



Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront
Waterfront Capital Improvement Projects Division

November 6th, 2024

Recreation Improvements Projects at Cesar Chavez Park

Summary of Public Comment – Community Meeting #2

Community Meeting held October 30, 2024 – 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm via Zoom

The City of Berkeley’s Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department held the second Community Meeting in a series of two Community Meetings for Recreation Improvements Projects at Cesar Chavez Park. Community Meeting #1 was held May 23, 2024 and introduced the Cesar Chavez Permanent Restroom Building on Spinnaker Way Project and Cesar Chavez Perimeter Pathway Improvements Project. Community Meeting #2 was held October 30, 2024 and covered both projects. Below are comments summarizing presentation materials and public comments.

Permanent Restroom Building on Spinnaker Way Project

Nelson Lam summarized presentation materials from Community Meeting #1 about restroom placement, City-Wide Parks restroom facilities survey, comparisons between conventional and self-cleaning restrooms, community input from Community Meeting #1, Exeloo site visit, and a summary of community emails received by our Capital Improvements Projects Division. The following questions and comments are listed in order received.

1. [Participant] A dog washing station would be appreciated as part of the Cesar Chavez Restroom Project.
2. [Participant] Question about inter-city Building Permit fees for the restroom Project.
3. [Participant] Questions about Exeloo restroom door, example presented limited time in restroom to 10 minutes. ADA users need more time than 10 minutes to use restroom. City of Berkeley’s Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department should set restroom use time to more than 10 minutes. [Answer] Yes, our Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department can set the automatic time limit to longer than 10 minutes. Please provide comments on how long you think the automatic time limit should be.

4. [Participant] Likes the idea of a self-cleaning restroom. [Question] How do people know on the outside if the restroom is occupied? [Answer] There are LED lights around the entrance button that change from blue [unoccupied] to yellow [occupied] when someone is inside. Door will also not open if someone is inside restroom.
5. [Participant] All lights should be shielded. Exterior lights should be shut off at night so there is no light pollution.
6. [Participant] Wants more port-a-potties on the north-west and north-east corners of Cesar Chavez Park.
7. [Participant] Likes self-cleaning bathrooms, likes this Exeloo model.
8. [Participant] Happy about the decision to go with an automated (self-cleaning) restroom.
9. [Participant Question] How much would more bike parking (bike racks) cost to be included in the Cesar Chavez Restroom Project? [Answer] A few thousand dollars and increased concrete sidewalk costs.

Cesar Chavez Perimeter Pathway Improvements Project

Nelson Lam summarized existing pavement condition assessment, existing site amenities condition assessment, trash can options, wildlife and nature considerations, community input from Community Meeting #1, and presented potential construction phasing. The City of Berkeley's Burrowing Owl Off-Agenda Memorandum was distributed through the chat: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Off%20Agenda%209-20-24%20Cesar%20Chavez%20Park%20Burrowing%20Owls%20Area.pdf>. The following questions and comments are listed in order received.

1. [Participant chat message] Highly encourages some way to indicate bike lanes. Pedestrians sometimes wear ear-buds and cannot hear cyclists calling out.
2. [Participant] Wants many more signs for the off-leash area. People do not know where the off-leash area is. Wants more signs to direct people to the off-leash area.
3. [Participant] Are the blue trash cans with pull down handles ADA accessible? [Answer] Yes, the blue trash can example will pull down handles are ADA accessible. Any trash can installed as part of this project will be ADA accessible.
4. [Participant] Will the culverts around the pathway be affected by the pathway repaving project. [Answer] No, the culverts in Cesar Chavez Park will not be affected by this Project.
5. [Participant] The results of radiation testing of Cesar Chavez Park have not been released. [Question] Will this Project be stopped if the landfill comes back positive for radiation? [Answer] Because of Grant Funding timeline constraints, we have to keep working on this Project while we wait for radiation testing results.

6. [Participant] Wants better signage and is happy about forthcoming signage plan. Would like to see striping on the path. Does not think the existing bike path needs to be widened. Wants a yellow dashed line down the center. Current unstriped path causes stress for both pedestrians and cyclists.
7. [Participant] Huge number of seniors are using e-bikes. Hasn't seen people racing around Cesar Chavez Park themselves.
8. [Participant] Reiterates that there should be port-a-potties in the north-east and north-west sections of Cesar Chavez Park. Would also like to see drinking fountains on the north end of Cesar Chavez Park. Would like the existing pavement reused as permeable asphalt paving.
9. [Participant] Triangle signs and striping would be good. Cesar Chavez is not a speedy place currently. Wants to have recycling and compost bins as well as garbage bins that are all ADA accessible. Wants more native plantings areas and more protected native plantings areas.
10. [Participant] Wants less pavement, wants abandoned paved areas to be removed from Cesar Chavez Park. Doesn't want the path to be wider. Raising concerns about Bryant's Savannah Sparrow. Believes that Bryant's Savannah Sparrow use the area north of the native planting area. Does not want more trees or shrubs and wants more grassland for the Bryant's Savannah Sparrow. Wants "Protocol Burrowing Surveying" and biological monitors. Doesn't want any staging in the open space area. [Response] No staging will occur in the open space areas.
11. [Participant] Current trash cans have a space on top for recycling. Wants separate recycling cans or recycling option.
12. [Participant] Does not think striping will work. Runs on the Ohlone Greenway, bicyclists do not listen to the striping, does not think striping will work at Cesar Chavez Park. Issue with people walking side by side. Suggests speed limits, doesn't think a wider path will be better. Wider paths are not inviting to walk down. No room on the current path for separate bicyclist and pedestrian lanes.
13. [Participant] Community is saying there are burrowing owls this year.
14. [Participant] There should be a focus on less "famous" native species like Large Marble Butterfly. Native plants that support these species like rock crest should be planted. Thinks we should pick 3-5 native animal species and plant native plants to support them. Wants more protection for grassland birds, wants a fenced off grassland area.
15. [Participant chat message] Fencing off an area for burrowing owl is tricky. Fencing could cause burrowing owls to abandon the site. Burrowing owls like wide open spaces. A fence is best used for a very large area for burrowing owls.
16. [Participant] Wants action on the burrowing owl sanctuary fence on north-east corner of Cesar Chavez Park. [City of Berkeley Burrowing Owl Off-Agenda was distributed through chat].

17. [Participant] Glad that the bike path is not being widened. Likes that Cesar Chavez Park is a quiet place. Pedestrians have been hit by bicycles.
18. [Participant] Striping is not intended to separate bicyclists and pedestrians but wants to increase situational awareness of all parties. Thinks striping will make the experience more pleasant and less stressful for everyone and will bring more people to the park.
19. [Participant] East Bay Regional Parks uses volunteers to govern the bike paths and dog walking trails. Would like more ambassador volunteers.