

OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Berkeley Rent Board Conference Room B – 2000 Center Street, 4th floor, Berkeley, CA

Public participation

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid model with both in-person and remote participation, and in accordance with Government Code Section 54953 and all current state and local requirements allowing public participation in meetings of legislative bodies. Any member of the public may attend this meeting at the posted location(s). Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to DéSeana Williams, Executive Director of the Rent Board, at 510-981-7368 (981-RENT). The Committee may take action related to any subject listed on the Agenda.

To access this meeting by Zoom

[Join the meeting from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device](#). If you do not want your name to appear on the screen, use the drop-down menu and click on "Rename" to rename yourself to be anonymous. To request to speak, use the "Raise Hand" icon by rolling over the bottom of the screen.

To join by phone

Dial 1-669-900-6833, enter Webinar ID: 889 4918 6585 and Passcode: 589298. To comment during the public comment part of the agenda, Press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Committee Chair.

Email comments

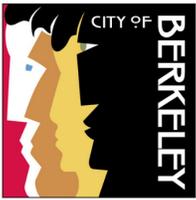
Email comments must be submitted to corozco@berkeleyca.gov by **4:30 p.m.** on the day of the meeting in order to be considered by the Committee and included in the public record. Format your subject line: "PUBLIC COMMENT ITEM FOR OUTREACH COMMITTEE." Please observe a 150-word limit. Time limits on public comments will apply.

Decorum

All rules of procedure and decorum apply for both in-person attendees and those participating remotely. Attendees at public meetings are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various scents. Please help the City respect these needs.

Communications access information

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services Specialist at (510) 981-6418 (voice) or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three (3) business days before the meeting date.



REVISED AGENDA: OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Berkeley Rent Board Conference Room B – 2000 Center Street, 4th floor, Berkeley, CA

1. Roll call
2. Land Acknowledgment Statement: *The Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board recognizes that the rental housing units we regulate are built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun-(Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors, and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's landlords and tenants have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878 and since the Rent Stabilization Board's creation in 1980. As stewards of the laws regulating rental housing, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today.*
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Election of Committee Chair
5. Review and approval of January 28, 2026, Meeting Minutes
6. Public Comment
7. Rent Board Outreach Staff Report
8. Recommendation to adopt Resolution Advancing Justice: Ensuring Access and Inclusion for All (See attached report along with staff analysis)
9. Discussion and possible action for a Recommendation for Rent Board Language Access Policy, including improved language access on the website and potential language access hub, along with staff analysis of specific materials to be translated. (See attached report along with staff analysis)
10. Discussion and possible action to amend the description and purpose of the Outreach Committee which is now the Outreach and Accessibility Committee
11. Next Meeting Date – March 25, 2026
12. Future Agenda Items
13. Adjournment

STAFF CONTACT: Carla Orozco, Community Development Project Coordinator (510) 981-4934

COMMITTEE: Andy Kelley (Chair), Vanessa Marrero, Ida Martinac, Alfred Twu



OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 28, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Rent Stabilization Board Conference Room A – 2000 Center Street, 4th floor, Berkeley, CA

Minutes (Unapproved)

1. Roll call: Kelley called Roll.
Members Present: Twu, Martinac, Kelley
Members Absent: Marrero
Staff Present: C. Orozco, D. Williams, A. Chang
Members of the Public: None
2. Land Acknowledgment Statement: The Land Acknowledgment Statement was played.
3. Approval of the Amended Agenda: M/S/C (Martinac/Twu) Roll call vote. YES: Twu, Martinac, Kelley. NO: None; ABSTAIN: None; ABSENT: Marrero; Carried: 3-0-0-0.
4. Approval of the Amended December 4, 2025 Minutes, and January 9, 2026 Minutes: M/S/C (Twu/Martinac) Roll call vote. YES: Twu, Martinac, Kelley. NO: None; ABSTAIN: None; ABSENT: Marrero; Carried: 3-0-0-0.
5. Public Comment: None
6. Rent Board Outreach Staff Report: No Action Taken
7. Recommendation to adopt Resolution *Advancing Justice: Ensuring Access and Inclusion for All*: This item will be brought back to the February 25th Outreach Committee Meeting. No Action Taken
8. Discussion and possible action for a Recommendation for a Rent Board Language Access Policy (See attached report): There was a motion to bring a recommendation back to the February 25th Outreach Committee Meeting of improved language access on the website and potential language access hub along with staff analysis of specific materials to translated M/S/C (Twu/Martinac) Roll call vote. YES: Twu, Martinac, Kelley. NO: None; ABSTAIN: None; ABSENT: Marrero; Carried: 3-0-0-0.
9. Data Metrics: No Action Taken
10. Next Meeting Date February 25, 2026 – 6:30pm
11. Future Agenda Items:
 - Standing RSB Staff Report-Can include Staff from other Units at RSB
 - Language Access Policy
 - Quarterly Digital Ed Staff Update
 - RSB Social Media Development/Usage to target seniors, people with disabilities, those with limited English proficiency
 - UC Berkeley Outreach-Residential Housing, Student groups connected to people with disabilities, limited English proficiency
 - Berkeley City College Outreach



Rent Stabilization Board

- City of Mountainview High Language Line Use
- Ed Roberts Outreach
- BUSD first week of school flyers
- Data Metrics
- Disability of Rights Education and Defense Fund-Distribution of RSB Outreach Material

12. Adjournment: M/S/C (Twu/Martinac) Motion to adjourn. Roll call vote. YES: Martinac, Twu, Kelley, Marrero; NO: None; ABSTAIN: None; ABSENT: Marrero. Carried: 3-0-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

STAFF CONTACT: Carla Orozco, Community Development Project Coordinator (510) 981-4934
COMMITTEE: Andy Kelley (Chair), Vanessa Marrero, Ida Martinac, Alfred Twu



DATE: December 28, 2025

TO: Honorable Members of the Outreach Committee

FROM: Commissioner Vanessa D. Marrero
Sponsored: Commissioner Alfred Twu

SUBJECT: Recommendation to the full Board to adopt Resolution
Advancing Justice: Ensuring Access and Inclusion for All

Recommendation

The Outreach Committee recommends that the Board adopt Resolution Advancing Justice: Ensuring Access and Inclusion for All, which affirms the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board's commitment to accessibility and inclusion within the organization and emphasizes the inherent rights of tenants, landlords, commissioners, and individuals with disabilities. It aligns with our mission to regulate residential rent increases in the City of Berkeley, protect against unwarranted evictions, and ensure compliance with rental housing policies that support vulnerable populations.

Background

In the City of Berkeley, the rising costs of living and housing have created significant challenges for many residents, particularly low- and fixed-income individuals, students, marginalized communities, and persons with disabilities. As housing costs continue to escalate, the threats of unwarranted rent increases and evictions have become increasingly prevalent, jeopardizing the stability and security of vulnerable populations within our community.

The Rent Stabilization Board plays a crucial role in regulating residential rent increases, ensuring that housing remains affordable and accessible for all residents. This responsibility is particularly critical in the face of growing economic disparities that

disproportionately impact marginalized and underserved communities. Lack of affordable housing not only threatens the livelihoods of residents but also undermines the diversity and vitality of our neighborhoods.

Currently, many residents are facing the dual pressures of stagnant wages and rapidly increasing rent prices, leading to potential displacement and a loss of long-term community members. This situation is further exacerbated for individuals with dynamic disabilities, who may require additional support and resources to maintain their housing stability.

Moreover, our organization acknowledges the urgent need to address systemic inequities within the housing market that prevent equal access to safe and affordable housing. Implementing policies that promote accessibility, inclusivity, and support for all community members is not merely a matter of housing policy; it is fundamentally about human rights, justice, and dignity.

The need for action from the Rent Stabilization Board is clear:

1. **Preserving Affordability:** Rent stabilization measures are essential to prevent excessive rent increases that threaten to displace tenants and destabilize our communities.
2. **Preventing Displacement:** Taking proactive steps to protect vulnerable populations from unwarranted evictions is essential to fostering a fair and just housing landscape.
3. **Enhancing Inclusion:** A commitment to accessibility ensures that the needs of all community members, especially those with disabilities and language barriers, are met by the policies enacted by the Board.
4. **Promoting Equity:** By implementing fair housing policies, we can work towards rectifying systemic injustices and creating an equitable environment for all residents.
5. **Facilitating Community Resilience:** Stabilized rents contribute to community resilience, allowing families to thrive and contribute positively to their neighborhoods.

The resolution highlights the essential need for structured accessibility to services and resources, acknowledging that a lack of such structure silences voices and undermines principles of inclusion and equality crucial to our democracy.

Key commitments include:

1. **Accessibility Enhancements:** Strengthening efforts to ensure all individuals, particularly those with dynamic disabilities, have full access to organizational activities.
2. **Language Services:** Providing necessary translation and interpretation services to support diverse language speakers.
3. **Direct Access:** Ensuring that all stakeholders, including individuals with disabilities, can directly access services and resources, promoting collaboration and inclusion.
4. **Technology Investment:** Integrating assistive technologies to facilitate communication and resource retrieval for individuals with disabilities.
5. **Resource Availability:** Establishing systems for easy access to materials, stipends, and necessary resources.
6. **Training and Awareness:** Implementing training programs for staff to enhance their understanding of accessibility and inclusion.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Creating frameworks for ongoing assessment of initiatives to ensure effectiveness and improvement.

This resolution seeks to create an inclusive environment and strengthen the impact of our mission, ensuring every community member is valued and empowered. By implementing this board action, we can align our strategies with our mission to advance housing policies that meet the needs of all residents, guaranteeing everyone a safe, stable, and affordable home.

Financial Impact:

This resolution has nominal financial impact to the City of Berkeley General Fund allocation for the administration of the Empty Homes Tax and will not impact the Rent Board fund.

ADVANCING JUSTICE: ENSURING ACCESS AND INCLUSION FOR ALL

WHEREAS our mission is to regulate residential rent increases in the City of Berkeley, protect against unwarranted rent increases and evictions, and provide a fair return to property owners.

WHEREAS our Board works to ensure compliance with legal obligations relating to rental housing and to advance the housing policies of the City with regard to low- and fixed-income persons, marginalized communities, students, persons with disabilities, and older adults.

WHEREAS our board embraces the principles of disability justice—intersectionality, accessibility, equity, and community empowerment—acknowledging that every tenant, landlord, commissioner, and individual with a disability possesses the inherent right to direct access to necessary services and resources.

WHEREAS failure to uphold these principles perpetuates societal inequities and marginalizes those who are already underserved and underrepresented.

WHEREAS it is paramount to ensure that all communication, services, and resources are not only accessible but also inclusive to everyone, especially those requiring translation and interpretation services.

WHEREAS this commitment pays homage to our diverse community and is vital for genuine engagement and participation across all sectors of our society.

WHEREAS we recognize the transformative power of technology and direct access to resources in uplifting individuals who speak languages other than English and those with dynamic disabilities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that by dismantling systemic barriers that create silos within the monolingual and disability community, we can foster a culture of collaboration and interconnectedness that strengthens our collective advocacy for justice.

1. **Acknowledgment of Accountability:** A lack of structure, capacity, and implementation stifles access and inclusion, silencing the voices of individuals with disabilities. This failure threatens the very principles of equity and justice that are essential to the vitality and health of our democracy, compelling us to act decisively and responsibly.

2. **Accessibility Commitment:** The board commits to robustly enhancing accessibility and inclusion efforts, ensuring that individuals who speak other languages than English and people with dynamic disabilities have full and equitable access to all organizational activities and resources. This commitment will be grounded in collaboration and ongoing dialogue with impacted communities.

3. **Language Services:** The board will actively provide comprehensive translation and interpretation services to support individuals who communicate in languages other than

English. Hiring qualified interpreters and translating key documents will ensure that no individual is left unheard or uninformed.

4. **Inclusive Access:** All tenants, landlords, commissioners, and individuals who speak another language other than English and those people with dynamic disabilities shall have direct, unhindered access to organizational services and resources. This approach fosters solidarity, collaboration, and mutual respect among all community members, reinforcing our shared humanity.

5. **Technology Integration:** The board will make strategic investments in technology that promotes meaningful accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This will include assistive devices, software, and tools that facilitate efficient communication and easy access to resources.

6. **Resource Availability:** The board will guarantee that materials, stipends, and other essential resources are not only readily accessible but also customized to the diverse needs of our community members, enabling empowerment and self-sufficiency.

7. **Training and Awareness:** All staff members will undergo comprehensive training that deepens their understanding of accessibility and inclusion. This initiative will ensure that all personnel are equipped to effectively serve individuals with diverse needs and are committed to fostering an inclusive environment.

8. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The organization will establish a robust framework for monitoring the effectiveness of these initiatives, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement to adapt to the evolving needs of the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution shall take effect immediately and be communicated to all staff and stakeholders, promoting widespread awareness and collaborative efforts in achieving these vital commitments.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 28, 2026

TO: Honorable members, Outreach Committee, Berkeley Rent Board

FROM: DéSeana Williams- Executive Director

SUBJECT: Implementation Context and Existing Practices Related to Access and Inclusion

I. Purpose of This Analysis

This analysis is provided in response to the Outreach Committee’s recommendation that the Rent Stabilization Board adopt the Resolution titled “Advancing Justice: Ensuring Access and Inclusion for All.” The purpose of this report is to describe the programs, services, policies, and practices currently in place at the Rent Board that support accessibility, language access, and inclusive service delivery, and to contextualize the Resolution within existing operational, legal, and fiscal frameworks.

II. Existing Framework for Access and Inclusion

Accessibility and Disability Compliance

The Rent Board operates in accordance with federal ADA requirements and City of Berkeley policies. Recent efforts include compliance with WCAG mandates and accessibility considerations embedded in the approved RFP for a new core data system. There have been no complaints or findings of accessibility barriers in the past 4 years.

Language Access Services

The Rent Board provides language access through City Language Line services, translated materials including the Rent Control Guide in Spanish, website translation tools, public notices of language access availability, and bilingual staff who provide real-time assistance.

Technology and Equitable Access

The current RFP for a new data system reflects an investment in accessibility, usability, and equitable access to the agency’s services, data, and documents.

Training and Staff Awareness

The City of Berkeley offers ADA, reasonable accommodation, EEO, and customer service trainings through the NeoGov training platform. These training courses are available to staff on an ad hoc basis and are not mandatory.

III. Clarifications Regarding Resolution Language

The Rent Board provides stipends only to Commissioners. No stipends are provided to members of the public.

IV. Operational and Resource Considerations

Full implementation of all elements of the Resolution would require evaluation of staffing, funding, and timing. Many of the referenced functions are supported by Citywide systems and would require coordination and phased implementation, consistent with budgetary and staffing capacity.

V. Conclusion

The actions and commitments outlined in the Resolution largely align with existing Rent Board practices and ongoing initiatives. Specifically, accessibility commitments are being addressed through compliance with federal ADA requirements, City of Berkeley policies, and continued efforts to achieve WCAG compliance, including accessibility considerations embedded in the approved RFP for a new core data system. Current language access goals are met through City Language Line services, some translated public-facing materials, website translation tools, and bilingual staff support, with continued refinement through clearer public notice and consistent application across programs.

Recommendations for technology investment are being advanced through the Board-approved data system replacement process, intended to improve usability, accessibility, and equitable access to services. Training and awareness objectives are supported through existing City-provided ADA, reasonable accommodation, and customer service trainings available to staff, with any future formalization or expansion of training requirements to be evaluated in coordination with Citywide policies and resource availability.

Where the Resolution speaks to new or expanded actions, such as formal monitoring frameworks, customized resource development, or additional system-wide requirements, these efforts would be appropriately assessed, prioritized, and phased in over time, consistent with staffing capacity, budgetary constraints, and any necessary Board approval processes. In this way, adoption of the Resolution affirms the Rent Board's direction and values while ensuring that implementation of its specific actions remains sustainable, coordinated, and grounded in existing operational frameworks.



Memorandum

DATE: February 25, 2026
TO: Honorable Members of the Outreach Committee
FROM: Andrew Chang, Principal Program Manager
SUBJECT: Language Access Policy

Recommendation

For the Outreach Committee to request that staff translate the most frequently accessed forms into Spanish and Simplified Chinese and draft an internal policy and protocols for Language Access Services that include the following provisions:

1. Create and maintain a page on the Rent Board's website that provides visitors with information on available language services and translated forms and is linked on the front page in a conspicuous location.
2. Include verbiage in Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Arabic on the front page of all mailings, outreach materials, and petition packets, notifying recipients of available language services.
3. Include non-English-speaking communities and community groups in the Rent Board's outreach work plan, in alignment with the Rent Ordinance's stated purpose to advance housing policies regarding marginalized communities (Chapter 13.76.030).
4. Conduct a bi-annual review of the utilization of language services, community needs, and frequently used forms, and return to the Outreach Committee with findings and recommendations for further action.

Background and Need for Committee Action

On January 9, 2026, the members of the Outreach Committee discussed initial considerations for a Language Access Policy and requested staff to conduct further research and provide a cost estimate for the initial translation of all Rent Board Forms. On January 28, 2026, the Outreach Committee received the results of staff's research, discussed potential policy considerations, and requested staff to return with a recommendation to address the requested points of discussion.

Staff has identified the following documents as immediate priorities for translation:

1. Petition Filing Rules
2. Tenant Petition for Individual Rent Adjustment
3. Tenant Petition Schedules A-D
4. Landlord Petition
5. Mediation Request Form

Financial Impact

Translation of these five most frequently used documents into Spanish and Mandarin Chinese has an impact on both staff time and budgeted expenditures. As an immediate, one-time investment, the translation of documents into Spanish will require substantial staff hours from Spanish-speaking staff.

Staff has also requested a detailed estimate from Language Line for Mandarin Chinese translation and WCAG compliance services for both Spanish and Chinese documents. Based on established rates, staff estimates this one-time cost to be approximately \$2,500.

Future costs may vary annually depending on identified needs for translation of forms and other documents, as well as the specific services utilized.

Contact Person

Please contact Carla Orozco, Community Development Project Coordinator, at corozco@berkeleyca.gov or at (510) 981-4934.