



Understand Today to Build a Better Tomorrow!

Welcome to the first edition of *Berkeley Now*, a news outlet focused on issues of social justice in our city.

We will provide news and analysis of issues such as housing and homelessness, public and mental/behavioral health, and policing, among others.

These are issues that affect everyone at some point. But the decisions that affect your healthcare, your housing, and your safety may feel like they are made in mysterious ways. And it's true, the deal often goes down before the final vote at a city council meeting

We believe that a democracy depends on the whole community engaging with the most critical issues of our time.

For that engagement to mean anything, people have to be in a conversation about what our leaders are planning for the city.

Be Part of Berkeley Now!

Our plan is to monitor the discussions that are happening in the boards, commissions, committees and councils that make the big decisions, then report back to the public.

But did you know that Berkeley has about 35 commissions? That's a lot to monitor. We definitely *need readers to be writers as well*. Students, activists, really anybody with an interest in a specific subject, there is a place for you to contribute, and we will help you get started.

We also need your:

- community reports,
- human interest stories
- letters to the editor,
- photos and graphics,
- and fund-raising talent!

Contact us at BerkeleyNowNewspaper@gmail.com and let us know how you want to participate in *Berkeley Now!*

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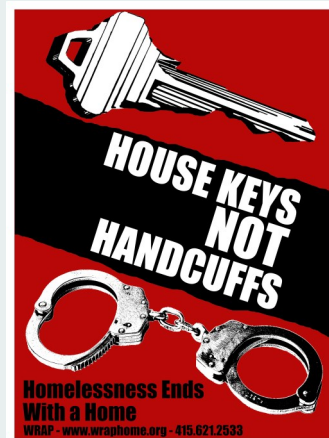
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Editorial

Vote for Measure M, the Vacancy Tax

Election Day is November 8

For the first edition of Berkeley Now, we are happy to give our strong endorsement to Berkeley Measure M.

Our article in this edition, “End the Housing Pain,” shows how Measure M will free up many of the estimated 1,200 housing units that are vacant and not available for rent.

The Green Party of Alameda County offers a helpful summary of this very important ballot measure: “The tax is directed primarily to corporate landlords who leave units vacant,” while exempting small landlords. The tax will also “cut down on the blight of empty buildings scattered around our city, and generate \$3.9 to \$5.9 million annually which, hopefully,

will be used to construct and rehab affordable housing.”

Berkeley Now asks the question “Can Measure M be the beginning of a ‘Housing is a Human Right’ movement?” We believe that it can, if voters understand the positive benefits it will bring to so many Berkeley residents.

A victory in November will empower housing justice advocates to organize for a broad range of affordable housing reforms, including building affordable housing, strengthening rent control, better regulating evictions, and supporting affordable housing as a form of reparations to the African American community.

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Photo credit UAB Institute for Human Rights Blog

Time to End The Housing Pain

In Berkeley, rising rents and the price of buying a home has pushed people into overcrowded living conditions and increased homelessness. Many cannot afford the ever-rising rents: they include students, those on fixed or low incomes, people living with disabilities, seniors and working people on minimum wage. They are shut out of the housing market and are experiencing housing pain. How can we end, or even lessen housing pain?

Adding more market rate housing alone will not ease housing pain. Some argue that supply and demand and free market forces will eventually produce the housing that everyone needs. But the so-called free market has produced dizzying levels of inequality. Why? Because it is much more profitable to build luxury than low-income housing, much more profitable to build cramped tiny units than units with sufficient space for families. For-profit speculators keep units and even entire apartment buildings empty. The 2020 U.S. Census reported over 4,000 vacant places in Berkeley. These long-term vacancies artificially restrict the supply of housing and create blight in neighborhoods.

Thirty years ago people in the middle income range could buy a home in Berkeley. But now in 2022, home buyers are paying somewhere between \$300,000 to half a million dollars over the asking price. Although some Berkeley neighborhoods have

long been wealthy, increasing numbers of people with very high incomes and accumulated wealth, in recent years are changing the very fabric of our community.

Even people with incomes in the top 5% have become renters. This adds to the pain of those who cannot compete in this high-priced housing market. No longer restricted to north Berkeley and the hills, high-income tenants are now moving into south and west Berkeley, areas that were once affordable to low-income and minority tenants.



Art credit to wraphome.org

Moreover, the 45,000 students at the University of California are competing for the same housing as well as paying steep prices for Cal tuition.

The bottom line: if you are fortunate to find a place to rent in Berkeley, it can be overpriced, run-down, too small, crowded with roommates, or much too far from work or school.

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Is it Just My Re-Imagination (or is public safety really changing in Berkeley?)

It's been a heck of a couple years.

Two years after Minneapolis police killed George Floyd by kneeling on his neck for 9 minutes and 29 seconds on May 25, 2020.... Two years after Floyd's 6-year-old daughter told reporters that her "Daddy changed the world...."

Concerns about proper policing led cities like Berkeley to embark on a process of Reimagining Public Safety. In 2020, we amended the city charter to strengthen community oversight of the police by establishing a Police Accountability Board. In 2021, the City Council passed a strong platform to address racial disparities in police stops. And in 2022, Council accepted and funded a community-driven plan to "re-imagine" public safety in Berkeley. How Berkeley implements Reimagining Public Safety is a question that may take years to fully answer.

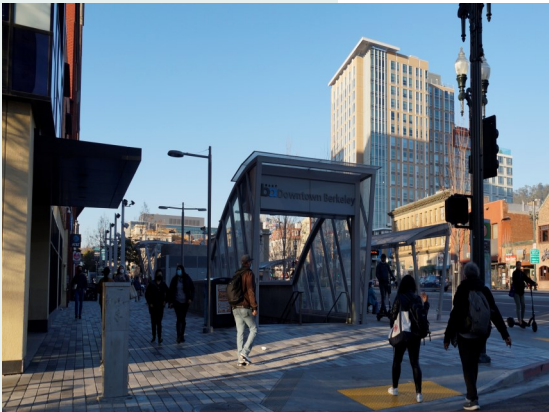


Photo credit to boonachepresents

Reimagining Public Safety

The Reimagining Public Safety framework adopted by the City Council this spring is a unified approach to both crime reduction and human rights. It works to bring the Berkeley community together and change the way we think about the police response to mental health and non-criminal crises.

Everyone deserves to feel safe and secure in the city they call home. Berkeley residents are concerned about crime and safety in their neighborhoods. This is understandable given the recent rise in certain categories of crime, along with increased auto accidents. How police should respond to crises has led to debates about "safety and security" versus "civil rights and liberties."

The traditional response to public safety issues stresses more police officers, more arrests and longer prison sentences. The City Council, while taking community concerns seriously, is trying a different way. In the Reimagining Public Safety framework, the Council has taken a more holistic approach. Police have an important role to play, but they are only one part of the solution.

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Wellness of Berkeley = Health Equity

Stated in 1966, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

As we think about a potential end of the pandemic, on which our attention has necessarily been focused, we take pride in our city, though with concerns about inequities.

Berkeleyans should be pleased that our vaccination rates are at 93% (including UCB) and deaths still below 100. Our shopping areas have not completely returned to business as usual; however, we are seeing more people in our parks, and kids have returned to school. The wisest of us are still wearing masks and getting our boosters, which in Berkeley are easily available regardless of income, zip code, or health coverage.

For these outcomes, praise is due to the Public Health Division, our community-based organizations, faith-based community, and others who walked Berkeley neighborhoods, door-knocking to provide education, resources, and information about the pandemic.

A living example of how well some systems worked during COVID is proof of cooperation and coordination among certain public and private entities, who recognized their interdependence: this cooperation brought services to the community quickly and efficiently.

However, before we bring out the champagne or other sparkly stuff, let's note how unevenly the pandemic affected the city's people.

African Americans are overrepresented in COVID-19 deaths. Black residents make up just 8% of the city's population, yet account for 33% of deaths from the virus.

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City of Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin speaking to unhoused residents.

Photo credit to boonachepresents

Time to End The Housing Pain *continued from page 3...*

How Bad is Housing Pain in Berkeley?

It is easy to spot tall market rate properties popping up everywhere: costly apartment complexes, hotels, and business towers. Rents can be \$3,000-\$4,000 a month for just a small apartment. These units are unaffordable for most in Berkeley. Some claim that market rate housing like these units brings down rents in surrounding apartments, but in Berkeley, such cases are hard to find. Instead, housing insecurity, or what we call “housing pain” is rampant.



Photo credit to berkeleyside—Jordan Court Affordable Housing

In July, the Berkeley Housing Authority, for the first time in over a decade, allowed Berkeley residents to apply for “Section 8” rental assistance. More than 21,000 applied just to get on the waiting list. Unfortunately, there are only 2,000 spots available, so over 90% of those applying were disappointed. After years of waiting, if and when those 2,000 successful applicants do receive a voucher, they are still not guaranteed a place to rent. A Berkeley landlord must be willing to accept vouchers.

The chair of Berkeley’s Rent Stabilization Board, Leah Simon-Weisberg, commented that the flood of wait list applications demonstrated the critical need for affordable housing and an expansion of the Section 8 program, “There is almost no affordable housing available on a regular basis,” she told an interviewer.

The Racial Dimension to Housing

While housing pain can afflict millions of people across the country, it has had a staggering effect on people of color, and entire communities of color. A pre-pandemic study conducted in 2019 by the California Housing Partnership found that rising Bay Area rents between 2000 and 2015 had the greatest impact on low income Black, Latinx and Asian communities. Huge rent increases lead directly to the loss of housing in these communities. This study of the nine counties in the Bay Area found that the 30 percent increase in rents between 2000 and 2015 was tied to a 28 percent loss in the number of poor households of color. Other conclusions from the study show that the proportion of renters paying more than 30% of their income has risen, particularly so among women of color.

In its report on the 2019 study, the Mercury News quoted Tameeka Bennett, former director of East Palo Alto’s Youth United for Community Action, “Gentrification is happening at an alarming rate. Our families have no place to go....” Bennett said that many have moved to Stockton and Tracy and now contend with a long commute to their Bay Area jobs, “It’s really affecting their quality of life.” A third of low-income residents of color who moved in 2015 left the region completely.

Berkeley is not immune to this pattern of displacement. Once African Americans were nearly 25% of our city’s population. Berkeley’s Black population is now only 8%. This loss is a great shame to our city. After the end of the explicit Jim Crow redlining policies that restricted where Black people could live in Berkeley, we did not have the foresight to create policies which keep people in the community. Instead we prioritized market rate housing with little attention to affordability. As a result, our city has lost a tremendous amount of human talent, community assets and representation.

Today our emerging housing patterns resemble the apartheid pattern of the past where Black people were forced out of the city, only to travel back each morning to low-paying jobs. Our present housing policies mean that only rich people are allowed to live here; only they will influence city politics and policies.

Berkeley, and California in general, are beginning to take seriously the decades-long call for reparations for African Americans for centuries of slavery and discrimination. This is a subject we will return to in future editions.

Homelessness in Berkeley

Homelessness is the other side of the lack of access to affordable and low-income housing. Not only low income, but catastrophic health issues, loss of affordable housing, incremental or sudden disabilities, substance abuse, LGBTQ youth losing housing with doctrinaire parents: all of these and more contribute to homelessness. A compassionate social response to these factors demands a range of solutions, including available low income housing, permanent housing first for the homeless, mental-health services, substance abuse services, youth and LGBTQ services and outreach, and transitional housing with supportive services.

Berkeley spends a lot of money each year on homeless issues, but too much of that money does not address the roots of homelessness or benefit enough people on the street. Beyond economics, there is a deeper moral issue as well.

Under Berkeley's council/manager form of government, the City Manager has broad authority and has ordered police sweeps and property confiscations of homeless people at will. Sweeps and confiscations have been found by courts to violate constitutional protections, and they undermine the ability of hundreds of people to feel secure in their belongings, their health, and their ability to create a better life. Berkeley desperately needs a better way of working with the homeless community.

Berkeley must take on affordable housing in ways that will reduce housing pain for the people who live and work in Berkeley. Encouraging more towering market rate housing is not the answer. In the sections that follow, we will discuss several approaches that can take us in a more positive direction.



Measure M to Free Up Vacant Housing

The current Berkeley City Council took a bold step towards increasing the housing supply in the community by placing Measure M, the vacancy tax, on the ballot this November.

The Bay Area Community Land Trust supports Measure M because it will push some vacant properties onto the market, some of which can be acquired by non-profit groups for affordable housing. And the money raised through the tax on vacant properties that are not brought onto the market, can be used by the City to help non-profits purchase properties and keep them affordable.

Measure M, if passed, is expected to unlock many of the estimated 1,200 units that are currently vacant and not available to rent. Measure M, known as the “Empty Homes Tax”, discourages large corporate property owners from keeping units vacant. It institutes an annual tax of \$6,000 on empty units in large buildings and \$3,000 on empty condos, duplexes, and single-family homes not used as someone’s primary residence. The tax increases based on the length of vacancy. Measure M will encourage large property owners to rent their units and will generate up to \$5.9 million annually for building and preserving affordable housing.

A City of Vancouver B.C. analysis of outcomes of their vacancy tax shows that from 2017 to 2020, the number of vacant properties decreased by 26%, and that more than \$86.6 million of net revenues from the tax was allocated to support affordable housing initiatives.

Is there hope that with Measure M we can bring all factions of the housing debate in Berkeley

together? Could this step be the beginning of a “Housing is a Human Right” movement?

It is interesting to look at how this simple proposal speaks to the talking points of the three main housing factions:

First is the “NIMBY” (Not In My Back Yard) constituency. People who want to maintain the character of their neighborhood and oppose building of additional housing should like

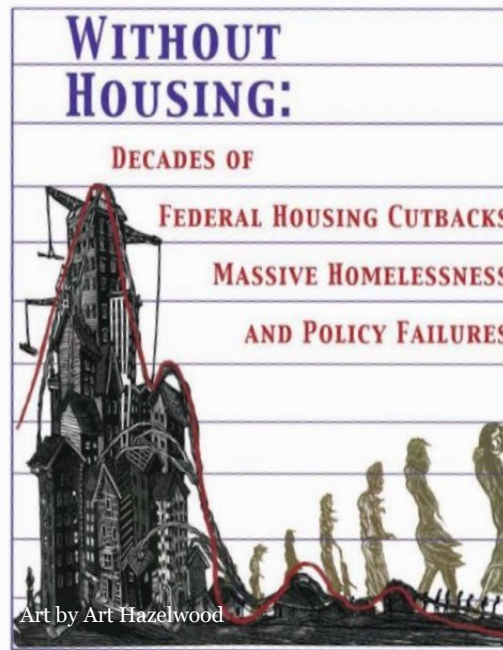
Measure M because it does not make the city more dense or the buildings taller. It simply frees up vacant housing so people can get off the street, and it may even begin to reverse the absurdly high cost of housing for everyone.

Second; the “YIMBY” (Yes, In My Backyard) constituency should appreciate that the vacancy tax puts more housing on the market, even if not necessarily at the affordable housing level.

These “pro-housing” folks

believe it is necessary to open up housing for people of all income levels, they argue that “we just need more housing.”

Third, affordable housing advocates demand release of vacant housing to the market because it could lower the cost of housing for everyone. This group is clear that the vacancy tax will not solve the affordability crisis by itself. It will have to be part of a range of social programs including constructing more affordable and low-income housing, strengthening rent control, better regulating evictions, and many others. These advocates support the vacancy tax as a great start that will benefit everyone except the for-profit speculators. Retaining older housing by its nature preserves affordability because new buildings are exempt from rent control for 20 years.





Is There a Solution to Housing Pain?

Housing pain is a systemic, long-standing problem that has its roots in the idea of housing as a means to make profit. There is no single “fix” to solve such a problem and this society will not overcome the housing affordability crisis until we come to see housing as a human right, something that our society guarantees to all, as it does with public education, social security, and emergency healthcare.

But such changes in thinking take decades. For the moment, here are a few ideas that are worth considering:

The Vacancy Tax (Measure M) is on the ballot this November. It needs no public expense to work and will produce revenue for creation of affordable housing. Find more information about Measure M here, and the full text of Measure M here.

Focus creation of housing on units for those with the greatest need and produce housing that is truly affordable for all including low-income, very low-income, and those with no income at all, and also provide the ongoing subsidies necessary to house extremely low-income people.

Support anti-racist initiatives such as affordable housing as a form of Reparations.

Support other tenant and low-income protection such as extension of rent control and the Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA).

Rent control: Berkeley passed strong rent control decades ago, but the city’s ability to extend it to single-family homes and apartments built since 1995 has been curtailed by California’s Costa-Hawkins Act in that year. To fully protect tenants’ rights, changes must be made both in Berkeley and California law.

Tenant or Community Opportunity to Purchase ordinances (TOPA or COPA) require that when real estate investors sell rental properties, they must give the tenants and non-profit community housing organizations advance notice and a first opportunity to purchase the building.

We will come back in future issues of Berkeley Now to examine these ideas in more depth.



These budget allocations were inspired by the Reimagining process and were included in the two-year budget approved in June 2022:

Find placement options for people in mental or behavioral crisis.

Enhance Mental Health Wellness Support at the Berkeley High School Health Center.

Focus expenditures from Measure P on homeless programs.

Enhance anti-displacement programs.

Expand violence prevention: CeaseFire; McGee Avenue Baptist Church: Voices against Violence; Berkeley Youth Alternatives counseling.

Expand domestic violence prevention and support.

Shift collision analysis to Public Works from the police.

Enhanced emergency dispatch system.

Shift enforcement functions to civilians as appropriate.

Expand community service in lieu of punitive fines.

Expand employment opportunities for unhoused individuals

Establish an Office of Diversity and Equity, hire a Reimagining project coordinator, move low-risk traffic issues out of the police department, language equity services.

Is it Just My Re-Imagination *continued from page 4...*

In addition to enforcing the law, our community’s public safety requires we address many aspects of daily life including mental health issues, housing, education, employment, economic security, social services and equity. In the long run, this holistic, restorative approach to public safety can lead to greater well-being and security among Berkeley residents.

Reimagining Public Safety has three overarching elements: *reduce, improve, and invest.*

The first element - **reduce** - *gives police a more focused role, by reassigning some of their work to professionally trained civilian responders. This shift will give police more time to effectively perform their primary role: investigating serious and violent crime.*

The second element - **improve** - *requires better policing practices that protect civil rights and liberties, improve training, and promote accountability for police.*

The third element - **invest** - *shifts resources to programs and agencies that address the health, social and economic needs of the community, violence prevention and interruption programs, and restorative justice initiatives. These “upstream” investments address the root causes of poor health, poverty and crime in Berkeley to improve public safety for all.*

Racial Disparities in Berkeley Policing

Civil rights organizations in Berkeley have long contended that the African American and white experiences with local policing are so different that they constitute “Two Berkeleys.” Despite many years of campaigning, racial disparities affecting Black and Latinx community members continue to the present day.

Recent data from the police shows that Black and Latinx civilians are far more likely to be stopped and searched by police. A roughly equal number of Black and white civilians are stopped by Berkeley police every year. However, since there are around seven times as many white people living in Berkeley as African Americans, this means that an African American civilian is seven times more likely to be stopped by police. Black people are also six times more likely to experience police use of force than white people.

On top of the racial disparities in stop rates, African Americans have a 25% greater chance than white civilians of being stopped but receiving no citation, an indication that they were stopped for no good reason. Not only does this practice violate constitutional protections, it also wastes police time that would be better spent investigating serious crime.

This police department data confirms the widespread anecdotes of Black and Latinx people that describe their unfair treatment by Berkeley police.

It is encouraging that the Berkeley City Council has taken this issue seriously by adopting the recommendations of the Mayor’s Fair and Impartial Policing working group, in February of 2021. This program includes a broad range of reforms, including a study of institutional reasons for the racially disparate treatment of civilians, firing of racist officers, focusing stops on safety issues rather than petty infractions, and many others. Unfortunately, the City Manager has not required the police department to fully implement the most important changes in the program.

Constitutional Policing is a more effective way to stop crime

Police use up valuable time stopping and searching many people of color with no reasonable grounds for suspicion of a crime. At the same time, their ability to effectively respond to legitimate calls for help and to investigate serious crimes in Berkeley is compromised. Officers are overworked and overstretched, made worse by the way the police force prioritize their time.

The approach and focus of Berkeley policing needs to shift. The time police spend conducting unjustified and unproductive stops and searches (and the additional administrative burden this creates) would be better spent investigating and intercepting the perpetrators of serious crime. When police focus on evidence-based leads rather than dragnet or “saturation” policing tactics, they have more time and resources to address legitimate safety concerns in Berkeley. This will help to restore trust in

police and simultaneously allow Black and Latinx residents to go about their daily lives without experiencing unfounded and racialized police stops. One crucial element of the reimagining process is improving police practices and ensuring police are held accountable for their actions. Constitutional policing needs to guide the policies and practices of the police force, including in relation to stops and searches. When it comes to stops and searches in Berkeley, police should be guided by the 14th Amendment—equal protection under the law—as well as the Fourth and Fifth Amendments.

The idea of balancing human rights with security, or prioritizing one over the other, is a false one. Following the Constitution is the most effective way to reduce crime and violence.



Stronger police oversight and accountability

The Reimagining Public Safety rubric—“Reduce, Improve and Invest”—assumes that the police will continue to be a part of the public safety system.

The passage of the city charter amendment Measure ii by Berkeley voters in November 2020 was a big step forward for police accountability. It could also increase legitimacy and trust in BPD when the public sees the police cooperating with the Police Accountability Board (PAB).

As the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force stated in its final report this February, “The PAB can only succeed if it has maximum support from both city administration and City Council.” The Task Force strongly recommended the following steps as examples of support for the PAB:

“The Police Accountability Board (PAB) must assume the continuing oversight responsibility over both policing and the implementation of re-envisioned public safety. City Council, city management, City Attorney, and the police department need to honor the community-based oversight structure by including the PAB and its Director fully in the development of public safety policy.”

However, the Task Force concluded,

“The Council and staff have moved backward, providing the most minimal level of consultation at the latest possible stage. This trend is exemplified by the surveillance technology and Early Intervention System (anti-racial profiling) policy processes, with concern about the development of internal PAB complaint hearing regulations as well.”

Therefore the Task Force recommended that:

“Council request PAB advice before making a policy decision to proceed toward surveillance technology acquisitions; mandate the BPD to collaborate with PAB on development of all significant General Orders or other policies; and support moves by the PAB to make it easier for people from historically marginalized communities to raise and pursue officer misconduct complaints.”

Since this report by the Task Force, other warning signs have emerged. The police chief ignored a formal letter requesting specific BPD documentation, which the PAB is explicitly entitled to under Measure ii. Members—even ranking leaders—of the BPD and the police association have publicly lambasted the PAB and individual Board members, even filing suit to limit its power as they did in 1973 at the birth of the Police Review Commission (PRC), predecessor to the PAB.

Now that the Council has named Mr. Hansel Aguilar as permanent Director of Police Accountability, they and city management will be tested on whether they will back him up, and along with him, the independent police oversight promised in Measure ii.

Many More Rivers to Cross

There are many more rivers to cross in Berkeley’s journey to reimagine public safety. In future editions we will report on subjects such as:

- In May and June of 2022, in creating the two-year Fiscal Years (FY) 2023 and 2024 budget, Berkeley City Council had the chance to put our money where their mouths are. (Fiscal years run from July 1 to the next June 30.) How did they do?
- In most of this country, prosecution of criminal cases is not handled by city governments such as Berkeley. Local cases are prosecuted at a county level by the District Attorney’s office, sometimes by the state or federal Departments of Justice. This November 8 there is a rare contested election for District Attorney. What does this election reveal about the debate over the prosecutors’ priorities?
- Since the battles over People’s Park in 1969, when sheriff’s deputy snipers [fatally shot African American bystander James Rector](#), the city of Berkeley has struggled over “demilitarization” of policing. A number of new state and city laws help Berkeley control military equipment.

It will be up to the residents of Berkeley to ensure that Reimagining Public Safety is carried out as intended, that the City Council holds firm to its vision, and that city management and staff cooperate with this forward looking vision.



Wellness of Berkeley = Health Equity *continued from page 5...*

Among Latinx, with a 96% vaccination rate, death rates are evenly represented in the city's COVID-19 fatalities. About 15% of residents are Latinx, and they make up 14% of fatalities.

White people and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are more lightly hit by the pandemic. White people make up 50% of Berkeley's population but only 38% of the city's COVID-19 deaths; AAPI people, at 20% of the population, make up just 8% of deaths.

Those of us with health security, housing security, income and assets security, transportation and food security fared much better during the pandemic than Berkeley residents who do not have those privileges. It is time to focus on Health Equity.

When challenged by an outbreak of disease, it became clear that our systems of response improved and stepped up, and relationships were put in place which will serve us well over time.

Services to the Homeless

Under the leadership of Alameda County's Office of Homeless Care and Coordination, *Health Care for the Homeless* was instrumental in the formation and ongoing operation of Operation Comfort, the isolation and quarantine hotel for those with a positive test result or who are symptomatic. In addition, the City added a Covid-19 section to its website. This team worked closely with shelter sites early on, conducting site visits and making recommendations around ventilation, bed spacing, and masking, as well as providing testing and testing supplies and holding vaccine events.

Street Health teams along with Lifelong Medical Care provided services to their scheduled encampment sites which included testing, vaccine, and supplies (water, food, etc.) to those who chose to isolate in their tents.

Berkeley's own Public Health Division (BPH) took the lead on responding to outbreaks (three or more positive cases at one time) in shelters, providing testing and vaccine clinics. Two staff



Photo credit to boonachepresents

members from the City's Department of Health, Housing and Community Services provided a weekly outreach meeting that brought together outreach providers for updates. They distributed food, water, and supplies such as test kits and masks, and also coordinated ongoing vaccine efforts at all shelter sites, working with BPH to bring vaccines to sites regularly.

Further Needs

Looking at the 2020 Census, Berkeley continues to have a large population in poverty: 17.8% of residents. Living in poverty = poor health status.

The most recently published "City of Berkeley Health Status Report" (2018) included a look at health inequities in Berkeley.

Key themes of this report were inequities in Health, Prevention and Emerging Health Threats. The report showed that two major health challenges in Berkeley are the lack of adequate mental health care and of a plan to deal with the high rate of alcohol and substance use in our city and on our campuses.



Photo credit to noit.org

Mental health challenges and the use of alcohol and substances, cut across socio-economic, race, education, age, and gender differences. It is important to recognize that there is much greater access to good mental health care and sobriety/recovery services for people with access to care than for the uninsured and the underinsured.

African American respondents noted that African American communities and families are being displaced because of a lack of housing and community development – inequities that are rooted in poverty, racism, and inadequate access to culturally relevant and high-quality health services.

In recent years, the public health perspective has developed an understanding of the social roots, or “determinants,” of health.

These include:

- Stable and affordable housing
- Economic development and financial security
- Climate change and justice
- Complete neighborhoods
- Human rights, democratic inclusion, and eliminating historical legacy of discrimination
- Inclusive and safe communities

The 2018 Health Status Report included the attached chart which points clearly to the importance of reducing health disparities and increasing community wellness in Berkeley. We must address these disparities with the same urgency as when we responded to COVID. The health inequities in the report require continued community and City Health staff action to save lives.

HEALTH INEQUITIES IN BERKELEY

Chapter 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics & Social Determinants of Health	Chapter 2: Pregnancy & Birth	Chapter 3: Child & Adolescent Health	Chapter 4: Adult Health	Chapter 5: Life Expectancy & Mortality
<p>Families headed by a White householder earn 3.4 times more than African American families, 1.9 times more than Latino families, and 1.4 times more than Asian families.</p>	<p>The risk of an African American mother having a LBW baby is 2.5 times higher than the risk for White mothers.</p>	<p>African American children (under 18) are 7 times more likely, Latino children are 5 times more likely, and Asian children are 2 times more likely than White children to live in poverty.</p>	<p>African Americans are 3 times more likely than Whites to be hospitalized due to coronary heart disease.</p>	<p>African Americans are 2.3 times more likely to die in a given year from any condition compared to Whites.</p>
<p>The proportion of families living in poverty is 8 times higher among African American families, 5 times higher among Latino families and 3 times higher among Asian families, compared to White families.</p>	<p>The risk of an African American mother having a premature baby is 2 times higher than the risk for White mothers.</p>	<p>African American high school students are 1.4 times more likely than White students to drop out of high school.</p>	<p>African Americans are 34 times more likely than Whites to be hospitalized due to hypertension.</p>	<p>African Americans are 2.0 times more likely than Whites to die of cardiovascular disease.</p>
<p>African Americans are 2.8 times less likely, Latinos are 1.6 times less likely and Asian children are 1.1 times less likely than Whites to have a bachelor's degree or higher.</p>	<p>The teen birth rate among African Americans is 9 times higher, and among Latinas is 3 times higher than the rate among White teens.</p>	<p>The asthma hospitalization rates for children under 5 for African American children is 10 times higher, and for Latino children is 2.8 times higher than the rate among White children.</p>	<p>African American women are 1.5 times more likely than Whites to be diagnosed with breast cancer.</p>	<p>African Americans are 1.8 times more likely than Whites to die of cancer.</p>

SOURCE: Status Summary Report, <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-01/>

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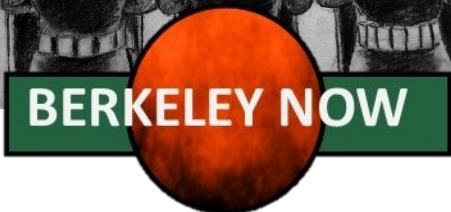
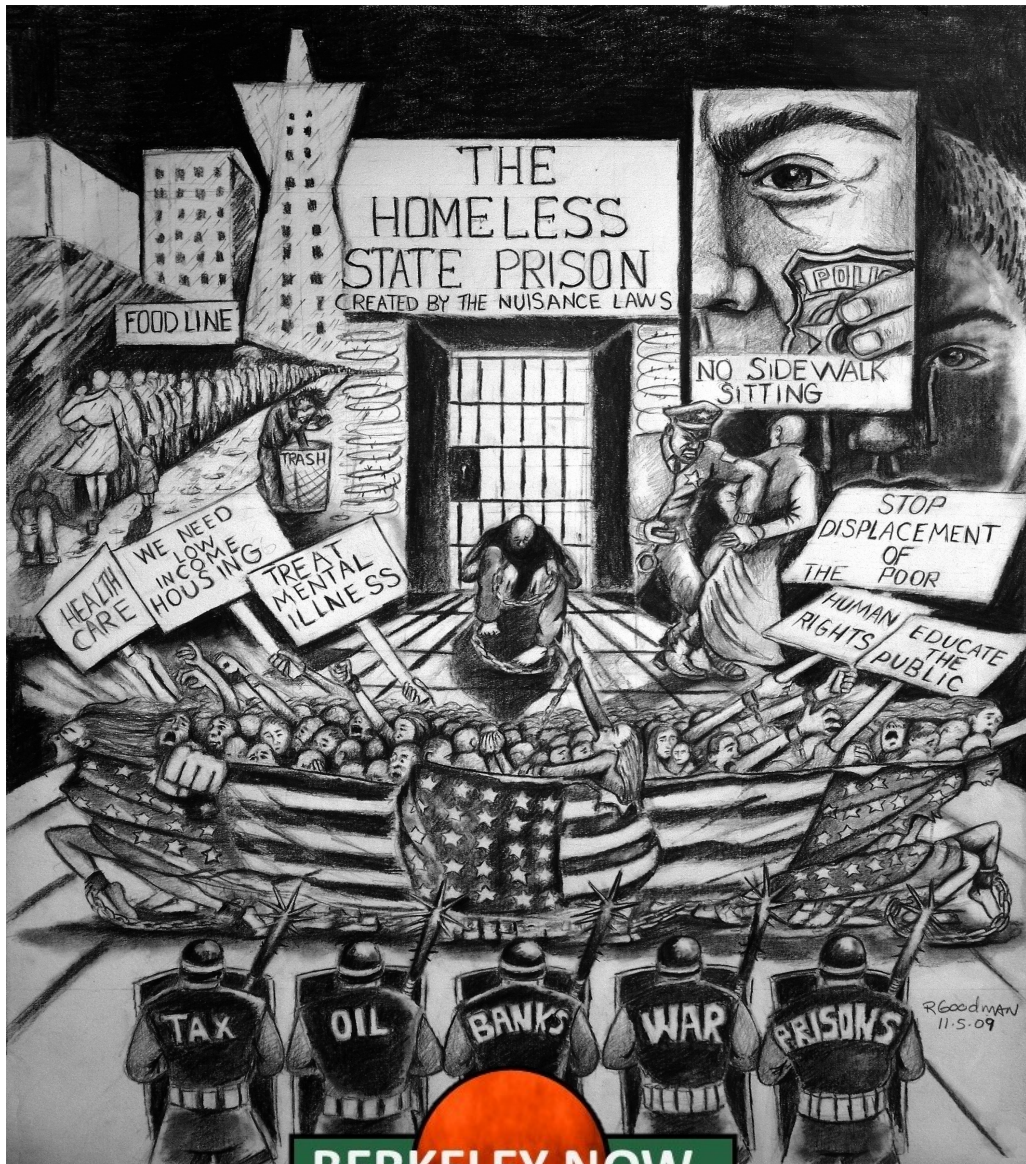


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