



Commission on Aging
Odile Lavault, Chair
Darlene Bronson, Commission Secretary

COMMISSION ON AGING REGULAR AGENDA

Wednesday, May 21, 2025
North Berkeley Senior Center
Gooseberry Room
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order by Chair, Lavault
2. Roll Call by Secretary, Bronson
3. Public Comments

The public may comment about any item not on the agenda. Public comments are limited to two minutes per speaker. Public comments regarding agenda items will be heard while the Commission is discussing the item.

4. Approval of minutes from April 2025 (Attachment A)
5. Approval of order of agenda

The Commission may discuss any subject listed on the Agenda. Public comments regarding agenda items will be heard while the Commission is discussing the item. Public comments are limited to two minutes per speaker.

Presentation

None

Staff report

None

Discussion / Action Items

1. Letter supporting the new missing middle housing legislation, Orrick (Attachment B)
2. Commission on Aging 2025 Work Plan draft, Lavault, Evans (Attachment C)
3. Proclamation for Rani Cochran, Lavault
4. Filling vacancies for Commission on Aging, Lavault

Commissioner reports

Information Items

**Please submit all agenda items by Monday, June 2nd to the Commission Secretary, for the June 18th meeting only.

Items for Ongoing Discussion

1. Safety & identify homebound seniors in Berkeley
2. Berkeley Rides for Seniors and Disabled waitlist
3. Older drivers' safety and DMV policies

Adjournment

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) 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.

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. 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 commission secretary for further information.

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 the North Berkeley Senior Center located at 1901 Hearst Avenue, during regular business hours. The Commission Agenda and Minutes may be viewed on the City of Berkeley website: <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions>.

Secretary:

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Health, Housing & Community
Services Department
Commission on Aging

COMMISSION ON AGING REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 16, 2025
1:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: (7) Yamaguchi, Orrick, Lavault, Collins, Porter, Newbery, Evans

Absent:

Excused Absence:

Staff Present: (2) Darlene Bronson, Donnaracia Scurry

Public: (3)

2. Public Comment (4)

Presentation

None

Staff Report

None

Action Items

1. Motion to include approval of order of agenda

M/S: Yamaguchi/Orrick

Ayes: Collins, Porter, Lavault

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Motion passed.

2. Motion to move the discussion on newly passed Measure FF and schedule a presentation on FF to a future meeting

M/S: Orrick / Yamaguchi

Ayes: Collins, Porter, Newberry, Lavault

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Motion passed.

3. Motion to modify Measure FF implementation recommendation letter working group (Porter/Collins/Newberry)

M/S: Porter/Yamaguchi

Ayes: Lavault

Abstain: None

Motion passed.

4. Motion to move Commission on Aging Workplan review to May

M/S: Orrick/Newberry
Ayes: Collins, Porter, Lavault, Yamaguchi
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Motion passed.

Discussion Items

1. Alzheimer's Day of Action March 5th, Orrick

Commissioners adjourned at 3:30p.m.

Minutes Approved on:

Darlene Bronson, Commission Secretary

May 21, 2025
Mayor Adena Ishii and City Council
2180 Milvia Street,
Berkeley, California 94704

Re: Aging Commission Letter in Support of Missing Middle Housing

Dear Mayor and Council,

As members of the Commission on Aging, we urge you to approve a comprehensive missing middle housing package of zoning and building regulations that will result in as many new homes of this type being built as possible.

As you know, in 2018 Berkeley was awarded the status of an “age-friendly” city by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) on the basis of its Age-Friendly Action Plan, developed after a lengthy community outreach process, focus groups and discussions with community non-profits and city departments.

In his cover letter, then-Mayor Jesse Arreguin noted that three goals emerged from this work:

- *Enable people to remain in their homes and communities as they navigate the transitions of aging*
- *Maintain and enhance the ethnic and economic diversity of Berkeley*
- *Ensure that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy the social and cultural assets Berkeley has to offer.*

As the commission noted in its May 7, 2024 referral to council¹ to recommend a slight increase in funding for aging services, the first of the four priority areas for the Action Plan is:

1. HOUSING AND ECONOMIC SECURITY:

Develop a continuum of affordable, accessible housing options for older adults to age in their community regardless of their health or financial status.

Over the past year, the commission has heard presentations from city staff as well as the Berkeley architecture and design firm which coined the term “missing middle.”

We have come to realize that this form of “missing middle” housing construction could be a crucial tool for many of Berkeley’s elders.

Those who are seeking to remain in their homes can subdivide their properties in order to bring in added income or house caregivers on site; those who are being priced out of the Berkeley rental and ownership markets could make their homes in the smaller, more affordable housing

¹ (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11QgepxzkVFiG20iyg4ckwFYaNblZ14LH/edit>)

units that are possible in multi-unit buildings. Last, and perhaps most important, because so much of Berkeley's housing stock was built so long ago, a very small share of existing units are energy-efficient AND accessible.

As we all know, Berkeley's over-60 population is growing rapidly, and shows no sign of diminishing in the near future. Berkeley residents over 60 currently number approximately 20,000—or 1 in 5 residents. **This number doubled in the decade from 2010 to 2020** and is projected to increase at a similar rate well into the future.

But there are fewer and fewer affordable alternatives for elders wishing to downsize, either for economic reasons or for comfort and convenience (or both).

Surveys of our unhoused neighbors show that increasingly they are people in their later years; some 40 percent of the recently homeless are over the age of 50.

We urge you to pass proposed changes in zoning, building and demolition rules to encourage construction of “missing middle” housing to the greatest extent possible.

If Berkeley is to live up to its “age-friendly” designation of seven years' standing, this would be an important step forward.

Respectfully,

Commission on Aging
Odile Lavault, Chair
Thomas Yamaguchi, Vice Chair
Penelope Collins
Karin Evans
Sheila Newbery
Phyllis Orrick
George Porter



Commission on Aging

Attachment C

INFORMATION CALENDAR
June, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Commission on Aging

Submitted by: Odile Lavault, Chairperson, Commission on Aging

Subject: 2025 Commission on Aging Work Plan

BACKGROUND

The Commission on Aging strives to enhance the quality of life for people 55 years and older in the Berkeley Community, and to increase public awareness of their contributions and needs by actively promoting their health, safety, independence and participation in our community.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

In the year 2024-2025 the commission has worked to establish a broad knowledge base of City projects, services, and resources which can be used to best address the needs, policies, and services shortcomings affecting daily life for Berkeley seniors. We heard relevant presentations by city staff and community experts.

The Commission has been particularly concerned by the understaffing of the Senior Services, the closure of ASEB (Alzheimer's Services of the East Bay), increasingly unmet housing needs of our seniors, and lack of adequate transportation.

Finalization of Work Plan 2025

Motion/Second:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

WORK PLAN

1. Support Berkeley Age Friendly Initiatives

- a. Commission will seek public input and discussion regarding the Action Plan. The Commission will continue to identify key issues in the Age Friendly Initiatives

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2025 Work Plan

strategic plan and communicate with relevant commissions urging support for the policies and their funding.

- b. Commission will work towards increasing awareness and communication regarding “The Age-Friendly Berkeley Action Plan” and make recommendations to the City Council. Short-term goal is broader community and municipal consideration of age-friendliness.

2. Advocate for Needs of Older Citizens in the Implementation of alternative & senior-friendly transportation modes in conjunction with “Safe-Streets” and parking issues.

- a. Commissioners will continue to seek education regarding all aspects of transportation and safety for seniors. When necessary, the commission will send liaisons to Transportation Commission.
- b. Commission will develop recommendations for the City Council regarding transportation and associated issues as regards the elder population i.e. senior-friendly shuttle system, parking issues, sidewalk safety, access to city subsidized senior transportation programs, implementation of measure FF.

3. Advocate for Affordable Housing for Older Adults as well as other housing policies that are consistent with Berkeley’s commitment to encouraging “Aging in Place” and/or “Aging in Community”

- a. Commission will actively seek a clearer understanding of the range of housing concerns facing Berkeley’s increasing older population. It will encourage better communication between the City, its various departments and the elder population regarding housing issues.
- b. Commission will increase City Council and public awareness about the specific needs of Berkeley's older unhoused population. (statistics?)
- c. Commission will support housing policies that do not discourage, but instead encourage our older citizens to remain in Berkeley.

4. Identify and examine the emerging issues and policies regarding public health and safety that are of particular concern to the older adult population and propose policy recommendations that address these specific concerns.

- a. The issues we will focus on, but not be limited to, are:
 - Access to health insurance and services
 - Access to Alzheimer’s education and support services for Berkeley families
 - Crime
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Scammers and other predatory business practices
 - Systemic ageist attitudes

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2025 Work Plan

- b. Commission will seek education regarding Berkeley's aging citizens safety concerns in order to identify that demographic's unique vulnerabilities and determine priorities.
- c. When feasible Commission will coordinate with other Commissions to ensure that the concerns of our elder community are reflected in their deliberations and recommendations
- d. Commission will watch that these concerns are addressed in all phases of municipal policy making and taken into account from the outset when any new policies are being considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Commission's work plan does not directly affect the environmental sustainability of the City, yet many of our priorities may lead to a more economical use of City land and commercial/residential spaces. Our work plan may positively impact City expenditures by reducing numbers of unhoused individuals and reducing the physical and mental health needs of our seniors that may require emergency attention.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Based on Commission research and public hearings, the Commission will draft and submit recommendations and communications to Council when necessary.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The Commission's work plan does not itself have any fiscal impact. The execution of many projects outlined in the work plan, however, may require the allocation of existing City funds and services. The commission is grateful for the support of Senior Center staff who coordinate our meetings and our interactions with the city of Berkeley.

CONTACT PERSON

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Odile Lavault, Chairperson, Commission on Aging
Thomas Yamaguchi, Vice Chair, Commission on Aging