

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
1000 SAN PABLO AVENUE
ALBANY, CA 94706
www.AlbanyCA.org

Clean California Local Grant Program (CCLGP)
Caltrans
1120 N. Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 24, 2023

RE: City of Berkeley's CCLGP Round 2 Application for the Tom Bates Sports Fields Beautification Project

Dear CCLGP Grants Committee:

On behalf of the City of Albany, we strongly encourage Caltrans to award a Clean California Local Program grant to the City of Berkeley for the **Tom Bates Fields Beautification Project**.

There has been a shortage of sports fields in the five-city area around Berkeley for decades. In the early 2000's, the five cities of Albany, Berkeley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, and Richmond joined together in a joint powers agreement (JPA) to raise funds and develop more sports fields. In 2008, the first project of the JPA cities resulted in the construction of the Tom Bates Fields Sports Complex in West Berkeley, which provided two artificial turf fields with night lights, three grass fields, a softball/little league fields, fencing, pathways, and parking lots. Since then, the new sports facility has provided outdoor sports fields for over 20,000 youth and adults throughout the year with over 300,000 player-hours of time.

While the fields are some of the most highly-used in the Bay Area, they are located in the industrial part of West Berkeley, directly surrounded by asphalt, concrete, the freeway (I-80), and other commercial uses. Since it opened, the parking lots, entrances, and portable toilets at the fields have been getting trashed constantly by vandalism, illegal encampments, abandoned vehicles, litter, and graffiti. The sports teams and their families from throughout the five-city area have been pleading for a new fieldhouse with proper restrooms, an additional youth soccer field, and improvements to the parking lots and field entrances for better safety, ADA accessibility, and aesthetics.

In early 2023, the City of Berkeley obtained \$4.4 million in local City funds to complete the fieldhouse and youth field, but not enough to install the landscaping, signage, and parking lot and field entrance improvements that could help this site reach its full potential as a truly successful public sports field complex. Funding from the Clean CA grant project to beautify this highly-used sports fields facility would be the final step needed to establish a strong sense of public recreational space in this industrial area. This would greatly enhance the user experience of thousands of field and shoreline users, discourage vandalism, litter, and graffiti, and connect these amazing sports fields to the natural beauty of the adjacent shoreline of the Bay, and become something we can all be proud of.

Please support this beautification project!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Tiedemann', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aaron Tiedemann
Mayor
City of Albany