waterfront Commissioners,

I, Jeff Malmuth, am sending this email on behalf of Jacqueline Costa at [costajacq@gmail.com](mailto:costajacq@gmail.com) to the following:

[RMiller@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:RMiller@cityofberkeley.info)

[bmasp@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:bmasp@cityofberkeley.info)

[savecc6@gmail.com](mailto:savecc6@gmail.com)

I would appreciate it if you can please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

Jacqueline Costa writes:

To whom it may concern:

I recently returned to Berkeley after an 18 year obligatory absence.

On my first morning back I headed straight to Cesar Chavez Park with my husband and my dog.

It was a place where I had spent much time, a place I had missed, full of special memories.

It's wonderful to be back and see one thing that hasn't changed.

Cesar Chavez is a beautiful place with easy access, it is an essential oasis in the middle of this metropolis for all to enjoy as is.

Jacqueline, John and Yuri



Sent from my iPhone

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Bruce B. Birkett <bruce@bbirkett.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 4:09 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Berkeley Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commissioners,

I write in reaction to "Comment on "Waterfront Specific Plan subcommittee report" dated 5/19/23 and posted 5/24/23," which you received from Martin Nicolaus, CEO of the Chavez Park Conservancy. Mr. Nicolaus wrote,

Since all areas of the park are sensitive ecological areas, the whole OLA should obviously be fenced. If it is too big to fence, it should be relocated and scaled down to manageable size.

Those sentences cause me great alarm.

I walk with my dogs off leash in this "OLA" multiple times nearly every week, meaning we together use this area exactly as intended. I have been a Berkeley resident for nearly 40 years, and run a Berkeley-based business; I view part of the Marina as vital to my enjoyment, health, and well being while living and working here. I take the dogs there as regularly as I do to in order to "recharge" – being out near the water, enjoying the many aspects of the wildlife and environment – in a way that no other dog park in Berkeley (such as Ohlone, wonderful as it is) can match.

On this morning's walk, I met a mother and her son (I assume), and we chatted while our dogs played together. I mention this only because I simply don't have this same type of important, rather random social interaction routinely anywhere else. We all walked together and talked for a while as our dogs continued to play.

Truth be told, I would love for the area to be *larger*, a comment I often make to my wife, but I of course understand the many competing demands for the overall space. I obviously don't have access to the same information you do, but will say that from my informal observations, I see the area getting a great deal of use from (mostly) responsible dog owners at all different times of day – again, as I understand things, exactly as the area is intended to function.

Please count this email as a strenuous objection to Mr. Nicolaus's demands, especially the "relocated and scaled down" bit.

I appreciate your consideration, and thank you for the work you do to balance the many needs, requests, and demands that we, Berkeley residents, place upon you.

Best regards,

--Bruce Birkett

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Sandra Chavarría <sandra.chavarriaslp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 3:35 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the PRW Commission

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the Berkeley Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission,

As you address the agenda item regarding the Cesar Chavez off-leash area (OLA), please consider the many benefits that the OLA currently provides not only to people with dogs but to the wider community.

In the words of John Etter of the Parks Planning division in Eugene, OR, "Off-leash parks are community centers for people just as much as for canines." As a dedicated visitor to the Cesar Chavez off-leash area for many years, I connected with many East Bay residents whom I otherwise would not have met. Through these connections I have both given and received vital community support. Our Cesar Chavez OLA community includes seniors living alone, whom we check on if we don't see them for a while. For many of us with busy work lives and long commutes, the time that we spend exercising our dogs in the OLA is also our time to socialize with other people, which is critical for both individual and collective mental wellbeing. I know people who are unable to have a dog of their own, who visit the OLA to be able to benefit from the human-animal bond. For these folks, social interactions with dogs are much more available to them in the OLA where dogs can actively solicit play and offer greetings, versus trying to approach a leashed dog who may or may not welcome the attention. I recently brought my friend and her teenaged daughter there, as they are grieving the loss of their family dog and she wanted her daughter to have the comfort and emotional support of being out in nature with both human and canine friends.

The OLA also provides valuable opportunities for people to give and receive education and support in responsible dog guardianship, which by extension benefits the broader community. As expressed by Dr. Lynette Hart of the UC Davis Center for Animals in Society, the creation and maintenance of off-leash areas is "a method for more efficiently educating dog guardians and facilitating them in assuring excellent behavior with their dogs." In the Cesar Chavez OLA, less experienced dog guardians can not only learn from observation, but are much more likely to ask questions and be receptive to advice given the sense of community that this environment fosters.

Cesar Chavez park has spacious areas for drone flying, kite flying, jogging, biking, picnicking, and wildlife conservation, in addition to the OLA. Runners and cyclists often come through the OLA, and dog guardians pass through the other areas while walking their dogs on leash to and from the OLA. Those of us who enjoy the park for one or more of these purposes are well able to coexist and learn from one another, which is an important part of a strong community. This beneficial overlap among park users would be impaired by relocating, fencing, or reducing the OLA. The scope of the OLA allows people to give each other space to accommodate different walking paces, family groups, physical needs, and dog temperaments and sizes, while still benefiting from being out in nature as part of the community.

Thank you for taking the time to hear this perspective. I trust that you will make a decision that truly benefits the city of Berkeley and the surrounding Bay Area community.

-Sandra Chavarría

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** sharkeysmalls <sharkeysmalls@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 3:23 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

In regards to fencing off park of CC park, this would be a major loss for the biggest users of the park—dog owners. Not only is this space so important for our pups, but it's also a community of dog owners who provide valuable resources to one another. Outside of the OLA, there is still much park to be enjoyed by everyone who visits CC. It would be a shame to lose such a valuable resource to all of us dog-owning Berkeley residents.

Sincerely,  
Buzzy and Sharkey

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Eileen Cohen <eftc@lmi.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 3:03 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a Berkeley resident (since 1994), homeowner, taxpayer, and dog owner. I have enjoyed use of the Off-leash Area (OLA) in Cesar Chavez Park since its inception and am grateful for this wonderful feature. I would like to point out that Mr. Martin Nicolaus's recent argument that the OLA should be "scaled down" is specious at best. According to him, because "only" 30 percent of park users use the OLA, it should be reduced in size. Consider, though, the fact that the OLA comprises less than 20 percent of the park's 90 acres. Mr. Nicolaus' own reasoning, then, actually makes a plausible case for making the OLA *even bigger!*

Regards,  
Eileen Cohen



Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Tamar Gershon <tamarg08@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 2:53 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Off leash at Cesar Chávez Park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern:

The Offleash area at Cesar Chávez Park has been a lifeline for me, my daughter, and my dogs, over the last 16 years that we have lived in Berkeley.

Especially during Covid, Cesar Chávez, Park, and the OLA has been an especially important place to us as we needed a place to be able to walk and to be in nature even moreso at that stressful time in our lives. It has been a crucial place for many in our community to allow us to take care of our mental and physical health as we went through the Covid pandemic. We continue to go there daily to enjoy the beautiful views, the birds and the lovely natural plants of the park. We are also bird watchers, and we love to see the red wing blackbirds, the pelicans and the and the wintering owls. We have always been incredibly respectful of our natural surroundings and the bird habitats.

In addition, the other people who walk at OLA has become a very important community to us. The people we meet there are people we see on a daily basis and have learned to know and to share important aspects of our lives with each other.

This is a caring and concerned community of nature lovers and dog lovers.

It would be a disaster to our community to lose this important place to meet and to experience the beauty of nature and the outdoors.

It should not be changed or hampered in any way.

We are clearly committed to caring for this land, and treating it with respect as you have seen by the many events, including picking up poop days as well as planting plants to beautify the surroundings.

Please take notice of our request as we are caring and concerned, voters and taxpayers.

Thank you very much for your time and energy and attention.

Tamar Gershon, MD



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Angela Coon <ninereasons22@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 1:43 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear friends and collaborators,

I would be devastated if this park changed in any way which excluded or reduced the off leash dog area. I have been using this park way before I even had a dog. It's a wonderful, safe, well kept up, wonderspot for all to enjoy. With limited urban tick free and accessible land by the bay I sincerely hope you will preserve this for dog owners to enjoy for many years to come. This place saved me during the pandemic. The community is respectful, organizes park clean ups and gatherings, and promotes more improvement to make it user friendly. The areas are clearly demarcated and there is plenty of park for everyone to enjoy both within and outside of the fences and pathways...the model airplane and kite flyers, picnickers and hikers all seem to work well. Please consider how vital this area is for many bay area dog walkers and how safe it is for dogs to have a space to run freely. I love the wildlife I get to take in and learn about thanks to the safely marked areas for birds and other vital habitats. It's a joy to be part of this park for over 30 years and I feel it contributes to the well being of many!

Thank you for caring about us!

Warmly  
Angela and her dog named Fish

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Irene Huang <jung.irene@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 12:10 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon -

I am writing this email to you as a resident of Berkeley, in District 2, and a long-time Off Leash Area (OLA)/Cesar Chavez Park enjoyer. Every morning, after dropping my 4 year old daughter off at school, I take our dog and run around the Off Lease Area of Cesar Chavez park. Every weekend, our family goes for a walk around the park. This is the only open space available anywhere in Berkeley and Oakland combined where children, adults, and our furry family members can enjoy open, outdoor space. We can let our children and dogs run freely without worrying about cars and the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The community of recreational dog walkers I have met over the last few years is incredible. Every morning, I see dedicated and responsible dog owners picking up trash and stray poops, helping to ensure the OLA and surrounding areas and kept clean and safe. We are extremely appreciative and respect the many aspects of Cesar Chavez Park including the birds, the flora and fauna and even the many and varied insects. We respect all stakeholders including, but not limited to, walkers, joggers, cyclists, kite flyers, picnickers, photographers, artists and, last but not least, Off-Leash Area dog walkers at the OLA.

**I am completely opposed to fencing, relocating, or scaling down the OLA.** In fact, I would like to the see the OLA expanded. The OLA is important to us for our mental, emotional, social, and physical well-being and I hope to see the OLA as a priority to strengthen our community.

Sincerely,  
Irene Jung-Huang

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Sarah Payne <sarahpayne1010@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 10:46 AM  
**To:** BMASP; Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA). I have been going to Cesar Chavez daily since 2021 when my dog was a puppy. The Cesar Chavez OLA has been the bright light in me and my husband's lives, especially during the isolating days of Covid lockdowns. We have met dozens of other responsible dog owners, which brought us an important sense of community that can be hard to come by. Please keep this area protected for such an organic, kind gathering of community. My husband and I have repeatedly said we don't know how we'd live in the Berkeley/Oakland area without Cesar Chavez's OLA. The park is one of the biggest draws for us to be here and has been the defining experience of living in the East Bay. Please keep this area protected and available as an important community gathering space that is critical to so many responsible dog owners throughout the region.

Thank you,

Sarah Payne, Ben Davis and Mila Payne Davis

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Kelly Grindstaff <kelly.grindstaff@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 05, 2023 9:44 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Park Commissioners,

I'm writing with respect to a proposal I have heard about to reduce and/or fence-in the Off-Leash Area (OLA) at Cesar Chavez Park. I am strongly opposed to this idea.

I moved to Berkeley in 2019 and discovered Cesar Chavez Park almost immediately with the Kite festival. My family has been visiting the park several times per week ever since. We have flown our kite there, I run around the outside of the park, and occasionally bike there as well. Mostly, we enjoy the open space and beauty of the park with our dog in the OLA. This is such a special place! I don't know of anywhere else quite like it. As someone who uses all parts of the park, I feel the current set up works well for all users. There is plenty of room for everyone to enjoy all that the park has to offer. As a regular user, I consider myself a steward of the park. I regularly pick up stray poops, and garbage like plastic, when walking in the park if I see it. There are even organized "pick up stray poop" events, which I have participated in. I greatly appreciate my time in the park, and specifically the OLA, for the benefits to my mental and physical health. I strongly encourage and ask that the OLA remain as it is.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Kelly Grindstaff  
856 Jones St  
Berkeley, CA. 94710  
[kelly.grindstaff@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.grindstaff@gmail.com)

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 8:18 PM  
**To:** Save CC; Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioners,

After having read over 30 fervently passionate letters to you about the profound beauty and positive mental, physical, and emotional contributions the OLA provides to our community of responsible and committed recreational dog walkers, I feel a need to modify one item from my first email.

I re-read Mr. Nicholas's comments on the Park, Recreation and Waterfront Commission where he erroneously states, in quotes no less:

“The only pertinent reference in the document is that “its boundaries should be appropriately **fenced** to protect sensitive ecological areas.””

I also re-read the report by the subcommittee of the Park, Recreation and Waterfront commission that correctly states:

“Its boundaries should be appropriately **demarcated** to protect sensitive ecological areas and marked to deter off-leash activity in park areas not intended for that purpose.”

Nicholas is wrong about fencing. The draft report uses the word “**demarcation**” not fencing.

Regardless, I wrote in my first email to the PRW in pertinent part:

“In keeping with the spirit of the openness of Cesar Chavez Park I propose a limited fence at the entrance of the OLA, beginning a short distance from the newly located Porta Potty and extending east past the bulletin board. A fence at the entrance would let people know when they have reached the OLA. Vines could be planted along the fence to soften its appearance.”

I have now read over 30 emails from a group of committed responsible dog walkers. I have spoken with dozens more who have yet to write. In particular, Paul Mileck wrote:

“The size and openness of the dog park should not be changed. Fencing would be an eyesore for everyone. Sightlines are currently more-or-less unobstructed-- it's open and beautiful. The terrain goes up and down, and adding fences will look bad by any standard. Fencing would create a constant maintenance issue.”

As I walked daily at the OLA since writing my first email to the PRW I tried to envision a sterile industrial chain link fence bisecting the magnificent unobstructed views of park, “beginning a short distance from the newly located Porta Potty and extending east past the bulletin board.” No matter how I try I arrive at the conclusion that a fence simply does not fit. As Paul stated so poignantly, “fencing would be an eyesore for everyone.” I have now spoken with many people and not one endorses a fence. Indeed, everyone I speak with is appalled at the idea. Having thought this over, speaking with many and reading the many very thoughtful emails to the PRW, I am simply unable to envision such an intrusion to the park to satisfy the interminable complaints and aggressive photographing and posting of dog walkers by a small group of people.

Therefore, I retract my initial suggestion about a fence and agree with the subcommittee proposal to appropriately **demarcate** to protect sensitive ecological areas and mark to deter off-leash activity in park areas not intended for that purpose.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeff Malmuth

Long-time Berkeley (D1) resident

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** ROJAS ROY <roybitts@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 6:23 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Proposal to fence, reduce in size or relocate the Off Leash Area, Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

A la atención de la Comisión de Parques, Recreación y Zonas Ribereñas [Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission] (PRW) de la ciudad de Berkeley

Estimados Srs.-Sras.

Recientemente ha llegado a mi conocimiento una inquietante propuesta que invita a la ciudad de Berkeley a cercar, reducir o reubicar el área designada para pasear perros sin correa (OLA, por sus siglas en inglés) del Parque César Chávez de la marina de Berkeley.

Sin bien comprendo y comparto las inquietudes y las buenas intenciones de los proponentes, como usuario de este espacio al que llevo a pasear a mis perros casi a diario y amante de la naturaleza, quisiera con todo respeto solicitarle a la Comisión de Parques, Recreación y Zonas Ribereñas que, a la hora de tomar una decisión sobre dicha propuesta, tome también en cuenta el bienestar y la salud mental de la gran cantidad de vecinos de Berkeley y ciudades aledañas (e incluso visitantes de otras ciudades y estados del país) que acuden a diario, y a todas horas, al Parque César Chávez a pasear a sus perros y a disfrutar de las numerosas oportunidades de recreación que ofrece este hermoso espacio multiuso, tanto por las maravillosas vistas y por la belleza del entorno como por la posibilidad que brinda a muchas personas de ejercitarse, relajarse y socializar un poco mientras pasean a sus perros.

El beneficio para la salud mental de los vecinos de Berkeley y alrededores que acuden a este parque, incluidos los paseantes acompañados de perros, es innegable; especialmente en este periodo post-Covid que ha dejado tantas secuelas físicas y psicológicas en tantas personas y del que aún nos estamos recuperando.

Por las razones anteriores, y por los ya citados beneficios que aporta a tantos vecinos de nuestra comunidad, sería lamentable que se restringiera o eliminara este espacio. Soy consciente de la presencia de algunos paseantes de perros que actúan de forma irresponsable y desconsiderada al no recoger los excrementos de sus animales o no los controlan adecuadamente. Sin embargo, diría que la gran mayoría de los paseantes de perros actúa de forma responsable y, de hecho, existe una comunidad bien organizada de estos paseantes que lleva a cabo actividades periódicas de limpieza de las zonas dedicadas a los perros y también fuera de ellas, y no solo de los excrementos sino también de los numerosos restos de basura que otros usuarios del parque dejan tirados en cualquier lugar. No se debería castigar a la mayoría por las malas acciones de algunos.

Por lo tanto, les solicito que consideren la posibilidad de tomar otras medidas alternativas a esta propuesta para abordar este asunto, tales como mejorar la señalización, colocar carteles informativos para educar a los usuarios en general y a los paseantes de perros en particular u otras formas que no restrinjan o arrebaten el acceso a este espacio a una gran cantidad de ciudadanos de Berkeley.

Con todo respecto,

Roy Rojas-Montero

Agenda Item 15. Communications - Cesar Chavez Park - Off Leash Area

Feel free to use any part of this email to help formulate a letter. Letters should be addressed to:

([RMiller@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:RMiller@cityofberkeley.info))

([bmasp@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:bmasp@cityofberkeley.info))

Include in the subject line: "Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)."

Please CC me at [savecc6@gmail.com](mailto:savecc6@gmail.com)



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Maximilio L\_Cut <maxlcutler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 1:16 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

OLA (Off-Leash Area) at Berkeley Marina is cherished, important, and respected by myself, my dog, and the other members of my Berkeley family.

The OLA (Off-Leash Area) of Berkeley Marina/Cesar Chavez park is a big reason why my dog is a good model citizen! The park allowed him to have the space for many positive experiences. My dog is big and needs this space to run around. For my dog's health, and for my family/my health as well. Many morning and evening walks using this area have given me great happiness; seeing my dog smile makes me smile.

Please keep the Off Leash Area of Berkeley Marina/Cesar Chavez park unchanged. The only change I would like is for the OLA to be made bigger.

Thank you,  
Max and Cholo Leyva Cutler

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jody Roberts <jzr835@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 11:47 AM  
**To:** save6cc@gmail.com; Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** CC

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am one of "The great majority of park visitors who come for nature: fresh air, great views, grassland, trees, wildflowers, birds, peace and quiet, escape from urban stress" and, I come with my dog. Mr. Nicolas has been stalking some of us who walk with dogs for years. He photographs us and then posts our images on the internet without our permission. He usually stays on the perimeter of the park and makes radical assumptions about how we destroy the park. He is incorrect about "irresponsible dog walkers" and "dogs as a disease vector". His mission seems to be to want to destroy a vibrant community of individuals, families, and families with dogs. Will he also fence in the drones that are flown over the wildlife and the birds and the families that enjoy the peace of the out-of-doors.

This is an inclusive park that welcomes many communities. We share the park with kite flyers, miniature airplanes, picnickers, children, birds, rabbits, squirrels; other cultures and races. Will he segregate those, too?

We citizens of Berkeley have adapted to this garbage dump, its methane gas in the most positive ways possible: offering peace, nature, community to all cultures and nature.

Thank you for addressing this issue.  
Jody

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jennifer F <oosmama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 8:29 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Re: Off leash area in Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I forgot to ask that you share this letter with PRW meeting next week. Thank you.

On Tue, Jul 4, 2023 at 7:23 AM Jennifer F <[oosmama@gmail.com](mailto:oosmama@gmail.com)> wrote:

I am writing in support of keeping the off leash area the same size. It is a wonderful place to go every morning with my 2 canine friends. It is often the best part of my day. Please keep that part of the park open. So many lovely people and dogs use it regularly at the same time I do. I derive so much benefit from exercise, human and animal companionship, new friendships, birdsong, fresh air, beautiful views, bracing sea breezes. It is a treasure as is.

Thank you.

Jennifer Fechner

415-816-3722

2204 Sacramento St, Berkeley, CA 94702

**Miller, Roger**

---

**From:** Jennifer F <oosmama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 7:23 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Off leash area in Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in support of keeping the off leash area the same size. It is a wonderful place to go every morning with my 2 canine friends. It is often the best part of my day. Please keep that part of the park open. So many lovely people and dogs use it regularly at the same time I do. I derive so much benefit from exercise, human and animal companionship, new friendships, birdsong, fresh air, beautiful views, bracing sea breezes. It is a treasure as is.

Thank you.

Jennifer Fechner

415-816-3722

2204 Sacramento St, Berkeley, CA 94702

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Mateo Rutherford <mateo\_rutherford@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 04, 2023 6:57 AM  
**To:** BMASP; Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Off Leash Dog Area at Cesar Chavez Park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Berkeley Park Commissioners,

We are long time residents of West Berkeley (1995), and our co-owner is from a fifth generation East Bay family. We have two lovely dogs and take them often to run and play with other dogs at Cesar Chavez off leash area. We, and our dogs, love this place and use it almost daily.

Since the Pandemic many folks found the need for companionship and adopted pets, and unfortunately, many of those pets have been sent to the SPCA with the end of the pandemic. I believe that the off leash area is crucial to help people keep those pets who helped them through one of the emotionally most difficult periods in our lifetime.

I would definitely support expanding this area. I've gone once to Point Isabel with our dogs. It has a cafe, which is great, but it's farther and we have to drive there.

There are many parks available to people who do not like dogs, including many areas of the Marina with equally stunning views. For dog owners the options are much more limited.

Please keep us posted about any plans to change this area.

Thank you very much for the work you do.

Mateo Rutherford  
1120 Bancroft Way

Sent from my iPhone

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Dylan Verner-Crist <dvernerc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 9:51 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please Maintain the Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Area

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Miller and Berkeley Staff,

I write in opposition to the proposed plan to reduce or confine the Off-Leash Area (OLA) of Cesar Chavez Park.

For the past three years, I've lived in northwest Berkeley, only a two mile run from the OLA. A year ago, My partner and I got our first dog, a border collie puppy who we named Finn. A few months later, we discovered Cesar Chavez's OLA and were floored. For some initial months (once Finn was old enough), we went to dog parks, but found the dogs at most of them often aggressive and the owners often inattentive or worse. The OLA is nothing like that. The people who go to it love their dogs and love the outdoors. And it shows. The dogs at the OLA are greatly-trained, warm and friendly, and their handlers are lovely. I've been going to the OLA for the better part of a year now, but I'm still stunned by how incredible it is - a large, hilly area in the wind and sun, for dogs to exult in. For a border collie - the type of dog that needs a place to run - it's perfect.

The OLA has quickly become Finn's favorite place in the world. When we drive down the road approaching it, he starts to squeal in excitement. We know most of the dogs and their handlers by name. It's a real community, led by Jeff, the de facto mayor of the OLA (he knows all the dogs' names and they all know him). It's become a place where I weekly meet a friend to catch up and walk our dogs and where Finn and I run to at the end of the workday.

Please don't curtail the OLA. It's a remarkable thing.

Best,  
Dylan Verner-Crist

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Nancy Hormachea <nimmigration@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 7:27 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to recommend that the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA) remain unchanged.

The City of Berkeley is unique because it had the vision to create out of an unsightly landfill OLA, a beautiful area where residents along with their unleashed dogs may enjoy nature alongside spectacular views of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. Personally, I'm deeply grateful to the city officials who pioneered this special resource I enjoy every day.

It's painful to think that current City of Berkeley officials want to regress and ignore the many benefits of the OLA in Cesar Chavez Park. OLA is a tremendous asset that serves many members of the community. Being able to walk with my dog off-leash clearly contributes to my health and well being. When visiting friends and family accompany me to OLA they are amazed. They come away with a feeling that the local government takes care of its residents. For many visitors OLA is a model endeavor that they wish to recreate in their cities.

OLA must remain as it is without any changes. Dog owners who visit OLA are conscientious individuals and stewards of Cesar Chavez Park. We pick up after our dogs in the OLA as well as in all other areas of the park and adjacent parking areas. Many who visit OLA engage in extraordinary efforts to maintain a clean, healthy and safe area. The dogs who visit the area are healthy, well cared for members of loving households who despite allegations are not disease vectors.

I'm a resident of Berkeley, business owner and registered voter. I urge you to please maintain OLA unchanged.

--

Nancy Hormachea  
Law Office of Nancy Hormachea  
1855 Olympic Blvd., Ste. 175  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Tel: 510-849-0996  
Fax: 510-849-0749  
Cell: 510-470-0267  
[nancy@nancyhlaw.com](mailto:nancy@nancyhlaw.com)

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** sweendog44 <sweendog44@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 6:26 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; Jeff (Treats) Berkeley  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)."

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr Roger Miller,

I regularly walk my dog, in a responsible way at the Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley. Both my wife Patty and I pick up trash some people have littered. We often choose to travel to Berkeley because we love the park and the size and freedom the park offers.

In the last 20 years, I cannot remember seeing a dog behaving badly, or affecting other folks who do not have dogs. Please do not limit the size of the park or fence it.

Brian Sweeney  
1376 Patricia Drive  
Gardnerville, NV  
661-713-4371

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone



**Ryan Turner**

**1133 Holman Road | Oakland, CA 94610**

July 3, 2023

Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission

2180 Milvia Street

Berkeley, CA 94704

*Via email: [rmiller@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:rmiller@berkeleyca.gov)*

**Re: Comments for July 12, 2023 Commission Meeting Agenda**

Dear Mr. Miller and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commissioners,

As a dog-owner, a kite-flyer, and the parent of a young radio-controlled aircraft pilot, I read the recent comments on the Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) from Martin Nicolaus of the Chavez Park Conservancy with concern. I come to the park multiple times per week because Cesar Chavez Park (CCP) offers types of recreation and access to nature that we can't enjoy in other East Bay parks. Mr. Nicolaus notes in his letter that park users who bring dogs are in the minority, while the majority of visitors are there to enjoy nature. This dichotomy doesn't make sense to me.

My family, friends, and others we interact with at the park are there to enjoy nature, sometimes with our dogs, as CCP has incredible views, plenty of sunshine, and tons of plants and animals to observe and enjoy. We have relatively few places in the East Bay where we can enjoy both the wild nature of the Bay Area and the wild, unleashed nature of our furry companions. I will spare you the soliloquy about the joy we find in our dogs as I know you've heard it ad nauseum. But dog parks also connect people to each other and to community - something most of us are in serious need of in 2023. Such interactions are powerfully good for my mental health, personally, and I know many others that feel the same way.

As you are doubtless aware, the East Bay Regional Parks system comprises 73 parks spanning 125,000 acres; 1,250 miles of trails; 55 miles of shoreline. All of these areas are available to people simply seeking a natural experience. Indeed, many offer a far more natural experience than the open, reclaimed land of CCP. The Off-Leash Area at CCP amounts to 17 acres. Point Isabel adds another 43. There are several EBRPD sites that allow some off-leash activity in open spaces but at all of these locations, dog walkers need to contend with foxtails and poison oak in addition to the complications of sharing the space with other users. While I respect that people may not want to share their natural experience with a pack of dogs, there are literally tens of thousands of acres of open space where this is possible.

Regarding the use of remote control aircraft, a very similar argument holds, but the space available for this hobby is more limited, still. My son is nine years old and as long as he has been able to talk, he has wanted to fly. He has severe ADHD that makes many educational activities feel boring and makes connection to his peers challenging at best. At the airfield at CCP (or "the CCP Aerodrome" as we call it at home), I am able to get this kid as close as he can get to an airplane cockpit. Here, he can spend the day outside, interacting with a group of pilots and enthusiasts from a wide range of ages, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds.

**Ryan Turner**

**1133 Holman Road | Oakland, CA 94610**

This hobby is profoundly valuable for the many young people, including the high school aviation clubs that fly at CCP. Only a tiny fraction of the hobby is actually spent flying - the rest of the time involves understanding flight dynamics, diagnosing technical problems, experimenting with new engineering designs, and endless repairs. Particularly for the kids with a keen interest in aviation, you honestly couldn't ask for a more educationally valuable STEM hobby that fosters both intergenerational and inter-class relationships and connects students of historically underserved groups with adults who have active careers in STEM fields.

Many families who visit the park stop by the tables and someone among us is always happy to act as an ambassador of the hobby. Though I'm sure it must happen from time to time, I have never had a single negative interaction with other park users while flying.

Many of the informal group of pilots that use the CCP Aerodrome stay connected through a web messaging board that we actively encourage new folks to join with wallet-sized QR-code invitation cards. The group serves to connect the community, organize meet-ups at various locations, and provide direct access to technical help. We have over 160 users, though we know there are many more that come to CCP to fly.

Understanding that our ability to practice our hobby is largely contingent on public goodwill, the more conscientious among us make a strong effort to guide new pilots into appropriate behavior: keeping low altitude flight to the field between the airstrip and the smokestack, not "buzzing" past other park users, giving kite flyers plenty of space, and interacting politely and respectfully with other park users on the ground. We're doing what we can to shape group etiquette and can certainly do more. Some of us have talked about formalizing some of these guidelines into signage and we would be glad to work with the park and city to see this done.

In 2023, especially "after" the pandemic, almost all the parents I know struggle to get their kids off their screens, imploring them to touch grass and get some sunshine. I rarely have this problem when I suggest we go to Cesar Chavez Park with the dog and RC planes in tow.

A friend used a drone to shoot this video of my son and me flying on the bay side of the park last year. I shared it with you then but I hope you'll take another look as the topic of RC flight at CCP has come up again. It's still my vision of a perfect Sunday afternoon on the Bay.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4YqadlQvok>

Respectfully,

Ryan Turner  
compassrose@gmail.com

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jorgen Carlsen <jscarlsen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 6:12 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I'm writing in regards to the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA) and proposed changes. My wife and I have been taking our dog Luna on walks in the off leash area almost daily since we moved to Oakland over two years ago. Every day we walk the paths, we are so incredibly thankful that the park exists and we are able to take our dog off leash in such a beautiful park. The park is such an incredible resource for people with active dogs that need to run off leash to get adequate exercise.

If the OLA was altered to be made smaller we would be devastated. We currently walk nearly every path available in the off leash area and love it so much. I know there are many other dog owners who feel the same as we meet and talk with them all the time. Please leave the OLA as is!

Thanks,  
Jorgen, Sahana and Luna

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Ram Balasubramanian <ram.z.balasubramanian@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 5:53 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom it May Concern:

I'm writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Cesar Chavez Park Off Leash Area (OLA). I am one of a large group of dedicated, responsible, recreational, dog walkers, committed to ensuring the Off Leash Area and surrounding areas are kept clean and safe.

I am a new dog owner but have been walking my dog there most mornings since I discovered the park, ~6 months ago. I've met a lot of very responsible dog owners and walking in the OLA is wonderful exercise and brings me peace of mind and a great way to start my mornings!

The Off leash area needs to remain in its current acreage, entirely unfenced and free to all.

Thank you,

Ram.

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Kdonne Chick <kchick08@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 5:16 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area (OLA). If anything was to change I would like it to be made bigger, I see many responsible dog owners using this space and it has been a godsend.

I'm a new dog owner and only starting to go to Cesar Chavez this last year. The OLA has been amazing, for both my dog and my health both mentally and physically. I think the proposed changes to shrink the park would be a great disservice to all the responsible dog owners who currently use and rely on this area. I've met and made so many great human and canine friends. Everyone been super nice and amazing. I am surprised at how many dog related activities are held at this park. I would have never imagined I would attend a dog poop pick up party. However, both my dog and I have attended. I constantly strive to leave the park a better place than before we enter.

Thank you

Donnie and Mochi

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jody Roberts <jzr835@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 1:53 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP; save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am one of "The great majority of park visitors who come for nature: fresh air, great views, grassland, trees, wildflowers, birds, peace and quiet, escape from urban stress" and, I come with my dog. Mr. Nicolas has been stalking some of us who walk with dogs for years. He photographs us and then posts our images on the internet without our permission. He usually stays on the perimeter of the park and makes radical assumptions about how we destroy the park. He is incorrect about "irresponsible dog walkers" and "dogs as a disease vector". His mission seems to be to want to destroy a vibrant community of individuals, families, and families with dogs. Will he also fence in the drones that are flown over the wildlife and the birds and the families that enjoy the peace of the out-of-doors.

This is an inclusive park that welcomes many communities. We share the park with kite flyers, miniature airplanes, picnikers, children, birds, rabbits, squirrels; other cultures and races. Will he segregate those, too?

We citizens of Berkeley have adapted to this garbage dump, its methane gas in the most positive ways possible: offering peace, nature, community to all cultures and nature.

Thank you for addressing this issue.  
Jody

Dear Berkeley Waterfront Commissioners,

I am a frequent visitor to Cesar Chavez Park; usually I walk my dog there about 5 times a week, and have for several years. Like many people I find the park a beautiful place, full of friendly people of all ages and types. Starting my days in the open space, seeing familiar friends and acquaintances each morning and chatting with them gives me an emotional and physical lift that I can't fully express. The park dog walkers are a community in the best sense of the term, whether we live in Berkeley or nearby. We discuss and care about each other's health, families, opinions, and of course our dogs, which give us all such joy as they play freely. Strangers become friends over time here.

I recently read a piece by a man named Martin Nicholas who sends out an email newsletter focussing on birds, called the Chavez Nature Conservancy— a very official sounding thing. I always enjoy reading about the local birds and seeing photos. In this piece Mr Nicholas argues that Chavez park needs more fencing to prevent dogs from marauding birds. He also states that dog walkers represent a small minority of people visiting the park.

What data support these statements? A cursory look at some publicly available data from the UC Census and the American Veterinary Medical Association indicates that there are about 26,000 dogs in Berkeley, based on a conservative estimate that around  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Berkeley households own at least one dog. If even 10% of those households walk their dogs at Cesar Chavez park once weekly, that's at least 2600 people per week. But to my knowledge we have no accurate information about the number or people walking dogs at the park— or of any group of park users. This would be very useful to know...perhaps a research project with urban planning students at Cal? It would be a mistake to make park policy or infrastructure changes without accurate data.

What evidence is there that dogs are routinely threatening wildlife in the protected areas? On the contrary, I see most people and their dogs walking on the well defined paths and leaving no mess. If dogs were truly destroying the park environment surely there would be a lot fewer plants, squirrels, birds or snakes. In fact, there is already fencing in the park to protect birds, and it has large gaps— why not repair this? Fencing is ugly, I'm sure we can all agree, and detracts from the beauty of the park. Let's not add any more.

There are several places where dogs are off limits at the Park, places dedicated to wildlife and native plant protection. Those places are beautiful and necessary. Recreational places like the OLA are also beautiful and necessary, but not for the protection of wildlife. Mowing the shared use areas of the park benefits humans by reducing tick habitat as well as keeping down noxious weeds, and making the meadows more usable for play and exercise.

Well, you see where I am coming from. I hope you do not give undue weight to the complaints of Mr Nicholas when deciding on how to maintain Cesar Chavez Park. From my observations [as valid as Mr Nicholas's] leaving the Off Leash Area as it is, is the best idea of all.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Jones



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** CHRISTIAN SCHREIBER <schreibc@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 1:39 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Commissioners:

I write to urge you to reject further changes, including fencing and/or reduction in size to the Cesar Chavez Off-Leash Dog Area in the Berkeley Waterfront.

The OLA is a beloved resource used by hundreds of dog owners each day. In its simplest terms, the park has achieved its highest use: it is a gathering spot for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, and a safe place for dog owners to walk, enjoy the scenery and beauty of the park.

As someone who visits the park multiple times per week, rain or shine, I am an experienced observer and user of both the OLA and the full 90 acres of the park. The off-leash dogs co-exist with the many other groups who use the area - kite-flying families, drone enthusiasts, picnickers, and runners and walkers. The idea that "yelling dog owners" would disrupt the quiet enjoyment of the park is at odds with what I have witnessed over thousands of hours at the park. (Indeed, this type of anecdotal evidence -- of a stray hiker or dog -- is insufficient to demonstrate the type of systematic "abuse" of the park, and its flora and fauna, that would warrant further limiting its scope.)

Please leave well enough alone. The area has been successfully utilized as open space, and draws happy crowds each day. Additional limitations on the OLA will only diminish the park and the positive experiences it creates.

Thank you for your careful consideration of the community interests at stake.

Sincerely,

Christian Schreiber

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** pauli@lmi.net  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 1:37 PM  
**To:** BMASP; Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** 'Save CC'  
**Subject:** don't fence the dog park please forward to Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear public officials:

I have been visiting the Caesar Chavez dog park at the Berkeley Marina with my dog regularly since 2018. I ride my bike and my dog chases me around the park. I got the dog at the local animal shelter (BACS) and the folks there are fantastic!

The size and openness of the dog park should not be changed. Fencing would be an eyesore for everyone. Sightlines are currently more-or-less unobstructed-- it's open and beautiful. The terrain goes up and down, and adding fences will look bad by any standard. Fencing would create a constant maintenance issue. Also, dogs are more aggressive in fenced parks like Ohlone. Very few dogfights at Caesar Chavez. I think a fenced dog park will discourage public use of the park. Certainly there will be fewer dogs and fewer dog owners/walkers.

Recent parking improvements have made it easier for the public to access the park. Better walkways, benches and restrooms are improvements that will make more people happy.

- Paul Mileck, park user.

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Erika Hazel, The Bizerkeley Vegan <thebizerkeleyvegan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 10:53 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Off Leash Area- Berkeley Marina

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Park Commissioners,

I'm writing because I feel that daily access to walk on the land in the Berkeley Marina especially during the past three years has been a source of connection, with the open space vs. the confinement of our homes, and with the encounters with other people walking there vs the isolation of the pandemic.

The off leash area is a valuable resource for the entire Bay Area and everyone says "we are so lucky to have this huge space by the water!" How good it is for us to be part of nature as well as having a safe space for walking our four legged friends.

So I'm writing as someone for you to not downgrade or decrease the off leash walking area. My dog and her dog pack walk there everyday and is integral to thousands of us who use it every day!

Thank you,

**Erika Hazel (she/her)**

**Founder/Owner of The Bizerkeley Food Festival**

**Vegan Food Critic & Event Planner**

**Instagram, @bizerkeleyvegan @bizerkeleyfoodfest**

**Phone #: 510-833-5170**



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Sahana Rajasekar <shnraj@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2023 10:53 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

I walk at the Cesar Chavez park with my dog every day, maybe twice a day, and the recreational dog walking at the Off-Leash Area is SO important for my mental, emotional, social, and physical well-being. I can't stress enough how much I have benefitted from this and I ask that the Off-Leash Area be allowed to continue to flourish.

Thank you,  
Sahana

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Lisa Meakin <lisameakinswim@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 8:47 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the PRW commission

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I use Ceasar Chavez Offleash dog Park almost daily. It is nice to have a place at the Berkeley Marina where one's dog can be off leash. I have made friendships at the dog park and it is wonderful to see the dogs playing and walking. I have never encountered a problem, and I feel most dog owners are respectful to the park. It really is the highlight of my day and a huge stress release to go for a walk and enjoy my dogs company at Ceasar Chavez.

A new park near the pedestrian bridge/ Seabreeze market has just been constructed and it is not an off leash area. I feel there is no need to shrink the Offleash dog Park area as there is plenty of other space available at Cesar Chavez which is dog free and also the brand new park just a half a mile away with a nice parking lot, very nice bathrooms, new picnic tables, and trails.

Please consider keeping the Offleash dog area as it is.

Thank you,

Lisa Hawley- Meakin

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Akemi Nojima <akeminojima@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 8:42 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Park commissioners,

when we first moved from San Francisco 5 years ago, we were surprised to find out that Berkeley was not as friendly as the city was. We moved to Berkeley because the level of the inclusiveness, open mindness, and progressiveness would be the same as the city offers, or more advanced here. We were casually anticipating the same level of coexistence and were deeply disappointed by the limited outdoor areas where all can be free and respectful. There are not many fenced dog parks in the city. Instead, the parks are shared among us without fences.

We were very pleased to have discovered Cesar Chavez Off Leash Area during covid. Please keep the area open to all of us, to people with dogs and without dogs. We do have Albany bulb, and Point Isabel, but as the citizen living in Berkeley, we request that the city invest enough in parks to keep up with the services the neighborhood cities offer.

Thank you, Akemi Nojima and Lothar Schubert on behalf of Asher  
1150 Park Hills Rd, Berkeley, CA 94708



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** wini williams <wini\_working4you@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 7:49 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** PI Jeff Malmuth  
**Subject:** Cesaar Chavez OLA

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am an elderly, disabled 50+year resident of Berkeley. The Marina has been a very special place for me, for my family and for my dogs over the course of my aging. Now in my 80's I find the peace and beauty; the animals, water, birds and people offer a diverse community, a restful way to start and/or end my day. The walk through the OLA is a perfect amount of exercise for me and I am able to allow my dog to run free for his exercise. Making this area smaller would not benefit anyone and would narrow down the space which allows for long runs for the dogs and leisurely walks for the people.

There are a lot of us using this park throughout the day in every type of weather. I make it my business to pick up all 'orphan' poops as well as trash, in the OLA and throughout the park. There is plenty of room for all who want to enjoy the Marina in its many forms.

Please leave it the way it is.

Wini Williams

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Angelino Roibal Giannini <angelinoroibalgiannini@students.berkeley.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 7:45 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I would like to write on behalf of the Berkeley High School Aviation club as a regular member who helps with administration. We have heard that there has been talk to restrict remote controlled aircraft at CCP (Cesar Chavez Park). This is highly concerning to all of our members as one of the only locations we can easily fly legally at is CCP. As the name of our club suggests, we focus on aviation. This means that we fly a large variety of remote controlled aircrafts. We are already heavily restricted by the drone laws in the US and this will be especially evident when remote ID gets enforced. Flying is important to all of us because it allows us to connect with each other through a somewhat rare and complex hobby. Helping each other with something so challenging at a young age is extremely valuable for all of us. It is obvious that we all have developed our social skills due to our club.

If remote controlled aircraft gets banned at CCP, our club will hinder. In our weekly meetings, we build various drones and RC planes. If we didn't have a place to fly them, there would be no way to improve and our work would be for nothing. I hope by writing I can prove the vitality of our hobby and rescue our right to socialize and have fun. Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,  
Angelino Roibal Giannini

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** The Entertaining Obsidian <teobeot@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 7:28 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am writing about the remote controlled aircraft hobby, flying at Cezar Chavez park, and my love to fly. I heard that there is talk about not allowing the flight of UAV's at CCP(Cezar Chavez Park). This is extremely concerning to me for many reasons. First, I'm in high school and we are always taught that high school is when you find your passion. Drones have been my passion. It has allowed me to fulfill my interest in engineering in a accessible way. Currently, any free time I have after school is spent on building, fixing, and researching about drones and their technology. Second, my high school has a aviation club which I attend and a huge part of our club is flying(obviously). The easiest way for us to do it legally is to fly at CCP. Finally, drone flying is my main source of social interaction other than school. The ability to relate to other people about something so rare and challenging is amazing.

So anyway, I write in hopes of continuing access to this amazing hobby as it's vital in many people lives including my own. Thank you for reading.

Respectfully,  
Teo Roibal

--

"Life is only long enough to assume, not to know." -Angelino R. G.

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Camille Watts-Zagha <camillewattszagha@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 6:55 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Preserve off leash area at Cesar Chavez

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I have been using and enjoying the off leash area at Cesar Chavez for years and I urge you to preserve it as-is. I bring out of town friends there and they marvel at the lovely setting and mixed, shared uses enjoyed by all. It is a treasure abcs should not be disturbed.

Thank you,  
Camille watts-Zagha  
1744 Cedar Street

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Judi thiel-silver <bigstrongyoyo93@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 2:50 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Off leash area

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Is this guy kidding?

First of all there's a TON of area for people who don't want to deal with dogs in the OLA. Why the heck does this guy want more? It's not like there's a lot of people in the non- dog area.

So, second- why does this guy need MORE non- dog area? Apparently he's a not a dog person and just doesn't like dogs. Which is cool- he doesn't need to get a dog. Why jerk around people who have dogs- no matter what he says there's plenty of area to share.

So, third- why doesn't want to share? Who the heck is he to say who gets dog area and who doesn't? How about we demand ALL of Cesar Chavez for off leash dog area? I mean, why not?

We had to fight hard just to hold onto Cesar Chavez in its current undeveloped state. Now we have to fight off some dog hater who wants it all? Cesar Chavez was developed for everyone- dog people and not dog people.

Please remember the original plan for Cesar Chavez and don't let some kook try to ruin it. Yet again. Why is it that some people can't look at Cesar Chavez and have to make it their own and run it for their own satisfaction?

A lot of people aren't using Cesar Chavez right now because of the profusion of foxtails. Foxtails are really dangerous for dogs and a lot of us are afraid to risk it.

Thank you for your time.

Judi Thiel Silver  
510 213- 5092

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** deny53@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 1:44 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commissioners,

The Off Leash Area is a very special place for me. My husband and I walk with our two dogs at the Off Leash Area each morning 7 days a week. We know many of the other committed and responsible dog walkers that come to the OLA each morning. We are also fortunate to meet new dog walkers at the OLA. We walk the entire perimeter of the OLA most mornings for exercise. At times we stop to socialize and at times we stop to just take in the magnificent views. My husband used to walk at the OLA with our two now grown sons. While less now, our sons still accompany us and love the OLA as they have known it for so many years.

It is very disheartening to think that some people, who we have never even seen in the OLA, want to reduce, fence, or possibly eliminate it. Many mornings we have seen one person set up a tripod and camera pointed in our direction. This makes me feel very uncomfortable.

In any event, I do hope that you, the Commissioners of the Park, that oversee this great treasure will help to ensure its preservation for our family and generations of other OLA dog walking families.

Respectfully,  
Daniela Calciolari  
Long-time Berkeley resident District 1

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 12:31 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Millar; Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** BMASP  
**Subject:** Re: Caesar Chavez Dog Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you so very much for your thoughtful email on the OLA. I am also going to forward your email to Roger Miller at the City of Berkeley as he should have a copy of it. Thanks again, Jeff

On Sun, Jul 2, 2023 at 12:08 PM Jennifer Millar <[jenniferjmillar@me.com](mailto:jenniferjmillar@me.com)> wrote:

Since 2009, through 2 dogs and a pandemic, I have been a regular at the Caesar Chavez Dog Park. It is a restorative area in so many ways. It is a place to be in solitude with nature or in communion with the other walkers. I am so grateful for the Park.

Jennifer Millar



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jennifer Millar <jenniferjmillar@me.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 11:54 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Caesar Chavez Dog Park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Since 2009, through 2 dogs and a pandemic, I have been a regular at the dog park. It is a place to relax, be in solitude with nature or commune with the other walkers. I am so grateful to have a safe place to walk my dog off leash. It is such an important spot for the community.

Jennifer Millar

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Sarah Elzea <sarahelzea@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 10:45 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings COB Staff,

I'm writing to comment on the OLA at Ceser Chavez.

I'm Sarah and my dog Cyndi and I are regular walkers at the OLA at Ceser Chavez. It is always great to get out there with my dog and enjoy the fresh air, birds, lovely scenery, and fellow dog walkers. The OLA has been a great area of respite for me before, during, and after the pandemic. I can't stress enough how helpful it has been for my mental, physical and social well being— There is a valuable community environment at the OLA. I have made many friends at the OLA and I have volunteered at regular Pick Up Poop (PUP) days. Last, there are so few open spaces in this area and there are so few spaces where I can take my dog and walk. Please do not make any changes to the OLA at CCP.

– Sarah & Cyndi

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Glenn Katon <glenn.katon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 02, 2023 10:21 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP; Humbert, Mark  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I have lived in Berkeley for over ten years and I enjoy visiting the Cesar Chavez off leash dog park several times a week. It's not just a beautiful park where my dog loves to play. It's an essential part of my Berkeley community. I meet and make friends there almost every time I go. Of the hundreds of times I've been there, I've never seen a person be disrespectful to others or the park. I love many things about living in Berkeley, and the off leash area at Cesar Chavez Park is near the top.

I urge you not to make changes to the off leash area of the park. Thank you for considering my request.

Glenn Katon  
2325 Woolsey St #2, Berkeley, CA 94705

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Morgan Price <funwithwords26@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 01, 2023 9:38 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks Commission,

I use the off-leash area at Caesar Chavez park about once a week. It is a great place for my whole family, including my 5-year old, to play and run around with our dog. We live in central Berkeley and there's really no other place nearby where we could do this. Plus we love watching all the different kinds of birds that we can see there, and we have made friends with several other dog owners who often come at the same time.

My impression is that the majority of the visitors to the park come with dogs, so I was very surprised to hear that there is a proposal to shrink or eliminate the off-leash area.

Sincerely,  
Morgan Price

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 01, 2023 7:39 PM  
**To:** Michael Bennett; Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Re: Please share this letter with the Parks Recreation and Waterfront Commission

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Michael,  
this is a wonderful email. Thank you very much. Would you mind if I share it with our group?

I'm also going to forward it to Roger Miller at the City of Berkeley since he can forward it to the PRW Commissioners.

Thanks again for taking the time to do this, Jeff

On Sat, Jul 1, 2023 at 7:16 PM Michael Bennett <[mbennett11@gmail.com](mailto:mbennett11@gmail.com)> wrote:

"Life begins where the pavement ends."

Whether you are two-legged or four-legged, pet owner or out for a stroll, there is magic in getting off the grid and into an unprocessed, unmediated environment such as the open area of Cesar Chavez Park. The rest of Berkeley is lively, crowded, and sometimes stressful. We desperately need the escape hatch that the open area provides. To alter it in any way would greatly lessen that magic and would be a loss for all. Please keep it just the way it is; it's perfect.

Michael Bennett

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** ECR <ericacr323@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 01, 2023 1:33 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC; Hahn, Sophie  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez Park--Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to register my strong feeling that any plan to reduce in size or confine the Off-Leash Area (OLA) of Cesar Chavez Park is a terrible idea. This part of the park is regularly enjoyed by many responsible dog owners who value their connection with nature along with the great pleasure of being there with their dogs. It is well known that pet ownership has tremendous and reciprocal benefits for human beings and their canine (in this instance) friends: the benefits of exercise, increase in empathy, unconditional love and affection, measurable lowering of blood pressure (at least in the humans!). We place a high value on the park's contribution to our mental and physical health, and object to would-be adversaries' intimidating and privacy-invading tactics--I am thinking primarily of some park users who photograph, without permission, other park users for no apparent reason other than to--yes!--intimidate and invade their privacy.

There is plenty of room at Cesar Chavez Park for all users to co-exist and receive the benefits they seek. The vast majority of park users--whether dog owners or not--are responsible and respectful of the park environment. I ask that the OLA be allowed to continue to flourish rather than be diminished. Surely the city of Berkeley would prefer to encourage the health supporting delight we get from exploring the natural surroundings of the park with our dogs, rather than squelch it.

Thank you for your attention to this concern.

Erica C. Roberts



## Miller, Roger

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**From:** Save CC <savecc6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 01, 2023 12:35 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP; Save CC  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear PRW Commissioners,

Last year when objecting to the proposed commercialization of Cesar Chavez Park the BMASP plan by HargreavesJones purportedly documented “979 questionnaire responses” about how people use the park. Out of 979 questionnaire responses, HargreavesJones reported, without evidence, that 320 were dog walkers making up 33% of the responses, I believe that to be an erroneous measurement.

We are a very large group of responsible and committed dog walkers at the Off-Leash area and I have spoken to nearly everyone personally. Not one person I’ve spoken with had ever been contacted, let alone responded to the purported questionnaire by HargreavesJones. Thankfully the ill-advised BMASP development plan for Cesar Chavez Park has been abandoned.

Recently Martin Nicholas wrote to your commission referring to the OLA stating:

The Off-Leash Area (OLA) is historically a new park use that serves only a minority of park users. An early BMASP survey found fewer than a third of park users came for their dogs. Observation shows that only a fraction of those who come with dogs use the OLA. The great majority of park visitors come for nature: fresh air, great views, grassland, trees, wildflowers, birds, peace and quiet, escape from urban stress. A comprehensive analysis of the OLA needs to focus on whether and how the OLA serves the park’s natural and ecological priorities. The only pertinent reference in the document is that “its boundaries should be appropriately fenced to protect sensitive ecological areas.” Since all areas of the park are sensitive ecological areas, the whole OLA should obviously be fenced. If it is too big to fence, it should be relocated and scaled down to manageable size.

Nicholas’s opposition to our dogs is often in the guise of “protecting” the wildlife. However, his disdain for dogs is clearly noted in his April 29, 2022 opinion piece in Berkeleyside writing:

Apart from a proposed “Enhancement” consisting of a “Dog Agility Course,” BMASP has nothing to say about the highly irregular unfenced **dog problem area in the belly of the park.**

His article concluded:

Agenda Item 15. Communications - Cesar Chavez Park - Off Leash Area

The international consulting firm running BMASP, Hargreaves Jones, prides itself on “rigorous investigation,” **but we’ve not yet seen a single HJ employee in the park asking park visitors’ opinions.** The plan, including the alleged public input portion, is being engineered from above.

Nicholas’s current comments are disingenuous at best as he now attempts to support his critical commentary about the “Off-Leash Area” with the same BMASP survey he earlier disparaged in his April 29, 2022 opinion piece in Berkeleyside.

Moreover, and absent evidence, Nicholas writes that, “Observation shows that only a fraction of those who come with dogs use the OLA.” Until the pandemic I had been walking my dogs in the Off-Leash Area each morning and each evening for over 15 years. In all these years, I have seen him many times, walking along the perimeter trail with his camera and tripod, but I have never once seen him walking in the Off-Leash Area. From my perspective, his comment about “observation” is unsupported by fact and merely an attempt to underscore his agenda to fence, relocate, and scale the OLA down.

Some people have indicated that the whole OLA should be fenced. A full perimeter fence is not necessary and goes against the sentiment of most people who love the “wildness” and open space of the park. In keeping with the spirit of the openness of Cesar Chavez Park I propose a limited fence at the entrance of the OLA, beginning a short distance from the newly located Porta Potty and extending east past the bulletin board. A fence at the entrance would let people know when they have reached the OLA. Vines could be planted along the fence to soften its appearance. Also the current northern fencing needs repairing. There is a large gap along the bottom of the fence that allows dogs to run under but prevents dog owners from retrieving them. The current northern fence is entirely ineffective. Finally, boulders or logs could be placed along the perimeter of the OLA. There are many seniors and disabled dog walkers, I am one of them and having boulders or logs placed along the perimeter will allow us to sit and rest during our valuable time at the OLA. I believe such a “fencing” compromise at the OLA will result in an enhancement for everyone who regularly enjoys our time there.

In any event, our large group of dedicated, responsible recreational dog walkers are committed to ensuring the OLA and surrounding areas are kept clean and safe. Stray, unaccounted for poops occur everywhere, even on the sidewalks of Berkeley. However, at the Park, many of us routinely pick up stray, unaccounted for poops wherever they are. Our group even meets twice a year for “Pick up Poop Awareness Day” during which time we fan out across the entire park to pick up stray poops and not just in the OLA! We also pick up plastic containers, discarded kites, and trash left at picnic areas.

Our group teams up for community building with UC Students for “Volunteer Day” to fill holes in the OLA.

The bottom line is that our large group of recreational dog walkers are extremely appreciative and respect the many aspects of Cesar Chavez Park including the birds, the flora and fauna and the many and varied insects. We respect all stakeholders including, but not limited to, walkers, joggers, cyclists, kite flyers, picnickers, photographers, artists and, last but not least, Off-Leash Area dog walkers at the OLA.

Agenda Item 15. Communications - Cesar Chavez Park - Off Leash Area

In contrast to negative commentary from some people, including Nicholas, the PRW commission should be aware of the positive mental, emotional, social, and physical contributions the Off-Leash Area provides to the many hundreds of responsible recreational Off-Leash walkers. The OLA is truly a valuable community environment. From my perspective, and that of our group, the OLA should be preserved in perpetuity for our current and future use; it is a treasure that must be conserved for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeff Malmuth

Long-time Berkeley (D1) resident

# Politics: The Marina as Strip Mall



*Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission meeting June 21 2023*

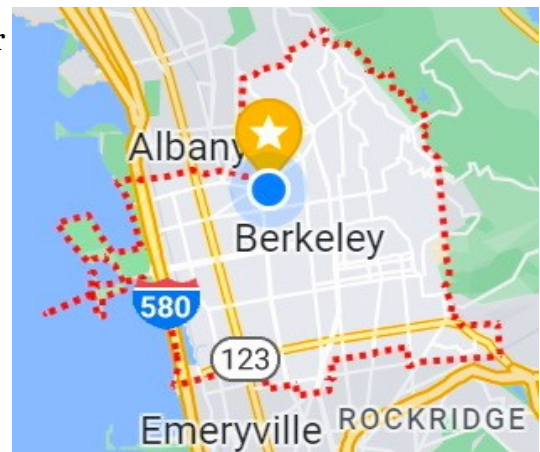
A subcommittee of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) Commission has produced a third draft of its proposed “Report & Recommendations to City Council Regarding Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan.” I’ve reviewed the first draft here on [May 12](#) and the second draft on [May 26](#) and again on [June 21](#). The third draft was presented at the June 21 PRW meeting. It is longer, eight pages of single-spaced text; you can [view it here](#). If it is approved by the full PRW Commission, as expected, it will be submitted to City Council. Here below is my commentary on the third draft. I’m going to focus mainly here on what the document has to say about Cesar Chavez Park, but a look at the bigger picture is necessary.

## “I. The Specific Plan Must be Organized Around a Vision for the Berkeley Waterfront Area“

The report begins by urging that the Waterfront Specific Plan must be organized around a “comprehensive vision.” It points out that currently there is a diversity of distinct “nodes of activity” such as the hotel, boat basin, Chavez Park, and others, and these don’t necessarily integrate and may be in competition or conflict. That’s quite true, but it’s normal and to be expected in any substantial and complex area.

The report holds up as a model the “Presidio/Tunnel Tops/Crissy Field” area in San Francisco which it calls a “resource with broad appeal to the entire community.” But on closer look, this San Francisco area actually consists of three different administrations with their separate budgets, each entity with its own website. It has been the scene of bitter controversies. It has also had the benefit of National Park money, such as a recent \$200M grant, plus major corporate donations. These may be lovely places but they are far from a valid comparable for the Berkeley waterfront.

A credible vision for the future has to begin with an accurate view of the present. The paper gives cause for concern on that score. The document says, for example, that “The Waterfront is one of the few areas of Berkeley that extends deep into the Bay that provides a myriad of water and Bayfront experiences.”



Unless Berkeley has suddenly annexed Emeryville and Albany, the Marina is not “one of the few” such areas. It is the **only** such Berkeley area. There is no Marina B.

There are other cognitive gaps. The document calls for establishing a kayak rental and launch facility, apparently unaware that a very good one already exists, run by [Cal Adventures](#). I’ve used it myself, years ago. Likewise it calls for a windsurfing launch site, when one has been in place on the south side for years and gets regular everyday use. [Cal Sailing Club](#) runs it. The report wants to build a cafe near the park, unaware that a nice cafe accessible to the public already exists in the [Hilton Doubletree hotel](#) next door to Chavez Park. The report calls for revival of the annual fishing derby, apparently forgetting that the fishing pier has been shut down for eight years now. A census of bird, plant, and other species in the park does not have to be constructed, it [already exists](#). There’s more of the same.

The report doesn’t get that the waterfront already has a comprehensive unifying vision. It is a *waterfront*. The unifying magnetism that holds all its “nodes of activity” together is contact with the waters of the Bay. That’s not only a geographical and social/psychological reality, it’s the core of the trusteeship under which the City has the privilege of managing the land. Remember, the whole Marina is a landfill, an encroachment on the waters of the Bay owned by the State of California. This is why, for example, the City can build recreational amenities related to water, such as boating and tourism, but cannot build condos or shopping malls. That’s the actual vision, and it’s a good one. The basic question we should be asking about any plan for the waterfront is, how does this relate to the water?

The subcommittee’s vision has no anchor in the waterfront. It sees the Marina as just another piece of commercial real estate to be developed. The draft says for example that “Community businesses and brands should be featured throughout the Waterfront Area....” That would turn the Marina into a strip mall. The principal report author, Allan Abshez, was heard at the recent PRW Commission meeting to complain about the State regulation that would bar, for example, a yoga studio at the Marina. Well, what does a yoga studio have to do with the water? If a yoga studio is OK, why not a sports equipment store? Or a motorcycle dealership? Or a Walmart? Or condos? Several other passages of the report envision broad commercial development without reference to the water connection. The underlying vision of this report, in all three drafts, has been to promote a Marina dedicated to commercialization and privatization. Like the [historic thrust of the Santa Fe Railroad and its successors](#), the report wants to bring commercial Berkeley to the waterfront, instead of bringing the waterfront to Berkeley. That’s not a vision that Berkeley has ever subscribed to, nor is it likely to do so in the future.

## **“II. Fiscal Recommendations”**

The previous drafts of the report contained meritorious criticism of the fiscal structure of the Marina. Current bookkeeping improperly burdens the semi-fictitious “Marina Fund” with expenses that are normally borne by the City, while conveniently omitting the major source of revenue that the Marina generates in the form of the hotel tax and the sales tax. As other critics have pointed out, the Marina is not broke. The Marina is a cash cow for the City’s

general fund. The subcommittee report recommends that Marina bookkeeping be fundamentally reworked.

This is useful, but not enough. The big gap is that the report doesn't attempt the required budgetary reconstruction. Maybe there is not enough information to do it in detail, but a reasonable estimate should be possible. What really is the fiscal status of the Marina, once the fake costs are omitted and the real revenues included? A credible Master Plan for the waterfront has to be founded on real bookkeeping. The report should figure out the Marina's fiscal reality and present it. That would be a contribution.

The report would also benefit by factoring in the proposed WETA ferry in the financial picture. No estimate of this project shows anything other than a big financial drain on the city's taxpayers. If the Marina is fiscally under water now, it will be sunk like the Titanic if the WETA ferry is built.

Without a more comprehensive review of Marina money, the report's numerous recommendations have no discernible funding. In its present form, the report is not likely to impress City Council.

### **“III. Planning Principles”**

This section of the report is a blend of apple pie generalities such as “great design” with a grab bag of specifics. Of course, everyone favors great design. What does that mean concretely?

Among the specifics, the draft recommends improving the pathway along Marina Boulevard and other trails. Good. That needs to be done. It also recommends abolishing car parking facing the Bay between the dead pier and the dead Hs. Lordship's site. Bad idea. Walk there on a summer's day and feel the frosty gale blowing in. You'll understand why people sit in their cars there instead of on benches to have lunch and view the Bay. Car parking in that spot is great design.

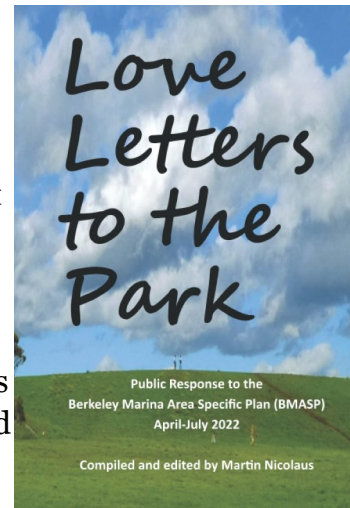
What's missing here is historical perspective. As the [2003 Master Plan](#) for the Marina illustrates, great planning principles often don't make it into execution. The 2003 plan, for example, called for building permanent bathrooms and a Park office in Chavez Park. Hasn't happened. Many of the excellent 2003 landscape design ideas never made it to the shovel stage.

The current report could make a real contribution if, instead of repeating platitudes, it analyzed why the great planning principles of the past died before execution. Why are these Master Plans routinely ignored? How are real decisions made? Don't look for answers in this subcommittee report.



## “IV. Cesar Chavez Park”

When it comes to Cesar Chavez Park, the report makes the not unreasonable point that there should be a comprehensive Master Plan for the park as part of the Waterfront Specific Plan. Last summer’s popular movement against commercial development in the park was just that, against *commercial* development. It was not opposed to park modifications of every kind. There are definitely areas needing improvement, and if they are done in a planned, thoughtful way, so much the better.



Here, too, the subcommittee report recites virtuous generalities about biodiversity, access to nature, and social equity. No one could disagree. The devil, however, is in the details. As soon as we get to specifics, the virtue goes out the window. Case in point:

The first and only specific area in Chavez Park that the report addresses is the Off-Leash Area (OLA). Here this third draft backs off from the previous drafts which correctly called for appropriate *fencing* of this loose-dog range to protect ecologically sensitive areas. Now it just wants the area to be “appropriately *demarcated*.”

We have had experience with demarcation. In late 2019, Marina supervisor Alexandra Endress undertook to post thin blue stakes, four feet tall, every ten feet along the dog park boundary to demarcate it. See [“Dog Park Expands,” Nov 6 2019](#). This demarcation effort was promptly sabotaged by extremist dog owners who pulled up the sticks and threw them in the trash. See [“Didn’t Look Up,” Nov 9 2019](#), photo right. More than 300 of these demarcation sticks linger unused in a Marina warehouse. Numerous boundary signs have similarly been destroyed or stolen. Every other demarcation effort short of a sturdy fence will meet the same treatment. Even if signs and markers remain standing, how will you get loose dogs to respect them? “Demarcation” only contributes to converting all of Chavez Park into a second edition of the Pt. Isabel dog park.



The subcommittee, two of whose three members are dog owners, does not ask the fundamental question how the unfenced Off-Leash Area serves the park’s biodiversity, ecological value, and attractiveness. A serious study would show that it has negative impacts on all three. Loose barks sink parks. Before any Master Plan for the park is adopted, the OLA needs to undergo an impartial and thorough reassessment of its value as a park asset in its present form.



The report also ignores the obvious fact that only a minority of park visitors come to the park with dogs. And only a fraction of those ever use the Off-Leash Area. Much of the time the area sits empty. And only a fraction of those who use the OLA love its lack of enclosure. Many dog owners would be happier with a more compact and contained area to keep their dogs from running out of sight, and to keep big dogs and little dogs separated. Many dog owners, and most other park visitors, would much prefer a professionally designed dog park.

The report proposes detailed enhancements to the OLA but has nothing more than vague generalities beyond that area. Yes, infrastructure. Yes, native plants. But there's not a word about the Native Plant Area, the Chavez/Huerta Solar Calendar, Glider Club hill, the ground-nesting bird grasslands, the signage throughout, the Barn Owl boxes, the seasonal Burrowing Owl sanctuary, the Open Circle Viewpoint, the Protected Nature Area, the Red-wing Blackbird breeding area, Peace Symbol Hill, the Flare Station, or the specific bodies of water on three sides.

The report bemoans habitat loss and species decline in general, without addressing the specific measures that destroy habitat and kill species in the park, such as [mowing during grassland bird nesting season](#) and inadequate [fencing to protect wintering Burrowing Owls](#).

A list of other specifics for Chavez Park on Page 5 deserves brief comment. A public café already exists [in the hotel](#). It has nice views of the boat basin. A very good [nature interpretive center](#) and an outdoor activity center for children and teens already exists in Shorebird Park. Where and why would a second one be built? A bike rental rack could be built in a side road off Spinnaker Way. A [kayak rental facility](#) already exists on the south side of University Avenue. Another cannot be built on the east side of the park because the North Basin water is a bird preserve under East Bay Regional Park jurisdiction, and the north and west sides of the park are too rough and windy. Outdoor weddings and birthdays have been held in the park since it was opened and do not need officially set-aside "areas." The picnic areas are fine, leave them alone. Don't clutter up the scenery with unneeded structures. Clutter is not great design.

Omitted from the list, but wanted by many parents: a kids' playground. And the report has nothing about [restrooms](#), [drones and motorized model airplanes](#), [off-road bicycles](#), [graffiti](#), or [open trash barrels](#). The report is out of touch with park visitor concerns of long standing.

Last summer, park visitors [including many dog owners](#) united in a common revolt against City proposals for commercial development inside the park, notably a concert venue in the main eastern meadow, and zip lines in the Native Plant Area. Although [we won this battle](#), we cautioned that commercial interests destructive to the park would be back. Proof is in the subcommittee's recommendation for something called an annual "Superbloom Festival." "Superbloom" has nothing to do with plants blooming. It's a sprawling high-



priced ticketed multi-concert event originating in [Munich, Germany](#). It features not just one but multiple concert venues like the hated “Lovebox” that BMA SP proposed. It’s a recipe for ecological disaster. Birders and doggers, despite many differences, will unite and rise up again if the park pursues the “Superbloom” menace.

## **Conclusion**

The concluding sections of the subcommittee report argue that Marina development should not be primarily focused on hotel rooms and restaurants, but should include a broad variety of commercial uses. “Berkeley businesses, brands and arts should be encouraged to have a presence in the Waterfront Area so that they can play a central role in promoting the Waterfront Area’s identity as an expression of the Berkeley community.” That florid language means, in so many words, converting the waterfront into a strip mall and the park into a concert venue. That’s the real vision of the subcommittee report.

The report asks that these and other uses should be approved on a case-by-case basis by the members of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission. Absent clear and principled criteria, the case-by-case approach is an invitation to conflicts of interest and corruption. The commission is an unelected body. Making decisions of this kind is not part of the commission members’ job descriptions or usual qualifications. In recent years, the City Manager has reduced the powers of commissions to purely advisory roles.

If the draft in this form goes to City Council, I intend to submit a Park Visitors’ Majority Report by way of an alternative, informing Council of the realities on the ground and urging Council to cast a skeptical eye on the report as it concerns Chavez Park.

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Kellicia Kotsatos <kellicia\_kotsatos@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2023 4:06 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** "Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)."

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Please save off leash areas of Cesar Chavez parks as this is highly treasured by many many people.

**The OLA is truly a valuable community environment. From my perspective, and that of our group, the OLA should be preserved in perpetuity for our current and future use; it is a treasure that must be conserved for everyone.**

Kellicia Wong Kotsatos

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Stefani Berger <stefaniberger43@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2023 2:02 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** Save CC  
**Subject:** The OLA is critical for my well being; Please share this letter with the PRW

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I am a 71 year old woman. I was recently diagnosed with breast cancer and I was required to have consequent surgery. I can not express how important the OLA has been for my physical and emotional wellness. Because I was limited in holding the leashes for my dogs, walking the short distance to the OLA was a blessing in so many ways. The OLA is where I reclaimed my spirit, my strength, my love of life. Watching my dogs also play freely lifted my spirits. Please preserve the OLA in perpetuity for our current and future use. It has been my free space to heal and glow in the environment. I do not want to be fenced in!!!!

Best,

In dance!

**Stefani**

*"In this time of crisis, the arts give us hope, elevate our spirits  
and help us transcend the difficulties facing us now."*

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** BMASP  
**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2023 10:47 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Chinlund  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com; Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** RE: Cesar Chavez Park, Off-Leash area

Good Morning,

Thank you for your email, we appreciate your comments. I have cc'd Roger to include your email to the PRW Commission. Take care and have a great day! 😊

*Christina Henderson*  
Associate Management Analyst  
1947 Center St, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
(510) 981-6309

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**From:** Jennifer Chinlund <jchinlund@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:00 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger <RMiller@berkeleyca.gov>; BMASP <BMASP@berkeleyca.gov>  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez Park, Off-Leash area

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

I'm writing because I feel that daily access to walk on the land by the Bay is one of the most important things in my life. I take my dogs for outings there twice a day and have done this for 25 years, the years I have lived in the East Bay. I've always felt nourished and lifted up by the enormous spaces, the beauty of the sky, rain shine or fog, the plants, the birds. And especially during the past three years it has been a source of connection, with the open space vs. the confinement of my home, and with the encounters with other people walking there vs the isolation of the pandemic.

I take my next door neighbor once every week to join me on my walk because she is progressing into dementia and can no longer drive. She becomes ecstatic when she enters the off leash area and frequently exclaims at the size of it and says "we are so lucky to have this huge space by the water!" How good it is for her to be part of nature as well as having a safe home with a partner who cares for her.

So I'm writing as someone who cherishes the Off-Leash area to ask that it be left as it is. I find it crucial to my emotional health, and so does my neighbor.

Thank you-  
Jennifer Chinlund

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** BMASP  
**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2023 10:32 AM  
**To:** Evelyn Hunter  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com; Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** RE: Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

Good morning,

Thank you for your email. We appreciate your feedback. Have a great day 😊

*Christina Henderson*  
Associate Management Analyst  
1947 Center St, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
(510) 981-6309

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**From:** Evelyn Hunter <evelyn.n.hunter@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:38 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger <RMiller@berkeleyca.gov>; BMASP <BMASP@berkeleyca.gov>  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello!

I'm writing to ask to preserve the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area in its current state.

Being a part of the community of folks who use the OLA regularly has been very important to me – the container of recreational dog walking has provided a way for me to break out of social isolation, build new friendships, and have routine in my life in a way that's low pressure and COVID-safe.

I appreciate having a scenic and beautiful place to take my dog, and love to take my friends to walk with us there when they visit. Our diverse, multi-generational community of dog-walkers values the land very much and takes stewardship of it very seriously. We keep our dogs within the OLA, clean up trash, and fill holes. I don't have a car, and Cesar Chavez is the only greenspace nearby where I can take my dog and allow her to be off-leash.

Please don't waste valuable city resources fencing or restricting one of the few open spaces available to the Berkeley dog-walking community.

Thank you!

eve hunter  
West Berkeley Resident

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** David McGraw <david.mcgraw.ca@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2023 7:04 AM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** Berkeley off leash are at Cesar Chavez Park

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a 81 year old widower who has lived in the East Bay for 45 years, ever since completing an advanced degree at Cal Berkeley. The last eighteen years of my career were spent as an executive at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. My wife and daughter both worked for Peet's Coffee & Tea for many years and we have deep roots in Berkeley and the East Bay. I now live in a retirement Center with my dog Chloe, a Standard Poodle (a Parti Poodle.) Chloe is my service dog.

Chloe and I enjoy Cesar Chavez Park every day, even when the weather is not great. This time we have together is very important to the mental wellbeing of both of us. We know many of the 'regulars', people and dogs, who frequent the park. We have made some fast friendships as a result. We also participate in the twice yearly 'poop pick-up' (and other trash removal) days with the CC group. Virtually all dog owners who frequent the park do so because it is beautiful and tranquil, but also because the dog owners who come to CC Park are very responsible. It's a safe space for people and pets. There is plenty of room for both dog owners and those without dogs. The park is an integral part of our lives and we respect all of its rules.

Reducing the size of the off-leash area would be a real shame and there is no compelling reason to do so. Please do not give in to the noisy few who want to limit the rights of responsible dog owners.

David McGraw  
St. Paul's Towers Retirement Center



**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Jennifer Chinlund <jchinlund@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:00 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** savecc6@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Cesar Chavez Park, Off-Leash area

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW).

I'm writing because I feel that daily access to walk on the land by the Bay is one of the most important things in my life. I take my dogs for outings there twice a day and have done this for 25 years, the years I have lived in the East Bay. I've always felt nourished and lifted up by the enormous spaces, the beauty of the sky, rain shine or fog, the plants, the birds. And especially during the past three years it has been a source of connection, with the open space vs. the confinement of my home, and with the encounters with other people walking there vs the isolation of the pandemic.

I take my next door neighbor once every week to join me on my walk because she is progressing into dementia and can no longer drive. She becomes ecstatic when she enters the off leash area and frequently exclaims at the size of it and says "we are so lucky to have this huge space by the water!" How good it is for her to be part of nature as well as having a safe home with a partner who cares for her.

So I'm writing as someone who cherishes the Off-Leash area to ask that it be left as it is. I find it crucial to my emotional health, and so does my neighbor.

Thank you-  
Jennifer Chinlund

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** kellie gan <kelli06@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:42 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the PRW

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I understand there is some noise about redefining/ reducing the Off-leash area (OLA) of Caesar Chavez Park. Please reconsider and leave the OLA as it is.

I and many friends and acquaintances as I work in the service industry and daily talk with many people who frequent CCP rely on the park and OLA as a way to meet new people and keep a social network while getting in daily exercise.

I apologize that my communication skills are not the best but I hope I get my point across.

Kellie Gan  
Sent from my iPhone

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Evelyn Hunter <evelyn.n.hunter@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:38 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger; BMASP  
**Cc:** save6cc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please share this letter with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission (PRW)

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello!

I'm writing to ask to preserve the Cesar Chavez Park Off-Leash Area in its current state.

Being a part of the community of folks who use the OLA regularly has been very important to me – the container of recreational dog walking has provided a way for me to break out of social isolation, build new friendships, and have routine in my life in a way that's low pressure and COVID-safe.

I appreciate having a scenic and beautiful place to take my dog, and love to take my friends to walk with us there when they visit. Our diverse, multi-generational community of dog-walkers values the land very much and takes stewardship of it very seriously. We keep our dogs within the OLA, clean up trash, and fill holes. I don't have a car, and Cesar Chavez is the only greenspace nearby where I can take my dog and allow her to be off-leash.

Please don't waste valuable city resources fencing or restricting one of the few open spaces available to the Berkeley dog-walking community.

Thank you!

eve hunter  
West Berkeley Resident

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** David Tepper <davidtepper@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 6:54 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Subject:** OLA at Cesar Chavez park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I have been going there for many years, both with and without a dog and have always regarded it as a wonderful place. The people there are very courteous and the dogs well controlled. I have never had a problem and always appreciated how fortunate we all are to have such a wonderful resource. There will always be some who believe it should be restricted and developed. But the fact is it is enjoyed by all sorts of people, Walkers, flying enthusiasts, yoga practitioners etc. I can see no reason at all to change the status quo because a few people have their personal gripes. It is a resource for too many others to be altered in any significant way. Thank you. Dave Tepper

**Miller, Roger**

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**From:** Joyce Freedman <rejoycef@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 6:47 PM  
**To:** Miller, Roger  
**Cc:** BMASP  
**Subject:** Re Parks Recreation and Waterfront Commission

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom it May Concern: I am one of a large group of dedicated, responsible, recreational, dog walkers, committed to ensuring the Offleash area and surrounding areas are kept clean and safe. I have been walking 3 to 4 times a week in the Offleash area of the park for the past 35 years. I routinely pick up stray dog poops, and other peoples trash, discarded kites and trash left at picnic areas. Cesar Chavez recreational dog walking is wonderful exercise for my aging body, and I am so grateful for the vistas of the Bay from the memorial, the numerous and tuneful Redwing blackbirds, meadowlarks, golden crown sparrows, not to mention pelicans, and other sea birds that flourish in the bay. The Offleash area brings me peace, and as I tell my children "it's my happy place." The Offleash area needs to remain in its current acreage, entirely unfenced and free to all.

Thank you,  
Joyce Freedman  
Berkeley CA 94505

Sent from my iPhone