



## PARKS, RECREATION, AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION

### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 7:00 P.M.  
2800 Park St, Berkeley, CA 94703  
(Frances Albrier Community Center – Auditorium)

Parks and Waterfront Commission

### Agenda

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

1. **Call to Order** (Chair).
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary).
3. **Land Acknowledgement:** The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair).
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for September 13, 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 the Public Arts Project at Aquatic Park** (Cox).
10. **Discussion/Action: Possible Parks Tax Increase Ballot Measure** (Wozniak).
11. **Discussion/Action: Proposed Ohlone Greenway Improvement Project** (Ferris).\*\*
12. **Discussion/Action: Feedback on Draft Waterfront Specific Plan** (Diehm/Kawczynska).\*
13. **Discussion/Action: Update on the Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) and EIR process & PRW Comm subcommittee rpt on City's WSP** (Ferris/Abshez).\* (see item 16 below)  
(See the City's Draft Waterfront Specific Plan at <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/WSP-DRAFT-2023-09-22.pdf>)
14. **Information: Recent Council Reports.**\*
15. **Future Agenda Items:** Inclusionary Playgrounds (Cox); Public Art (Lavvorn); Priorities for parks capital projects FY2023-24; PRW Commission Workplan 2023; Parks Development Fee; Citywide Accessibility Plan; Berth Fee Waivers for community service organizations; Locations for Dog Parks
16. **Communications.** Memo to Council re: PRW Comm subcommittee rpt on WSP, 9/19/2023 (Kawczynska); Ltr to Council re: Taplin Item for San Pablo Park Pool funding to State, 09/13//2023.
17. **Next PRW Commission meeting:** Wednesday, November 8, 2023 (in-person).
18. **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> - Alyssa Hurtado
<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, September 13, 2023, 7:00 P.M., Live Oak Community Ctr, Fireside Room

**Minutes – Draft**

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

1. **Call to Order** (Chair). 7pm.
2. **Roll Call** (Secretary). Present: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado; Kawczynska; Lee; Ranuzzi; Absent: Avellar; Wozniak.
3. **Land Acknowledgement:**
4. **Action: Approval of Agenda** (Chair). (M/S/C: Ranuzzi/Lee/U): Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado; Kawczynska; Lee; Ranuzzi; Noes: None; Absent: Avellar; Wozniak.
5. **Action: Approval of Minutes** for September 13, 2023 (Chair).\* (M/S/C: Diehm/Hurtado/U) with correction: Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado; Kawczynska; Lee; Ranuzzi; Noes: None; Absent: Avellar; Wozniak.
6. **Public Comment.** a) Kathryn Langstaff, Living Shoreline; b) Jim McGrath, Waterfront Specific Plan; c) Kelly Hammargren; d) Gordon Stout, Specific Plan.
7. **Chair’s Report.** Swimmers at South Cove (Kawczynska); Notify the secretary re: annual request to receive notification of PRW Commission agenda (Kawczynska); Golden Gate Fields closing Dec 18 (Kawczynska); SF Chronicle article re parks within 10 min walk (Kawczynska); Microforests (Diehm).
8. **Director’s Report** (Ferris). Update was provided.
9. **Discussion/Action: PRW Commission Memo & Recommendations to City Council Regarding the Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan** Abshez/ Diehm/ Kawczynska).\* Discussion was held. Public Comment: a) Jim McGrath; b) Kelley Hammargren.
10. **Discussion/Action: Update about the process of Public Art project in Aquatic Park** (Kawczynska/Cox).\* Update was provided. Public Comment: a) Kelly Hammargren.
11. **Discussion/Action: Councilmember Taplin Request for State Funds for Pools and funding referrals for Dreamland and Shorebird Play Structures** (Kawczynska).\* Discussion was held. M/S/C (Diehm/Ranuzzi/U) to ask council to forward the commission’s support letter to the State Budget Committee; Ayes: Abshez; Cox; Diehm; Hurtado; Kawczynska; Lee; Ranuzzi; Noes: None; Absent: Avellar; Wozniak.
12. **Discussion/Action: PRW Commission Workplan 2023 (DRAFT) and approval of new liaisons** (Kawczynska/Diehm).\* Held over.
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. **Adjournment:** 9:20pm.

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

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

- Commissioners in attendance: 7 of 9 appointed.
- Public in attendance: 5
- Public speakers: 5

**\*Note:** For any handouts distributed at the meeting, please see the Draft Minutes for September 13, 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>

## COMMUNICATION

DATE: October 11, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and Berkeley City Councilmembers

FROM: Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

RE: Feedback on Draft Waterfront Specific Plan

After review of the Draft Waterfront Specific Plan (9/22/23) the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission still has a few questions and comments about the report to bring to your attention for further clarification. We would like to recognize all the work staff and the consultants have done to bring the draft report before you today. The items below outline our concerns and requests for further action.

### PROCESS

1. **Ensure public is informed and included in the EIR Process.** We request that a detailed description of the upcoming steps of the EIR be posted to the city's website, including how and where the public can provide questions and input on the initial Scoping Process.
2. **Add critical data on Pier/Ferry and 199 Seawall Dr.** During the WSP public process both the pier/ferry and 199 Seawall Dr. projects were not allowed to be discussed. Critical economic data for the WETA ferry, including economic feasibility studies, were not discussed, aren't included in the draft plan, and should be added. This includes how a ferry might impact the economic, environmental and recreational use of the Waterfront. In addition, development at 199 Seawall Dr. (the former Hs Lordships) has not been brought forward for public review.
3. **Review Updated Parking Study.** The pending parking study should be completed and publicly reviewed at the PRW Commission (and other relevant commissions). Parking is one of the most consequential issues at the Waterfront and of great public interest.

### CONTENT

The commission requests that additional information be added to the pending WSP Draft document on the following topics:

1. **Build Diversity Representation.** Provide specific ideas how diversity representation can be increased, a key goal of the planning process.

2. **Document Value of Existing Non-Profit Groups.** Add detailed descriptions and data on existing non-profit groups that serve the south side, including Cal Sailing, Cal Adventures, Dragon Boats, Pegasus Voyages, Open Water Swim Clubs and other nonprofit recreational groups; include services provided and number of people served (members and general public).
3. **Document Economic Value of and Goals to Support Shoreline Fishing.** The Waterfront has historically served a diverse population of fisherpeople, providing sustenance and economic benefit. Shoreline fishing is estimated to bring a total consumer surplus in the millions of dollars and is a valued water sport.
4. **Ensure Transparency on Events and Concerts in Cesar Chavez Park.** If large scale events and concerts are still being considered at Cesar Chavez Park, we would like to be able to review detailed information about the permit process and fee structure; document the process for evaluating possible impacts to the environment, thresholds and criteria used, including potential noise and light pollution, and how these impacts will be anticipated and mitigated. It is suggested that notification of pending large scale events and concerts be reviewed by the PRW commission and other relevant commissions, during a publicly-noticed meeting, in advance of an approval.
5. **Document Input and Involvement of Indigenous Peoples.** Identify potential reparative and restorative actions at the Waterfront.
6. **Document Biological Resources and Plan to Align with California's 30x30 and Biodiversity Initiatives.** Enhance the document with species list from eBird, iNaturalist, or equivalent source; acknowledge biodiversity declines and solutions; provide suggestions how to support example selected species, including threatened, resident and migratory; shift the narrative away from non-native ("adaptive") species and set minimum goals for native species vegetation by location.
7. **Minimize Light Pollution.** Add lighting guidelines as outlined by recognized leaders on minimizing light pollution such as the International Dark-Sky Association, to ensure environmental stewardship and no net gains in light pollution.
8. **Document PRW Commission's Advisory Role.** Although we discussed reports and updates during numerous meetings about the WSP/BMASP, including our important 7/13/22 "listening session" (200 attendees) centering around Cesar Chavez Park, there is scant reference to our involvement in the draft report.
9. **Expand on Visions for Seawall Drive.** The draft plan lacks references to potential developments along Seawall Drive. Add a more detailed description of the options, including increased opportunities for fishing and other water- and land-based activities.

Agenda Item 14. Recent Council Reports**PARKS AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION****RECENT COUNCIL REPORTS**

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

**October 3, 2023 (regular)**

1.-Utility Easement: Bolivar Drive – East Bay Municipal Utility District

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-10-03%20Item%2001%20Ordinance%207883.pdf>

**September 12, 2023 (regular)**

2.-Contract No. 32200058 Amendment: ACI Payments, Inc for Recreation Online Registration System Credit Card Transaction Processing Fees

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12%20Item%2002%20Contract%20No.%2032200058%20Amendment.pdf>

3.-Stipend for Echo Lake Camp Staff

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12%20Item%2003%20Stipend%20for%20Echo%20Lake%20Camp.pdf>

21.-Grant Applications: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and State Funds For Six City Infrastructure Improvement Projects

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12%20Item%2021%20Grant%20Applications%20Bipartisan.pdf>

22.-Utility Easement: Bolivar Drive – East Bay Municipal Utility District

URL: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-09-12%20Item%2022%20Utility%20Easement%20Bolivar%20Drive.pdf>



COMMUNICATION

To: Berkeley Mayor and City Councilmembers

From: Claudia Kawczynska, Chair of Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

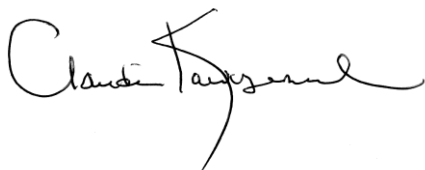
Date: August 14, 2023

**Re:** Memo & Recommendations Regarding the Waterfront Specific Plan

At the July 12 meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront commission we unanimously approved the memorandum that was presented to the full body by the WSP subcommittee. That subcommittee was established during our April meeting, for the purpose of examining and reporting on the status of the waterfront planning process to date and providing recommendations to you. The subcommittee was comprised of Allan Abshez (D8) as chair, Brennan Cox (D5), Erin Diehm (D4) and myself (D2). We worked on a tight deadline in order to meet, what was then, the proposed date for the staff to present their report to you. The issues that we addressed have been presented and discussed during numerous meetings of our commission, as well as at focus groups, webinars and council presentations—as well as feedback from numerous members of the public.

We are anticipating receiving the staff's report before the next PRW meeting on September 13, and, at that time, we might suggest revisions to this memo, or add a supplemental to the one that is attached now. Either way, we hope that these recommendations will be of value to you and will help to guide you through the next phase of the planning process.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our work. If you have any questions or wish to discuss these matters further with your appointees or with any member of our WSP subcommittee, do let me know at [claudia94710@gmail.com](mailto:claudia94710@gmail.com).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claudia Kawczynska', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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

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

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 and earlier groundbreaking plans, the Waterfront Area does not have an updated 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 longer) 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.

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

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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 locally 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 function as an East Bay focal point of the nearby Bay Trail. A kayak rental and launch facility, in a carefully selected location, should also be provided

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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**

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,

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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, modes of transportation, and programs should be included in the Master Plan. Cesar Chavez Park should be a safe place for the disabled and persons walking.

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.

D. 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, 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

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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.

E. 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.

F. 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
- Areas for outdoor weddings and other celebrations.

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

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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 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

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<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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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 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

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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. To ensure equitable access and encourage visits to the park, especially families with children, free short-term parking should be available for up to two/three/four hours of use. For those who want to stay longer, parking should be fee-based.

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.

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## MEMO

To: Berkeley Mayor and City Council Members

From: Claudia Kawczynska, Chair PR&W commission

Date: September 13, 2023

Re: Letter to Senate Budget Committee about funding for San Pablo Park Pool

At the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront meeting last night the commission authorized the submission of the attached letter to you. Following the correct procedures, we are requesting that our letter of support for securing funding for the San Pablo Park Pool be sent to the State Budget Committee as well.

Thank you for considering this important project for future funding. It is so important to the people in West and South Berkeley and one that the PRW during its T1 deliberations gave whole hearted support to.

September 13, 2023

Senate Budget Committee & Assembly Budget Committee  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission would like to endorse City Council's request for state budget allocations for capital improvements at San Pablo Park that includes the Frances Albrier Community Center and a new San Pablo Park Pool.

These are projects that initially came to our commission during deliberations for Measure T1, a bond that voters approved in 2016. And while this project received our recommendation, funding was only available for its planning and design phase. As Councilmember Terry Taplin noted, we had concurred that since it was not possible to renovate or build the Willard Pool (that is owned by the BUSD and not the city of Berkeley) that "we feared that many children in our city will not have the opportunity to learn to swim." Since San Pablo Park generally serves areas of Berkeley that historically have included Black and Latinos and lower income residents, providing such a recreational opportunity is one of environmental and social justice.

According to USA Swimming as of 2018 70% of African-Americans and 60% of Hispanic/Latino children don't know how to swim and their study showed that one of the main reasons for this is their neighborhoods have a lack of access to facilities. Not learning to swim also translates into a segment of our community who might be hesitant to pursue other water sports offered at the Berkeley Waterfront, like windsurfing, kayaking, open water swimming or even dragon boating. A CDC report in 2021 CDC said "that long-standing [racial disparities](#) in drowning deaths have not improved since 1999. According to the report, Black Americans are 1.5 times more likely to drown than white Americans."

A study from Northwestern University found that:

- Only 46% of Black and 47% of Latino children had swimming lessons, compared to 72% of white children.
- Less than 4% of white parents reported never learning to swim, compared to 26% of Black parents and over 32% of Latino parents.
- CDC reports Black children ages 10-14 years old drown in pools at rates over seven times higher than white children.

Construction costs have increased 26% over the last two years, so if we defer this project further, the costs will surely increase will increase even more than its \$14.8M projection. Please consider helping us construct a competitive and recreational pool complex at San Pablo Park. This park's symbolic and material importance in our struggle for racial justice cannot be overstated.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Claudia Kawczynska  
Chair, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission