

City of Berkeley

General Information

- Zip Codes: 94702, 94703, 94704, 94705, 94706, 94707, 94708, 94709, 94710, 94720
- Population: 121,240
- Median household income: \$66,237
- Total Housing Units: 49,671
- Owner-Occupied: 42.6%
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2011 – 2015: \$741,900
- Average persons per household: 2.29
- Median gross rent (2017): 2BR/\$2,600

Largest Employers

U.C. Berkeley
Lawrence Berkeley Nat'l Labs.
Alta Bates East Bay Hospitals
Bayer
City of Berkeley
Berkeley Unified School District
Kaiser Permanente
Berkeley Bowl Produce
Pacific Steel Casting
Berkeley City College

Real Estate-Related Policies and Regulations

For Sale and Open House Sign Regulations

Depending on a property's zoning, Berkeley Municipal Code specifies the type and size of sign allowed. Before sign installation, it is advised to locate the property's zoning district and comply with its related sign ordinance. Generally, the code allows for one (1) temporary on-premises wall or ground sign not exceeding seventy-two (72) square inches in sign area, no portion of which is higher than seven feet above existing grade, or within twelve (12) vertical feet of electrical conductors. Placement of Open House signs shall not cause a hazard to pedestrian or vehicle traffic and may not be affixed to City-owned utility poles and lamp posts. Details are available at [BerkeleyMunicipalCode/Signs](#).

Time-of-Sale Requirements

Private Sewer Lateral Program: Property owners are required to obtain a Sewer Lateral Certificate of Compliance (SLC) when any one of the following situations exists: (1) before the transfer or sale of property; (2) before obtaining a building permit for major construction projects; (3) when the City finds that the PSL may be a public nuisance; or (4) when a property owner elects to repair or replace their PSL. The City offers a loan program to assist Berkeley low-income property owners to comply with PSL ordinance requirements. Details are available at [BerkeleyPublicWorksDept](#).

Building Energy Saving Ordinance (BESO): As of December 1, 2015, Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) and Commercial Energy Conservation Ordinance (CECO) have been replaced by "BESO." Under BESO, owners of single family buildings shall have a Registered Service Provider prepare and submit an energy report at the

time of sale or within 12 months of a lender having acquired title due to foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure. Find more information at [BerkeleyEnergyandSustainableDevelopment](#).

Potential Disclosures Issues

The potential disclosure issues and resource list below are not intended to be all-inclusive. The Alameda County Disclosures and Disclaimers Advisory is available from the Bay East Association of REALTORS®.

Energy Efficiency Program Financing - Property Assessed Clean Energy (“PACE”): PACE financing is available to property owners engaging in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation upgrades to buildings. PACE financing is attached to the home, repaid through the property tax bill, and is transferred to subsequent owners until paid off. Berkeley participates in the CaliforniaFIRST Program, CSCDA Open PACE, HERO Residential, HERO Commercial, and PACE Funding for residential and/or commercial properties. Information about these programs is available at: <http://www.pacenation.us/resources/all-programs/> or <http://cscda.org/Open-PACE> or at www.heroprogram.com.

Fire Districts: After the 1991 Oakland-Berkeley Hills Fire, the City of Berkeley established two fire zones, encompassing portions of the City where structures may be more vulnerable to fire due to topography, vegetation and location of nearby parks.

- **In Fire Zone Two,** the Berkeley Building Code requires that new structures and modifications to existing structures have safety features such as non-combustible decks, Class A roofs, protection of exterior walls with fire-resistive materials, double glazed windows, protection of eaves and overhangs, and the enclosing of under floor areas.
- **In Fire Zone Three,** requirements include all the requirements of Fire Zone Two, plus additional fire warning systems, protection of utilities, and control of vegetation. Details are available at [BerkeleyMunicipalCodeSection19](#).

Flood Zone: Properties located within “100 year” flood zones must have Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance. Their lowest base floor elevation must be 2 feet above the 100-year flood level. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map Community Panel Number 06004 0002 A, Effective September 1, 1978. For more information visit: [BerkeleyMunicipalCodeSection17](#).

Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC): The LPC is responsible for the preservation and protection of Berkeley’s cultural and historic landmarks. For information, go to [BerkeleyPlanningandDevelopment](#) or call (510) 981-7410.

Sidewalk Repair Program: Effective October 1, 2011, the City of Berkeley began sharing equally the liability and repair costs for broken sidewalks with property owners. Find more information at [Berkeley Sidewalk Program](#) or call (510) 981-6409.

Tree Preservation Ordinance: The City of Berkeley has stringent regulations regarding Coast Live Oak Trees, including prohibiting removal of said trees or pruning of stems or limbs that

may be excessive or injurious to the tree. Exceptions may be made by the City Manager, or their designee, when any tree described in this Ordinance is a potential threat to life or limb or is a danger to property. Find details at [CoastLiveOakTreeOrdinance](#).

Taxes, Bonds and Assessment Districts

Real Estate Transfer Tax: Total: \$16.10/per \$1,000 property value, comprised of City Rate: \$15.00/per \$1,000 property value; and County Rate: \$1.10/per \$1,000 property value.

Transfer Tax Reductions for Qualifying Seismic Work: To be eligible for a reduction in the real estate transfer tax, building permits submitted for qualifying seismic strengthening work on or after February 1, 2007 must comply with specific technical guidelines and administrative procedures. Details are available at: [BerkeleyBuildingSafetyDivision](#).

Bonds/Assessments: The City of Berkeley has a number of bonds and assessments, some of which are formulated based on the square footage of the structure; others based on the square footage of the lot; and some based on a formula multiplied by the real property value. Details of current city and county taxes are available at: [BerkeleyFinanceDepartment](#).

San Francisco Bay Protection: Beginning July 1, 2017, a \$12 per parcel tax annually for properties in Bay Area counties including Alameda County was levied pursuant to the passing of Measure AA in 2016. Exemptions apply to parcels already exempt from state ad valorem taxes.

Rent Control, Review and Landlord Responsibilities

Rent Control: The City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization and Eviction for Good Cause Ordinance regulates most residential rents in Berkeley. Owners of rental property covered by the Ordinance are required to register their units with the City of Berkeley by filing registration statements and paying annual registration fees, which cover the program's cost. To find current information regarding the Rent Stabilization board, can be found at [BerkeleyRSBWebsite](#). Additional resources are available at:

- New laws and regulations for 2017-2018: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/rent/newlaws/>
- Regulations of the Rent Stabilization Board: [RegulationsBerkeleyRentStabilizationBoard](#)
- Rent Board Regulation Change Archives: [BerkeleyRentBoardChangeArchives](#)
- Current Market Medians: [BerkeleyCurrentMarketMedians2017](#)

Rental Property Inspection Program: The City of Berkeley Rental Property Inspection Program inspects rental properties for health, safety, and fire violations based on complaints from tenants, neighbors, or when deferred maintenance is visible from the street. Fees permits and repairs are the responsibility of the landlord. Details are available at [BerkeleyHousingCode](#).

New Tenant Buyout Ordinance: Effective April 30, 2016, the City of Berkeley enacted new rights and obligations regarding “buyout” agreements. These include any promise to permanently

vacate a controlled rental unit in Berkeley for compensation from the landlord. Additional information can be found at [TenantBuyoutOrdinance](#).

Special Study or Planning Zones: None.

Additional Information:

Dog Licenses: Every dog owner must license their dog which is four months or older. This license must be renewed annually. For additional information go to: [BerkeleyAnimalLicensing](#)

<u>Type/Term</u>	<u>1 Year</u>	<u>2 Year</u>	<u>3 Year</u>
Unsterilized	\$75.00	N/A	N/A
Sterilized	\$15.00	N/A	\$40

Unsterilized Cat Licenses: Cat has not been spayed or neutered - \$75

Replacement Tags - \$10.00 Dog Tag Replacement Fee

License Fee Waivers are available for Low Income Households, Senior Citizens, Service Dogs, and Adopted Dogs from Animal Shelter

City of Berkeley Resources

Building Division		510-981-7400
Business License		510-981-7300
Cable and/or Phone	XFINITY from Comcast	844-246-9494
Cable and/or Phone	AT&T U-verse	855-369-6101
Electricity	PG&E	800-743-5000
Environmental Services		510-981-5310
Finance Dept		510-981-7300
Fire Dept		510-981-3473
Garbage		510-981-7270
Gas	PG&E	800-743-5000
Housing Authority		510-981-5470
Permit Dept		510-981-7500
Planning/Zoning Dept		510-981-7400
Police Dept.		510-981-5802
Rent Board		510-981-7368
Sheriff Dept		510-981-5900
Public Works		510-981-6300
Recycling		510-981-7270
School District	Berkeley Unified School District	510-644-4500
Water	EBMUD	866-403-2683

Online Resources

- City Website: [City of Berkeley](http://www.cityofberkeley.org)
- Berkeley Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.berkeleychamber.com/>
- Berkeley Unified School District: <http://www.berkeleyschools.net/>
- Housing Authority of the County of Alameda: <http://www.haca.net/>
- East Bay Rental Housing Association: <http://ebrha.com/property-owners/>
- U.S. Census Bureau: [BerkeleyQuickFacts](http://www.census.gov/berkeleyquickfacts)

DISCLAIMER: The information provided herein is current as of the date below. The intention of this document is to increase awareness and should not be considered a comprehensive list since all information may not be known to Bay East Association of Realtors or may have changed since publication. Bay East recommends real estate professionals contact local officials to determine current codes, regulations, practices and policy requirements.

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