



Office of the Mayor

Mayor's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Message



June 24, 2019

To the Honorable Members of the City Council and fellow Berkeley residents,

I am honored to present my proposed Supplemental Budget Recommendations for the City of Berkeley for Fiscal Years 2020-21, which implements initiatives proposed by the City Council, and prioritizes public safety, pedestrian safety, housing affordability, and creating an equitable and sustainable community. These budget recommendations reflect both the City Manager's budget recommendations (the rows colored white in the attached spreadsheets) and Council budget referrals (the rows highlighted yellow in the attached spreadsheets). For a list of my detailed recommendations see Attachments 1-4. In partnership with our City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley and Budget staff we identified a way to prioritize Council and staff initiatives through funding some projects in June and pre-funding projects and positions in November. We also included the recommendations of the Budget and Finance Policy Committee. I want to thank the Committee for their thorough review and thoughtful recommendations. I am pleased that our budget is balanced, ensures long-term fiscal sustainability and addresses important community priorities.

In addition to recommendations for allocation this June, at the suggestion of the City Manager, I am also proposing that Council pre-approve both Council and staff recommendations when the

FY 2019 budget closes and Council takes up the Annual Appropriations Ordinance in November. This will allow projects and positions which need to be funded immediately to take effect, and those recommendations which can wait until the fiscal close receive approval.

Our budget is a reflection of our values and priorities. My budget recommendations help advance important Council priorities and will ensure a more equitable and sustainable city. For more specific information on my recommendations please read below.

I look forward to your input on these recommendations between now and budget adoption on June 25, 2019. Thank you for the honor of serving as your Mayor.



Mayor Jesse Arreguín

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Addressing Public Safety

Public safety is the top responsibility of local government. Berkeley is facing increasing threats from the risk of wildfire to pedestrian safety. From recent high-profile vehicular crashes involving pedestrians to the growing threat of wildfires, we have listened to the community's concerns and agree that these safety threats must be addressed proactively. We are also working with our Fire Department to identify safety improvements and upgrades to our ambulance fleet.

Implementing Vision Zero

Berkeley takes pride in having some of the highest levels of pedestrian and bicyclist commuting in the country. But we must invest in providing safe and accessible transportation options for all. High profile crashes have made it clear that we must make a serious commitment to Vision Zero if we are to yield the results that our community deserves. The budget provides funding for traffic calming and safety improvements at the following locations:

- 62nd St/King St
- San Pablo Ave/Ashby Ave
- University Ave/Acton St
- San Pablo Ave/Addison St
- Martin Luther King Jr Way/Stuart St
- Alcatraz Ave
- Solano Ave

We are also proposing funding to hire additional traffic engineers and a Senior Planner to help

move forward Vision Zero with the goal of eliminating all pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries. We are budgeting an additional \$100,000 towards pedestrian and bicycle safety projects, in addition to \$1 million for ADA improvements and \$1 million over the next two-years for sidewalk improvements.

Protection against Wildfires

Our climate is changing, making us even more vulnerable to wildfires. Berkeley is no stranger to this disaster, with a wildfire in 1923 levelling the Northside neighborhood and the 1991 Firestorm still fresh in the memories of many. As we have seen over the last two years, urban wildfires have become commonplace, and what happened in Santa Rosa and Paradise could happen here. That is why over the next two years, we are investing \$180,000 in disaster response training and equipment and \$233,333 in vegetation management. We are also proposing consideration in November of \$1.1 million on an outdoor emergency warning system to be used in the event of a wildfire and when the State's early warning system is operational, to alert of an impending earthquake.

Supporting our Police Department

Our Police Department continues its trend of increasing the number of sworn police officers, but there still is work to be done to ensure that we have a fully staffed department with the equipment they need to serve our community. My budget proposes funding for an additional 4 Community Service Officers and additional support staff. Additionally, we are investing in improvements to communication devices and upgrading the police fleet. We are also funding a gun buyback program that has proven to be an effective method of removing guns from the streets in other cities.

Creating a Sustainable Community

With climate change dominating headlines, we know that time is running out if we are to stop the catastrophic impacts of environmental destruction. We need a budget that reflects our commitment to green and sustainable growth. We are investing in expanding EV charging stations for both the public and the City's fleet. We are continuously working to upgrading our aging infrastructure with 21st century technology to create long-lasting and environmentally friendly streets and facilities.

Leading on Zero Waste Efforts

Earlier this year, Berkeley made national headlines by becoming the first city to pass a Single Use Disposable Foodware Ordinance. Other cities are already following our lead, but we are investing in implementation to make this a reality. We are also increasing the Zero Waste Division's size by 6.5 Full Time Employees as we continue to accelerate efforts on zero waste. Plans are underway to redevelop the Transfer Station into a state-of-the-art facility that will allow us to meet our zero waste goals.

Promoting Worker Cooperatives

Sustainability is not just about the environment but is also about ensuring the economic stability of our businesses. Berkeley is home to countless small businesses. Many are owned by people who are reaching the age of retirement, and contingency plans must be in place to keep these businesses running. Under the direction of the Council, the Office of Economic Development has been working with Project Equity, a non-profit that is dedicated to advancing worker cooperatives, to provide technical aid to businesses looking to transition to a worker-ownership model. We are doubling down on these efforts and increasing funding by \$50,000 for technical support and assistance to continue the legacy of our small businesses while empowering their employees.

Maintaining a Diverse and Equitable City

Our diversity is part of what makes Berkeley the city that we all love. All residents deserve access to the same quality of services, regardless of whether they live in the hills or the flatlands. My budget recommendations aims to level the playing field to allow all of us the opportunities we need to succeed.

West Campus Pool Opening Year-Round

Ever since the West Campus Pool had its hours significantly cut during budget cuts in 2004, there has been a strong support from the community to reinstate the pool being open-year round. West Campus is one of two pools that are publically accessible in Berkeley, with King Pool in North Berkeley being open year-round. It is not fair nor equitable for North Berkeley to have a year-round pool while South/West Berkeley does not. That is why I am proposing \$292,127 to expand operating hours for West Campus, allowing it to be open year-round, including on weekends.

New Paid Internship Openings

From rising rents to ballooning student debt, young adults are facing increasing financial difficulties, especially when so many careers require previous experience for entry-level jobs. Unpaid internships are not a viable option for many, which is why Council is investing \$13,500 annually for stipends for internships at the Mayor and Council offices. Additionally, there will be an expansion of the existing paid internship program for our Public Works Department.

Opportunities for Underserved Children

Berkeley's 2020 Vision is a program that aims to eliminate racial disparities in academic achievement in Berkeley's public schools. In an ongoing effort to eliminate the opportunity gap that exists, we are hiring a consultant to engage the community in equity activities while gathering data that can be used to close the gap. Additionally, we are continuing our partnership with Supply Bank.org which provides school supplies to low-income students at the beginning of each school year.

Focus on Housing, Anti-Displacement, and Homeless Services

The people of Berkeley have made it clear at the ballot box that the biggest priorities are housing and homelessness. With the passage of Measure O and P in 2018, we now have millions of dollars we can use for the development of affordable housing, anti-displacement, and homeless services. Recommendations for spending funds from those measures will be made by independent, citizen-run commissions, and on top of that I am proposing funding for various programs to lift up the most vulnerable members of our community.

Unprecedented Investment in Anti-Displacement

One key to reducing homelessness is to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place. That is why this year I am proposing an investment of \$900,000 towards anti-displacement projects. The breakdown is as follows:

- \$275,000 each (\$550,000 total to the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC) and Eviction Defense Center (EDC) for Eviction Legal Defense and Counseling for Low and Moderate Income Tenants
- \$250,000: Housing Retention Program
- \$100,000: Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool

The EBCLC and EDC will be tasked with providing a variety of anti-displacement services, including legal representation in unlawful detainer cases, eviction defense services, and providing social workers. We have provided funding to these organizations before to provide successful representation, and this increasing in funding will allow them to help out even more clients. The Housing Retention Program provides a one-time grant of up to \$5,000 for low-income tenants to prevent eviction due to non-payment of rent or failed inspection due to excess clutter. The Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool provides funding for rapid rehousing resources available to individuals experiencing homelessness in Berkeley. Together, these funds will mean the difference between living in an apartment and living on the streets for many individuals.

Both the Housing Advisory Commission and 4x4 Joint Committee on Housing recommended allocating \$900,000 from Measure U1 tax receipts for increased Anti-Displacement funding.

Additional Homeless Services

Berkeley already spends more on homeless services per capita than any other city in the region. But there still is a long way to go before the homeless crisis is solved. While no one city can solve this alone, we remain committed to increasing our services to meet the needs of the homeless community. We are providing \$17,000 to the Dorothy Day Drop-In Center for extension of hours for the emergency shelter. We will also be providing \$15,000 to a recreational vehicle mobile pump-out to make sure that any sewage is properly disposed of instead of entering our creeks and Bay.

Studying Housing Options

Earlier this year the Council voted to approve research into changing the zoning code to allow for so called “Missing Middle” housing. This includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and courtyard apartments. I am proposing the allocation of \$100,000 to complete this study. This will look into identifying ideal locations for this kind of housing, and dividing existing large single-family homes into multiple units.

Supporting the Arts and Recreation

There are over 150 arts organizations that call Berkeley home. They play an instrumental role in our economy, bringing in new visitors to our City and more revenue to local businesses. As a source of civic pride, I want to make sure that our arts community is getting the support from the City they need to thrive. In addition to the arts, another Berkeley treasure is our vibrant collection of parks, which Berkeley voters continue to generously support. This year will focus on funding major improvements to the Marina for generations to come to enjoy.

Investing in Civic Arts Grants

I am committed to providing \$500,000 towards the Civic Arts Grants program. This provides essential funding to dozens of arts organizations each year. I am also working to make sure that the starting level of the Civic Arts Grants fund is at \$500,000 indefinitely.

Funding Local Arts Programs

In addition to the Civic Arts Grants, we are providing funding to various programs that have become staples of the Berkeley community in recent years. The Bay Area Book Festival, which has become a nationally acclaimed event over the past five years, will be returning again next May, with \$50,000 in support from the City. The UC Theatre Concert Career Pathways Education Program, which provides unmatched experience working in the music industry to youth and young adults between 17-25 will be receiving a \$40,000 grant from the City.

Marina/Waterfront Improvements

Aging infrastructure is taking its toll at the Marina, and we must invest now before it is too late. That is why over the next two years, I am proposing an investment of \$3,450,000 for the Waterfront Immediate Capital Needs. This will help rebuild dilapidated structures, and will work in conjunction with the proposed ferry terminal and new pier. Additionally, we will continue funding for the biggest festivals located at the Waterfront, including the Kite Festival and 4th of July Event. We will also provide \$5,000 for maintenance of the Cesar Chavez Calendar, which will be used for matching funds to continuously improve the area.

Attachments:

Attachments 1-4: FY 2020-2021 Mayor’s Supplemental Budget Recommendations