

Office of the Mayor

## SUPPLEMENTAL or REVISED AGENDA MATERIAL

**Meeting Date:** April 30, 2013

**Item Number:** NA

**Item Description:** Send a letter to the Vice President of Facilities of USPS appealing the sale of the Downtown Berkeley Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way.

**Supplemental/Revision Submitted By: Mayor Tom Bates**

**“Good of the City” Analysis:**

*The analysis below must demonstrate how accepting this supplement/revision is for the “good of the City” and outweighs the lack of time for citizen review or evaluation by the Council.*

The City of Berkeley received a notice on April 22<sup>nd</sup> from USPS announcing their decision to sell the Downtown Berkeley Post Office. Their 15 day comment period ends at 5 p.m. on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor would like the City Council to discuss and take action on April 30<sup>th</sup> so that the Council has the opportunity to submit the resolution to USPS within the 15 day timeframe.

***Consideration of supplemental or revised agenda material is subject to approval by a two-thirds vote of the City Council. (BMC 2.06.070)***

A minimum of **42 copies** must be submitted to the City Clerk for distribution at the Council meeting. This completed cover page must accompany every copy.

Copies of the supplemental/revised agenda material may be delivered to the City Clerk Department by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Copies that are ready after 12:00 p.m. must be delivered directly to the City Clerk at Council Chambers prior to the start of the meeting.

Supplements or Revisions submitted pursuant to BMC § 2.06.070 may only be revisions of the original report included in the Agenda Packet.



Office of the Mayor  
Mayor Tom Bates

ACTION CALENDAR  
April 30, 2013

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Tom Bates  
Councilmember Jesse Arreguin  
Councilmember Laurie Capitelli  
Councilmember Susan Wengraf

Subject: Letter Appealing the Sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to the Vice President of Facilities of the United States Postal Service (USPS) appealing the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Minimal

BACKGROUND

On July 31, 2012 the City Council created the Post Office Subcommittee as a way to work with the community and address concerns regarding the possible sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office. The Post Office Subcommittee met on February 12, 2013 in preparation for the public hearing USPS held on February 26, 2013. The Post Office Subcommittee listened to comments and suggestions from the public regarding the possible sale of the Berkeley Main Post office.

USPS held a public hearing on February 26, 2013 and over 200 members of the community attended to testify their opposition to the sale of the historic Berkeley Main Post Office.

The Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution opposing the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office on March 5, 2013. The City Council requested USPS to suspend efforts to sell the building for one year, so that the City of Berkeley and USPS work together with the goal of continuing USPS ownership of the building.

On April 22, 2013, Mayor Bates received a letter from the USPS Facilities Implementation Office announcing its decision to move forward with the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office and relocating the retail services to a yet-to-be-determined location.

USPS has stated that any individual who disagrees with the decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office can appeal the decision within 15 days.

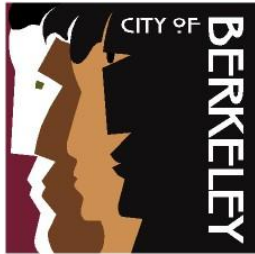
The Berkeley City Council will reach out to other local, state and federal elected officials and ask if they want to be added as signers to the letters.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Tom Bates 510-981-7100

Attachments:

- 1: Letter appealing sale of the Downtown Berkeley Post Office
- 2: Resolution opposing the sale of the Downtown Berkeley Post Office.



April 30, 2013

Vice President of Facilities  
Facilities Implementation – Pacific Area  
1300 Evans Avenue, Suite 200  
San Francisco, CA 94188-0200

**Re: Formal appeal of decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94704 and the relocation of retail services.**

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please accept this letter as formal appeal of the United States Postal Service's (USPS) decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way, Berkeley and the relocation of retail services currently available at the site.

The Berkeley City Council strongly opposes and objects to the sale of the Downtown Berkeley Post Office. We are disappointed to learn that USPS has decided to move forward with the sale of this historic building despite the overwhelming public opposition to the sale, as evidenced by the hundreds of community members that testified in person and via written correspondence.

On March 5, 2013 the Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution opposing the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office. In it, the City Council requested USPS to suspend efforts to sell the building for one year, so that the City of Berkeley and USPS could work together to find a solution with the goal of continuing USPS ownership of the building. Since that time, USPS has not reached out to find an alternate solution that would not put the historic building up for sale. Instead, USPS unilaterally announced the sale and the relocation of retail services without taking into consideration the requests made by the Berkeley City Council.

The Berkeley Main Post Office is on the National Historic Register of Places. It is the anchor of the Berkeley Civic Center Historic District, which is comprised of Berkeley's landmarked Old City Hall, Farm Credit Building, Veterans' Memorial Building, Berkeley Central Public Library, Berkeley High School, Community and Little Theater, YMCA, Armstrong College, the Elks Club and Civic Center Park. To privatize the Berkeley Main Post Office is an attack on the historic fabric of our City's center

and the Berkeley City Council continues to be united and passionate in its opposition to the sale of this property.

Berkeley's Main Post Office sits at the heart of our civic center and our city. To privatize this much loved landmark will diminish all that we have done to improve the downtown. It will also deprive citizens of their right to view the incomparable WPA murals, created with public funds and owned by all of us.

Our question to you is: What does it take for you not to sell this beautiful public building?

Please reconsider the sale and work with the City and the people of Berkeley to save our heritage and keep the Post Office in public hands. We are also requesting that the City be informed of when our appeal will be heard so we can be present for the deliberations.

Sincerely,

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Mayor Tom Bates

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Councilmember Max Anderson

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Councilmember Jesse Arreguin

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Councilmember Laurie Capitelli

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Councilmember Linda Maio

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Councilmember Darryl Moore

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Councilmember Susan Wengraf

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Councilmember Kriss Worthington

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Councilmember Gordon Wozniak

Cc: Patrick Donahoe, Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer

Diana Alvarado, Real Estate, Facilities Implementation, USPS Pacific Region.

The Honorable Ander Crenshaw, Chairman Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The Honorable Tom Carper, Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The Honorable Barbara Lee, United States Congress, CD 13

The Honorable Jackie Speier, United States Congress, CD 14

The Honorable Eric Swalwell, United States Congress, CD 15

The Honorable George Miller, United States Congress, CD 11

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, United States Senate,

The Honorable Barbara Boxer, United States Senate

RESOLUTION NO. 66,025-N.S.

OPPOSING THE SALE OF THE BERKELEY MAIN POST OFFICE

WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has announced the possible sale of Berkeley's historic and heavily used Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Main Post Office is both an official landmark of the City of Berkeley and is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, on July 31, 2012 the City Council created the Post Office Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, USPS will be holding a public meeting on February 26, 2013 to explain the proposal and hear comments from the public; and

WHEREAS, USPS has a 15 day written public comment period that will expire on March 13, 2013 and the City Council wishes to submit this resolution before the public comment period ends; and

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2013 the Post Office Subcommittee held a public meeting where members of the community had the opportunity to address their concerns regarding the possible sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley formally opposes the sale of the Historic Berkeley Main Post Office building and requests that the United States Postal Service maintain existing services at the Berkeley Main Post Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the USPS suspend, for one year, efforts to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office building and work with the City of Berkeley with the goal of continuing the USPS's ownership of the building, and the leasing of the rear portion of the building to provide an ongoing income stream to the USPS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley requests that USPS immediately impose a moratorium on all sales of Post Office buildings nationwide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley will request that its federal representatives hold hearings on the requirement that the USPS pre-fund its pension obligations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley shall reach out to other cities affected by the sale of postal facilities to develop a collective response.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution will be sent to the USPS, Congress members Lee and Speier, Senators Feinstein and Boxer and President Obama prior to the expiration of the public comment period which ends on March 13, 2013.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on March 5, 2013 by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Maio, Moore, Wengraf, Wozniak and Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: Worthington.

  
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Tom Bates, Mayor

Attest:   
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Mark Numainville, CMC, City Clerk