



Memorandum

DATE: Month 19, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board

FROM: DéSeana Williams, Executive Director

By: Lief Bursell, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Recommendation to adopt Resolution 26-06 authorizing the Executive Director to increase the purchase order with ACRO Services Corp. by an additional amount not to exceed \$40,000 to provide a temporary staff person to assist with the administrative tasks relate to the administration of the 2025 Empty Homes Tax

Recommendation

That the Board adopts Resolution 26-06 authorizing the Executive Director to increase the purchase order with ACRO Services Corp. by an additional amount not to exceed \$40,000 for a temporary staff person to assist with the administrative tasks related to the administration of the 2025 Empty Homes Tax.

Background and Need for Rent Board Action

The Empty Homes Tax (Berkeley Municipal Code Section 7.54) was approved by Berkeley voters in November 2022 under Measure M. The Empty Homes Tax is intended to disincentivize prolonged vacancies and housing speculation, thereby increasing the number of housing units available for occupancy, while also raising funds for municipal services, including but not limited to constructing, acquiring, and rehabilitating affordable housing.

Since the adoption of the Empty Homes Tax pursuant to Measure M in 2022, the Rent Board and City of Berkeley's Finance Department have worked collaboratively to implement the tax. In 2025, the City issued tax bills for those owners of residential units that were deemed to be subject to the Empty Homes Tax in calendar year 2024.

On December 18, 2025, the Board approved the addition of an Assistant Planner to the Rent Board's staffing model, primarily to help with the additional workload created by the Board's assistance with the administration of the Empty Homes Tax. Staff have since learned that the recruitment of this position will take several months due to an expiring eligibility list and do not anticipate having a Assistant Planner position filled

until June of 2026. Given this delay, staff recommend that the Board authorize additional funding for a temporary agency worker to help with 2025 Empty Homes Tax administrative tasks and provide sufficient staff capacity while the Assistant Planner recruitment is completed.

Financial Impact

Staff estimate adding one full-time temporary worker for up to six (6) months will cost the agency \$40,000. Funds are available for this expenditure through the Empty Homes Tax Program budget allocation.

Contact Person

DéSeana Williams, Executive Director (510) 981-7368

RESOLUTION 26-06

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO INCREASE THE PURCHASE ORDER WITH ACRO SERVICES CORPORATION BY AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000 FOR ONE TEMPORARY WORKER TO PROVIDE FULL-TIME ASSISTANCE WITH ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS RELATED TO ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2025 EMPTY HOMES TAX

BE IT RESOLVED by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley as follows:

WHEREAS, Berkeley voters approved the Empty Homes Tax (Berkeley Municipal Code Section 7.54) in November 2022 under Measure M to disincentivize prolonged vacancies and housing speculation, thereby increasing housing availability and generating funds for municipal services, including affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the Rent Board has collaborated with the City of Berkeley Finance Department to implement the Empty Homes Tax, which went into effect on January 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the administration of the Empty Homes Tax has created additional workload for Rent Board staff, including processing inquiries, assisting property owners, and coordinating with City departments; and

WHEREAS, the Board approved the addition of an Assistant Planner position in December 2025 to address this workload, but recruitment for this position is expected to take several months, with an anticipated start date no earlier than June 2026; and

WHEREAS, the services of a temporary staff person for a period not to exceed six months will provide necessary administrative support during this interim period and ensure timely and effective administration of the Empty Homes Tax; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley currently utilizes ACRO Services Corporation to provide temporary personnel when needed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board hereby authorizes the Executive Director to increase the purchase order with ACRO Services Corporation by an additional amount not to exceed \$40,000 to allow for one full-time temporary worker to support the agency with administrative tasks related to the 2025 Empty Homes Tax.

Dated: February 19, 2026

Adopted by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley by the following vote:

YES:

NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Soli Alpert, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

Attest: _____
DéSeana Williams, Executive Director