

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

This information can be interpreted for you free of charge. Visit City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 or learn more at www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess

Esta información se puede interpretar gratuitamente. Visite el Ayuntamiento en 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 o obtenga más información en www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess

这些信息可免费为您解释。请访问位于 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 的市政厅，或访问 www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess 了解更多信息

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)
Hana Gardens - 10870 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Join Via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88138907080?pwd=lubCqZoi1RLdzTRtTYs9iboCBpUJTF.1>

Meeting ID: 881 3890 7080 **Passcode:** 987742 **Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968

Please note that due to the temporary meeting location, this meeting will not be broadcast or livestreamed online.

Public Comments:

1. In-person, by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. Via Zoom, using the "[Raise Hand](#)" feature to request to speak.
3. By phone, dialing *9 to "raise your hand", and *6 to unmute.
4. Online, using the "[Submit Comments](#)" feature on the [meeting event](#).
5. Via email to cityclerk@elcerrito.gov indicating **Public Comments – Agenda Item #**.

Written comments received by **2:00 PM the day of the meeting** will be provided to the City Council and posted [online](#) in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and posted after the meeting.

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations. Closed Captions are available via zoom.

Conduct: This meeting is held pursuant to City Council [Rules of Order and Procedure](#).

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

6:00 PM ROLL CALL – CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF A
MOMENT OF SILENCE**

2. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

3. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Reports of closed session, commission appointments and informational reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the City Council and staff.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person. The Mayor may reduce the time limit per speaker depending upon the number of speakers and may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda. Comments regarding non-agenda, presentation and consent calendar items will be heard first. Comments related to items appearing on the Public Hearing or Policy Matter portions of the Agenda will be heard prior to the City Council taking action on each item.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Recognition of 2025 Exemplary Police Employees

Action Proposed: Approve proclamations recognizing the 2025 exemplary contributions of 1) Officer Nirajan Chand (2025 Officer of the Year, 2) Executive Assistant Emily Graham (2025 Professional Staffer of the Year), and 3) Volunteer Cathy Smith (2025 Volunteer of the Year).

Contact: Paul Keith, Chief of Police, Police Department

6. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the consent calendar shall be acted upon in one motion, unless a member of the City Council or staff request separate consideration.

A. Approval of Minutes

Action Proposed: Approve the City Council Meeting minutes from December 16, 2025; January 10, January 20, and February 3, 2026.

Contact: Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

B. Community Safety Committee Appointment

Action Proposed: Approve a Community Safety Committee recommendation to re-appoint Howard Hickman effective March 1, 2026
Contact: Aaron Leone, Sergeant/CommSC Liaison, Police Department

C. Community Safety Committee Recommendation

Action Proposed: Receive and file a recommendation from the Community Safety Committee.
Contact: William Cedrick Cobb, CommSC Chair; Aaron Leone, Sergeant/CommSC Liaison, Police Department

D. Financial Advisory Board Recommendation

Action Proposed: Receive and file a recommendation from the Financial Advisory Board.
Contact: David Carvel, FAB Chair; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer/Staff Liaison, Finance Department

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. POLICY MATTERS

A. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Mid-Year Budget Amendments

Action Proposed: Adopt a Resolution authorizing appropriation increases to the FY 2025-26 budget totaling \$1,593,905 from all funds, including an appropriation of \$1,142,493 from the unassigned General Fund balance.
Contact: Claire Coleman, Budget/Financial Services Manager; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

B. Discuss and Consider the Formation of a Library Task Force

Action Proposed: Consider the adoption of a resolution to form the City of El Cerrito Library Task Force to discuss and develop recommendations for options related to the modification or new construction of an El Cerrito Library.
Contact: Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

9. CITY COUNCIL LOCAL & REGIONAL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor and City Council communications regarding local and regional liaison assignments, committee reports, and any required reporting under AB 1234 for meetings (as defined by the Brown Act) attended at the public's expense.

10. ADJOURN REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is Tuesday, March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. at Hana Gardens (10870 San Pablo Ave)

The City of El Cerrito serves our diverse community by providing exceptional services that create a safe and resilient future for all.

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION
Commending and Congratulating Cathy Smith for Her Selection as El Cerrito
Police Department Volunteer of the Year

WHEREAS, Cathy Smith completed the El Cerrito Police Department Community Police Academy; and

WHEREAS, Cathy Smith became a volunteer with the El Cerrito Police Department in 2020 and has since volunteered for over 170 hours of her time; and

WHEREAS, she has served the El Cerrito Police Department and El Cerrito Community with unwavering energy and commitment; and

WHEREAS; she has served as a role player for law enforcement training, helping officers experience real world scenarios and hone their skills; and

WHEREAS, she has supported police staff, in small ways and large, to ensure they are appreciated and recognized; and

WHEREAS, Cathy Smith regularly patrols El Cerrito to check on the homes of vacationing residents; and

WHEREAS, Cathy Smith supported El Cerrito community events throughout the year, including Tri-City Safety Day and the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby commend and congratulate Cathy Smith on the occasion of her recognition as Police Volunteer of the Year. The City Council extends sincere appreciation to Cathy Smith for her devotion to the mission, vision, and values of the El Cerrito Police Department.

Dated: February 17, 2026

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION
Commending and Congratulating Executive Assistant Emily Graham for Her
Selection as El Cerrito Police Department Professional Staff of the Year

WHEREAS, Emily Graham began her career with the El Cerrito Police Department as the Executive Assistant in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Emily Graham quickly mastered the elements of her job; and

WHEREAS, she was nominated by her coworkers for being helpful, professional and knowledgeable; and

WHEREAS, she has been a leader in employee wellness, helped create the department relaxation room, authors a monthly wellness focused newsletter, supplies staff with healthy food, and organizes employee appreciation events; and

WHEREAS, Emily Graham is diligent in her duties, solves problems early, and supports her coworkers; and

WHEREAS, Emily Graham is the lead editor and a significant contributor to the El Cerrito Police Department Annual Report, a professional and informative source for information about the police department; and

WHEREAS, Emily Graham is a thoughtful and polite professional who prioritizes the needs of community members.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby commend and congratulate Executive Assistant Emily Graham on the occasion of her recognition as El Cerrito Police Professional Staff of the Year. The City Council extends sincere appreciation to Emily Graham for her devotion to the mission, vision, and values of the El Cerrito Police Department.

Dated: February 17, 2026

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION
Commending and Congratulating Officer Nirajan Chand for His Selection as El Cerrito Police Department Officer of the Year

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand began his career as a Police Recruit for the City of El Cerrito in 2022, and became a Police Officer in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand has been a significant contributor to the patrol division, ranking in the top five officers for arrests, police reports authored, and traffic safety enforcement in 2025; and

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand has a team focus, helping officers on his teams with difficult cases and passing along the knowledge that he has earned; and

WHEREAS, he brings a helpful attitude, professional presence, and a calming manner to emergency calls; and

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand was selected as a trainer for the Police the Teenage Brain curriculum and developed a personalized training program for the El Cerrito Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand was the primary officer on over fourteen hundred calls for service in 2025, helping to solve problems and keep community members safe; and

WHEREAS, Nirajan Chand had a truly standout performance with a clear focus on community members and a balanced approach to policing, teamwork, and collaboration.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby commend and congratulate Officer Nirajan Chand on the occasion of his recognition as Officer of the Year. The City Council extends sincere appreciation to Officer Nirajan Chand for his devotion to the mission, vision, and values of the El Cerrito Police Department.

Dated: February 17, 2026

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

Mayor
Carolyn Wysinger
Mayor Pro Tem
Gabe Quinto



AGENDA

Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Rebecca Saltzman

This information can be interpreted for you free of charge. Visit City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 or learn more at <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

Esta información se puede interpretar gratuitamente. Visite el Ayuntamiento en 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 o obtenga más información en <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

这些信息可免费为您解释。请访问位于 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 的市政厅，或访问 <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess> 了解更多信息

DRAFT MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)

City Council Chambers - 10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Closed Captions available Via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86739184642?pwd=H02wQ1UUO38al73Zcx7uQg3tmAFk43.1>

Meeting ID: 867 3918 4642 **Passcode:** 457676 **Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968

View:

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28
2. Livestream Online at www.elcerrito.gov/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations. Closed Captions available via zoom.

Conduct: This meeting shall be conducted pursuant to the El Cerrito [City Council Rules of Order and Procedure](#), including adjourning by 11:00 PM unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

Public Comments:

1. *In-person* by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. *By Email* to cityclerk@elcerrito.gov identified in the subject line as **Public Comments – Agenda Item #.**

Written comments received by **2:00 p.m. the day of the meeting** will be provided to the City Council and posted [online](#) in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and will be posted **after the meeting**.

6:00 PM ROLL CALL – CONVENE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Wysinger called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. **Present:** Mayor Wysinger, Mayor Pro Tem Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Saltzman **Absent:** None

1. CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON ANY REQUEST FROM A COUNCILMEMBER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING REMOTELY DUE TO EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES PURSUANT TO AB 2449

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF A MOMENT OF SILENCE

3. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

4. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Reports of closed session, commission appointments and informational reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the City Council and staff.

City Manager Pinkos - announced the upcoming City holiday closure.

Councilmember Saltzman - thanked staff for response and communication during the teachers strike.

Mayor Wysinger - announced Mayoral Certificate of Recognition for centenarian Theresa Parella; announced Mayoral Proclamation in recognition of 72th anniversary of St. Peter's Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, and presented a Mayoral Proclamations in honor of Billie Nichols, Reverend Marvin White, Iris Christine Morris, and the El Cerrito Gauchos Football Team.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person. The Mayor may reduce the time limit per speaker depending upon the number of speakers and may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda. Comments regarding non-agenda, presentation and consent calendar items will be heard first. Comments related to items appearing on the Public Hearing or Policy Matter portions of the Agenda will be heard prior to the City Council taking action on each item.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Janet Byron - commented on safety concerns on San Pablo Ave.

6. PRESENTATIONS

7. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the consent calendar shall be acted upon in one motion, unless a member of the City Council or staff request separate consideration.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Mayor Pro Tem Quinto **Action:** Approved the consent calendar as indicated below. **Ayes:** Mayor Wysinger, Mayor Pro Tem Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Saltzman **Noes:** None

A. Approval of Minutes

Action Proposed: Approve the City Council Meeting minutes from November 4, 18, and December 2, 2025.

Contact: Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Action: Approved minutes

B. Transportation Impact Fee Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024-25

Report publicly posted 11/26/2025

Action Proposed: Receive and file the Transportation Impact Fee Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024-25, ending June 30, 2025.

Contact: A'shanti Coleman, Management Assistant, Public Works Department; Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Action: Received and filed

C. Approve the 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule for City Council

Action Proposed: Pass a motion to approve the regular meeting schedule for 2026, reducing to the third Tuesday of the month for January, July, August, and September; scheduling a Council Retreat for 1/10/2026; and adding a meeting on 2/10/26, 2/24/26, and 9/22/26 for Advisory Body Interviews.

Contact: Holly Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Action: Approved schedule

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. POLICY MATTERS

A. City Council Reorganization

The City Council will elect a Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tempore to serve a term of one year.

Contact: Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Outgoing Mayor Wysinger provided remarks regarding her year as Mayor, and declared the offices of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem vacant. The City Clerk called for nominations and Councilmember Wysinger nominated Councilmember Quinto as Mayor.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Saltzman/Councilmember Motoyama

Action: Closed nominations and elected Councilmember Quinto as Mayor for 2026. **Ayes:** Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Quinto, Councilmember Saltzman, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

Attorney General Rob Bonta delivered the Oath of Office to Mayor Quinto, and the new Mayor provided remarks regarding his vision for 2026. Mayor Quinto called for nomination for Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilmember Saltzman was nominated by Councilmember Ktsanes.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Ktsanes/Councilmember Motoyama
Action: Closed nominations and elected Councilmember Saltzman as Mayor Pro Tem
Ayes: Mayor Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Saltzman, Councilmember Wysinger
Noes: None

Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman provided remarks regarding her plans as incoming Mayor Pro Tem.

Public Comments:

Greg Lyman - congratulated the incoming Mayor and commented regarding a new Library.

John Gioia - congratulated the incoming Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem.

Carolyn Coleman - on behalf of Cal Cities, congratulated the incoming Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, and thanked the outgoing Mayor.

10. CITY COUNCIL LOCAL & REGIONAL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor and City Council communications regarding local and regional liaison assignments, committee reports, and any required reporting under AB 1234 for meetings (as defined by the Brown Act) attended at the public's expense.

Councilmember Wysinger - reported on attendance at the Contra Costa Mayors Conference.

Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman - reported on attendance at El Cerrito pancake breakfast, John Gioia open house event, PRC meeting, Cal Cities East Bay Division meeting, WCCTAC Board Meeting,

Councilmember Ktsanes - reported on attendance at the City Planning Commission meeting, Urban Forest Committee meeting, El Cerrito Makers Faire, and Rise and Fall of Local Newspapers presentation at Hana Gardens.

Councilmember Motoyama - reported on attendance at the Contra Costa Mayors Conference, and the Association of Bay Area Governments Housing Committee meeting.

Mayor Quinto - reported on attendance at the Marin Clean Energy Executive Committee meeting, and Cal Cities Los Angeles division meeting.

11. ADJOURN REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the City Council meeting of December 16, 2025 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.

Holly M. Charl  ty, MMC, City Clerk

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

This information can be interpreted for you free of charge. Visit City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 or learn more at <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

Esta información se puede interpretar gratuitamente. Visite el Ayuntamiento en 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 o obtenga más información en <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

这些信息可免费为您解释。请访问位于 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 的市政厅，或访问 <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess> 了解更多信息

DRAFT MINUTES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING (9:00 AM)
Arlington Clubhouse - 1120 Arlington Blvd, El Cerrito CA
This meeting will be held in-person only with no remote participation

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations.

Conduct: This meeting shall be conducted pursuant to the El Cerrito City Council [Rules of Order and Procedure](#), including adjourning by 11:00 PM unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

Public Comments:

1. In-person by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. By Email to cityclerk@elcerrito.gov identified in the subject line as **Public Comments – Agenda Item #**.

Written comments received by **2:00 p.m. Friday, January 9, 2026** will be provided to the City Council and posted [online](#) in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and will be posted after the meeting.

9:00 AM **ROLL CALL - CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
Mayor Quinto called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.
Present: Mayor Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Absent:** Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman

1. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

All persons wishing to speak should sign up with the City Clerk. Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person and to items on the special meeting agenda only.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Greg Lyman - spoke regarding the need for a new library, and details regarding the proposed tax initiative.

Charles Taylor - commented on need for and type of senior services that could be provided with a new library.

Michael Fischer - commented on the conditions of the current library location.

Georgina Edwards- spoke regarding need for and type of children programs that could be provided with a new library

Joanna Pace - commented on the updated to the Arlington clubhouse, rapid response of city staff, new AC Transit app, and upcoming bus party event.

Ted Steen - commented on improvements to Cerrito Vista Park could increase the use and programs ran out of the locations.

2. **City Council Workshop Retreat**

Action Proposed: Conduct a facilitated City Council retreat focused on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027 Budget and Priority Setting

Contact: Karen Pinkos, City Manager, City Management; Nancy Hetrick, Facilitator, Raftelis

Presentation and Discussion: The City Council engaged with the facilitator on topics including the National Community Survey and celebrating achievements sharing what the members are most proud of accomplishing; staff provided an overview of the City's fiscal position including FY 2024-25 audit, reserves, expenses and forecast, upcoming budget process, and major initiatives currently in process.

The facilitator discussed with members their thoughts on needed information to make informed decisions, continue momentum, prepare for push back, and plan for what could interfere with objectives.

Members round tables one on one with each department's key staff to receive updates on department challenges, initiatives and other updates. Staff reviewed the

Strategic Plan goals and status of current initiatives and received feedback from members regarding what success would look like, what changes are needed, and highest priority of members.

Action: No formal action was taken.

3. ADJOURN SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The special meeting adjourned at 1:04 PM

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the City Council meeting of January 10, 2026 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.

Holly M. Charl  ty, MMC, City Clerk

Mayor
Gabe Quinto
Mayor Pro Tem
Rebecca Saltzman



Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Carolyn Wysinger

This information can be interpreted for you free of charge. Visit City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 or learn more at <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

Esta información se puede interpretar gratuitamente. Visite el Ayuntamiento en 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 o obtenga más información en <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

这些信息仅供参考。请访问位于 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 的市政厅，或访问 <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess> 了解更多信息

DRAFT MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)
City Council Chambers - 10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Closed Captions available Via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82568843935?pwd=0jXaS27DJnhJB9qIGzLueHVU71L0vm.1>

Meeting ID: 825 6884 3935 **Passcode:** 115415 **Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968

View:

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28
2. Livestream Online at www.elcerrito.gov/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations. Closed Captions available via zoom.

Conduct: This meeting shall be conducted pursuant to the El Cerrito [City Council Rules of Order and Procedure](#), including adjourning by 11:00 PM unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

Public Comments:

1. *In-person* by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. *By Email* to cityclerk@elcerrito.gov identified in the subject line as **Public Comments – Agenda Item #.**

Written comments received by **2:00 p.m. the day of the meeting** will be provided to the City Council and posted [online](#) in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and will be posted **after the meeting**.

6:00 PM ROLL CALL – CONVENE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Quinto called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Present: Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Absent:** None

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF A MOMENT OF SILENCE

2. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

3. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Reports of closed session, commission appointments and informational reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the City Council and staff.

City Manager Pinkos - provided an update on the A/V upgrades to Council Chamber, the status of the pool replastering project, and upcoming 1/29 application deadline for advisory bodies.

Councilmember Wysinger - announced St. John the Baptist Elementary School Crab Feed on 2/1.

Councilmember Motoyama - announced El Cerrito City Crab Feed on 3/21.

Mayor Quinto - announced letters sent on 1/9 regarding equal access to non-opioid pain treatments for medical patients, 1/20 regarding concerns on the City's pending earmarks for the Hillside Natural Area Fuel Modification Project; and El Cerrito Chamber ribbon cutting event for SPORTS THEREx and Recovery on 1/17.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person. The Mayor may reduce the time limit per speaker depending upon the number of speakers and may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda. Comments regarding non-agenda, presentation and consent calendar items will be heard first. Comments related to items appearing on the Public Hearing or Policy Matter portions of the Agenda will be heard prior to the City Council taking action on each item.

Public Comments:

Michael McDougall - spoke in support of awarding the Central Square contract.

Charles Taylor - commented regarding the National Community Survey and support for a new library.

Emeline Schreiner - spoke about the need for a new library.

Chuck Monroe - commented on the need and support for a new library.

Michael Fischer - spoke regarding the deficiencies of the current library and need for a new one.

Alan Kaplan - spoke in support of placing the proposed library tax on the ballot in June.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Citizens Street Oversight Committee Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Action Proposed: Receive and file the Citizens Street Oversight Committee Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 to the City Council and Citizens of El Cerrito.

Contact: Kathy Fleming, Citizens Street Oversight Committee Chair; Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer, Public Works Department

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding inclusion of the report presented to the Committee in the report presented to the City Council.

Action: Received and filed

B. 2025 El Cerrito National Community Survey Presentation

Action Proposed: Receive and file a presentation of results from the 2025 National Community Survey conducted in El Cerrito.

Contact: Grace Arneson, Senior Project Manager, Polco; Will Provost, Assistant to the City Manager, City Management

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding clarification on use of the terminology "utilities".

Action: Received and filed

6. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the consent calendar shall be acted upon in one motion, unless a member of the City Council or staff request separate consideration.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman

Action: Approved items A and D-I on the consent calendar as indicated below.

Ayes: Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

A. Committee on Aging Appointment

Action Proposed: Approve the Committee on Aging recommendation and appoint Melissa Newton to the Committee, effective January 20, 2026.

Contact: Bridget Cooney, Recreation Supervisor, Recreation Department

Action: Approved appointment

B. Committee on Aging Recommendation

Action Proposed: Receive and file a recommendation from the Committee on Aging.

Contact: Bridget Cooney, Recreation Supervisor, Recreation Department
Pulled from Consent by Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman.

Moved/Seconded: Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman/Councilmember Ktsanes

Action: Passed a motion to receive and file the recommendations and directed staff to return with an analysis of the recommendations, what is already planned, and what funding would be required. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

C. Park and Recreation Commission Recommendation

Action Proposed: Receive and file a recommendation from the Park and Recreation Commission.

Contact: Chris Jones, Recreation Director, Recreation Department
Pulled from Consent by Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman.

Moved/Seconded: Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman/Councilmember Motoyama

Action: Received and filed **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

D. Monthly Disbursement and Check Register Report for November 2025

Action Proposed: Receive and file the Monthly Disbursement and Check Register Report for the month of November 2025.

Contact: Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

Action: Received and filed

E. Monthly Disbursement and Check Register Report for December 2025

Action Proposed: Receive and file the Monthly Disbursement and Check Register Report for the month of December 2025.

Contact: Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

Action: Received and filed

F. Letter of Support for El Cerrito Police Participation in the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement Program Administered by Georgetown Law

Action Proposed: Pass a motion authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter, on behalf of the City Council, in support of the El Cerrito Police Department's participation in the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) program administered by Georgetown Law.

Contact: Paul Keith, Chief of Police, El Cerrito Police Department

Action: Approved letter

G. Amendment to Consulting Services Agreement with California Public Policy Group for Grant Writing and Legislative Advocacy Services

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an amendment to the consulting services agreement with California Public Policy Group (CPPG) in an amount not to exceed \$82,500 for grant writing and legislative advocacy services in Fiscal Year 2025-26, and not to exceed \$86,900 in Fiscal Year 2026-27 and \$90,980 in Fiscal Year 2027-28.

Contact: Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager; Will Provost, Assistant to the City Manager, City Management

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-1

H. Approve an Agreement with CentralSquare Technology for Community Development Permitting and Licensing Software

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to approve a five-year agreement with CentralSquare Technologies LLC (CentralSquare) for permitting and licensing software solutions used by the Community Development and Public Works Departments in an amount not to exceed \$345,905 over a five-year term.

Contact: Eric Ng, Information Technology Manager, City Management

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-2

I. Extension of Subregional Transportation Mitigation Program (STMP) Cooperative Funding Agreement with the West Contra Costa Transportation Commission for the El Cerrito del Norte Transit-Oriented Development Complete Streets Improvement Project

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an addendum to extend the expiration date of the Subregional Transportation Mitigation Program (STMP) Cooperative Funding Agreement with the West Contra Costa Transportation Commission (WCCTC) for the El Cerrito del Norte Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Complete Streets Improvement Project.

Contact: Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer, Public Works Department

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-3

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. POLICY MATTERS

A. **Accept Certification of Sufficiency of Citizens Initiative Petition for "The El Cerrito Library Initiative" and Consider Options Related to the Election on the Ordinance Proposed by the Initiative Petition**

Action Proposed: Approve a Resolution to accept the certification of the sufficiency of the Citizens Initiative Petition titled "The El Cerrito Library Initiative" (referred to in this report as "the Initiative"); and take action to

1) Request a report on potential impacts of the Initiative as authorized by California Elections Code section 9212, or 2) Approve a resolution to submit the proposed ordinance to the voters without alteration at the next regular election for the City of El Cerrito to be held on November 3, 2026, or at a special election to be held not less than 88 days nor more than 103 days from the order of the election.

Contact: Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding allowable modifications, clarification on the fiscal year impacted by the election date, impact and timing of the election date, and source of ongoing library operating costs.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Bill Barish - spoke regarding survey results and options for the location of a new library.

Suzanne Balmosada - recommended the City Council place the measure on the June ballot.

Michael Fischer - spoke regarding funding for a new library and need to improve library amenities.

Greg Lyman - spoke in support of placing the measure on the June 2 ballot and requesting the impact report.

Debra Morrison - spoke in support of the proposed property tax and need for a new modern library.

Charles Taylor - commented on the community support and need for a new library, and support of requesting an impact report and placing the proposed tax on the June 2 ballot.

Tom Parks - spoke in support to move the initiative forward as soon as possible.

Dianne Brenner - spoke in opposition to the proposed tax measure as written.

Denise Sangster - commented on the need to develop an alternative plan, and opposition to placing the measure on the June 2 budget.

Janet Byron - spoke in support of and need for a new modern library.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Wysinger
Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-4 and directed staff to prepare an impact report on the initiative. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** Councilmember Ktsanes

B. El Cerrito Library Facility Update

Action Proposed: Receive a presentation on the El Cerrito Library, including status and limitations of the current facility and an overview of conceptual scenarios and associated cost ranges for a modern, accessible, full-service library; and provide staff direction if applicable.

Contact: Will Provost, Assistant to the City Manager, City Management; Melanie Mintz, Community Development Director, Community Development Department

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding parking assessment and needs, purpose of a resident task force, location options, methodology for property acquisition estimates, costs for an alternative locations for scenarios renovating the existing library, assumptions related to construction costs, and specifics of a potential lease at the TOD site, and clarification that square footage is not usable square feet.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Paul Fadelli - spoke in support of a library at the El Cerrito Plaza location.

Jim Dolgonas - spoke in support of scenario 3 and challenges with other proposed scenarios.

Georgina Edwards - spoke in support of a modern library and the amenities and services that it could provide.

Tom Schrey - spoke in support of a modified library at the existing site.

Marti Snell - spoke in support of a new library and concern on a proposed site at the Plaza and an additional property tax, support of a new library task force, and a November election for the proposed tax.

Michael Coan - commented on prior failed tax measure for library funding, and concern regarding the proposed new tax without a confirmed site or plans.

Steve Price - commented on the importance of libraries, and support of a proposed site at the Plaza.

BJ Thorsnes - spoke in opposition of a tax increase to fund a library, the initiative language and process for the initiative.

Greg Lyman - spoke regarding the proposed ballot measure providing funding needed, and clarified the measure text and use of the funds collected.

Michael Fischer - commented regarding the need for access by public transit to the site of a new library, costs of relocating to an alternative site in scenarios to modify the existing site, and challenges with accessibility for a two-story site.

Rebecca Milliken - spoke in support of a new library and need for clear communication regarding viable options.

Laura Lent - spoke regarding experience in San Francisco with revitalizing library locations, and usage and impact studies showing a high return on investment, need for a larger library with expanded services, and support of placing the initiative on the June 2 ballot.

Michelle Fadelli - spoke in support of a new, larger modern library with a fair public process.

Linda Cain - commented on the need for a library, lack of funding to build a library, and implications of a new tax.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman
Action: Directed staff to bring back a proposal for a task force. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

9. CITY COUNCIL LOCAL & REGIONAL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor and City Council communications regarding local and regional liaison assignments, committee reports, and any required reporting under AB 1234 for meetings (as defined by the Brown Act) attended at the public's expense.

Councilmember Wysinger - reported on attendance at the Marin Clean Energy meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman - reported on attendance at the Contra Costa Mayors Conference, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade and Rally.

Councilmember Motoyama - reported on attendance at the Contra Costa Mayors Conference, City Council Retreat, Fire Recovery meeting, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Finance Committee meeting and election as Vice-Chair, ABAG Executive meeting, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade and Rally.

Mayor Quinto - commented on upcoming leadership meetings with Cal Cities in Sacramento.

A. 2026 Local Liaison Assignments

The Mayor will announce the 2026 City Council Liaison Assignments to City Boards, Commissions, and Committees and to Regional Bodies.

Mayor Quinto thanked the Councilmembers for their leadership on the regional appointments for 2026.

10. ADJOURN REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the City Council meeting of January 20, 2026 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.

Holly M. Charléty, MMC, City Clerk

Mayor

Gabe Quinto

Mayor Pro Tem

Rebecca Saltzman

**Councilmembers**

William Ktsanes

Lisa Motoyama

Carolyn Wysinger

This information can be interpreted for you free of charge. Visit City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 or learn more at <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

Esta información se puede interpretar gratuitamente. Visite el Ayuntamiento en 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 o obtenga más información en <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess>

这些信息可免费为您解释。请访问位于 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 的市政厅，或访问 <http://www.elcerrito.gov/LanguageAccess> 了解更多信息

DRAFT MINUTES**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026****REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)**

Council Chambers - 10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Closed Captions Available Via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81633024551?pwd=mYgw0xUnbzByKTx2y2z39iQN9O3NG.1>**Meeting ID:** 816 3302 4551 **Passcode:** 293336 **Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968**View:**

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28
2. Livestream Online at www.elcerrito.gov/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations. Closed Captions available via zoom.

Conduct: This meeting shall be conducted pursuant to the El Cerrito City Council [Rules of Order and Procedure](#), including adjourning by 11:00 PM unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

Public Comments:

1. In-person by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. By Email to cityclerk@elcerrito.gov identified in the subject line as **Public Comments – Agenda Item #.**

Written comments received by **2:00 p.m.** the day of the meeting will be provided to the City Council and posted online in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and will be posted after the meeting.

6:00 PM ROLL CALL – CONVENE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Quinto called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Present In-Person: Mayor Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama **Present Remotely:** Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman (Just Cause due to a contagious illness), Councilmember Wysinger (Just Cause due to a contagious illness) **Absent:** None

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF A MOMENT OF SILENCE

2. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

3. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Reports of closed session, commission appointments and informational reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the City Council and staff.

City Manager Pinkos - provided a reminder of the location change for upcoming City Council meetings in Hana Gardens through 3/24.

Councilmember Motoyama - announced the 2/10 discount day for El Cerrito Summer Camp.

Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman - announced the 2/7 bus party on Line 7 starting at Del Norte Bart.

Councilmember Wysinger - commented on the 2/7 bus party on Line 7 starting at Del Norte Bart.

Mayor Quinto - announced National League of Cities meeting and US Conf. of Mayors event canceled due to weather.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person. The Mayor may reduce the time limit per speaker depending upon the number of speakers and may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda. Comments regarding non-agenda, presentation and consent calendar items will be heard first. Comments related to items appearing on the Public Hearing or Policy Matter portions of the Agenda will be heard prior to the City Council taking action on each item.

Joanna Pace - spoke regarding the upcoming event on bus line 7.

Ira Sharenow - spoke in opposition to the proposed library ballot measure and commented on the city's finances.

Laurie Schrey - spoke in opposition to the proposed library ballot measure.

Greg Lyman - spoke in support of the proposed library ballot measure. Michael Fischer - spoke regarding the need for a new library.

(Item Heard out of Order)

6C. Proclamation Recognizing Mario Ubalde

Action Proposed: Pass a motion to approve a proclamation recognizing Mario Ubalde for his outstanding performance in the 2025 Olympic Hopes International Youth Diving Championship in Budapest, Hungary.

Contact: Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk, City Management

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Ktsanes **Action:** Approved Proclamation. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger
Noes: None

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Auditor Presentation on FY 2024-25 Audit and Financial Statements

Action Proposed: Receive and file a presentation from the City's auditor, and transmittal of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

Contact: Crystal Reams, Finance Director, Finance Department; Sheldon Chavan CPA, Managing Partner, Chavan and Associates, LLC

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding pension fund liability, Financial Advisory Board recommendation, recycling revenue figures, and the portion of pension costs covered.

Action: Received and filed

(Item Heard out of Order)

6D. Proclamation Honoring Firefighter/Paramedic James Van Wyck Firefighter of the Year

Action Proposed: Approve a proclamation honoring Firefighter/Paramedic James Van Wyck as Firefighter of the Year in the City of El Cerrito.

Contact: Eric Saylor, Fire Chief, Fire Department

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Ktsanes **Action:** Approved Proclamation. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger
Noes: None

6. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the consent calendar shall be acted upon in one motion, unless a member of the City Council or staff request separate consideration.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman **Action:** Approved the consent calendar as indicated below. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger
Noes: None

A. Black History Month Proclamation

Action Proposed: Pass a motion to approve a proclamation declaring February as Black History Month in the City of El Cerrito.

Contact: Shannon Bassi, Human Resources Manager, City Management

Action: Approved proclamation

B. Lunar New Year Proclamation

Action Proposed: Pass a motion to approve a proclamation recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Lunar New Year in the City of El Cerrito.

Contact: Shannon Bassi, Senior Human Resources Manager, City Management

Action: Approved proclamation

D. 2025 Meeting Report for Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Action Proposed: Receive and file a report of meetings held by City Board, Commission and Committees for the Calendar Year of 2025. **Contact:** Holly M. Charl  y, City Clerk, City Management

Action: Received and filed

E. FY 2025-26 Second Quarter Cash and Investment Report

Action Proposed: Receive and file the City's Second Quarter Cash and Investment Report for the period October 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

Contact: Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

Action: Received and filed

F. A Resolution Expressing Solidarity with the City of Minneapolis

Action Proposed: At the request of Councilmember Ktsanes, adopt a Resolution expressing solidarity with the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and its residents in the aftermath of recent United State Immigration and Customs Enforcement related shootings, and affirming the City of El Cerrito's commitment to Human Rights, Public Safety, and Accountability.

Contact: Holly M. Charl  y, City Clerk City Management

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-5

G. Amendment to Existing Agreement with Avila Project Management for On-Call Engineering and Project Management Services

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an amendment to the existing agreement with Avila Project Management for on-call engineering and project management services, increasing the contract amount by \$200,000, bringing the total not-to-exceed amount to \$450,000 in Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Contact: A'shanti Coleman, Management Assistant; Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer, Public Works Department

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-6

H. Amendment to Existing Professional Services Contract with TRB + Associates for On-Call Inspection, Plan Check, and Other Jurisdictional Services

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an amendment to the professional services contract with TRB + Associates increasing their contract authority from \$500,000 to \$950,000 for fiscal year 2026 to provide inspection, plan check and other jurisdictional services.

Contact: Jennifer Bright, Management Assistant; Melanie Mintz, Community Development Director, Community Development Department

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-7

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. POLICY MATTERS

A. 2026 State Legislative Platform

Action Proposed: Adopt the proposed 2026 State Legislative Platform for the City of El Cerrito.

Contact: Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager, City Management; Dane Hutchings, Founder & CEO, California Public Policy Group

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding status update for Grant work performed by the consultant, and concern regarding the process proposed for the legislative platform.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Wysinger

Action: Approved the Legislative Platform with the following revisions: add #7 under High Performing Organization to read "Monitor allocation of e-commerce sales and use taxes and advocate for such taxes to be allocated to point of delivery"; and add #12 under Livability and Belonging to read "To support regional housing funding measures to increase resources for and enhance the ability of El Cerrito to provide housing for all." **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes

B. FY 2025-26 Second Quarter General Fund Budget Update through December 31, 2025

Action Proposed: Receive and file an update on City General Fund revenues and expenses for FY 2025-26 through December 31, 2025.

Contact: Claire Coleman, Budget and Financial Services Manager; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding no-departmental expenditures, and reduced demand and revenues for the swim center.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Ira Sharenow - spoke regarding need for funding for policing and other maintenance needs on Ohlone Greenway, lack of a Senior Center, and timing of election for proposed tax measure.

Action: Received and filed

C. Award of Construction Contract for the Swim Center Accessible Parking Improvements Project, City Project No. C3050.10

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution awarding the contract for the Swim Center Accessible Parking Improvements Project, City Project No. C3050.10 (Project) to GradeTech Inc. as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract in the amount of \$662,090.28 and to approve potential change orders in an amount not to exceed \$100,000, for the construction of the Project; and appropriating a one-time allocation from the General Fund in the amount of \$762,100 in Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Contact: Roland Lambert, Associate Engineer, Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer, Public Works Department; Christopher Jones, Recreation Director, Recreation Department

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding disclosure to potential bidders of the engineer's estimate, process for lowest bid selection, and clarification of the role of Swinerton consultant.

Public Comments:

Betsy Bashor - asked questions regarding the timing of the project and parking lot closure, and potential grants for the Electric Vehicle charger portion of the project.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Ktsanes

Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-8. **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** None

D. City Council Policy Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Action Proposed: Conduct a study session on proposed revisions to the City Council Policies and Rules of Order and Procedure and 2) Adopt a Resolution to approve the proposed revisions as presented or provide staff direction to return with additional modifications and 3) consider forming an Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to Discuss Advisory Body Policies and implications of SB 707.

Contact: Mayor Wysinger and Councilmember Motoyama, City Council Policy Ad-Hoc Subcommittee; Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

Presentation and Discussion: Presenters and staff responded to comments and questions raised by members of the council regarding continued items, response by Councilmembers to public comments, and reduction of per speaker and total time for public comments.

Public Comments: Written comments submitted prior to and during the meeting are posted online as supplemental materials and incorporated into the official meeting record.

Ira Sharenow - spoke regarding the process and response to public comments.

Mayor Quinto announced intention to create an ad-hoc committee for Advisory Bodies and intends to announce appointed members at the next Council meeting.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Motoyama/Councilmember Wysinger
Action: Approved Resolution No. 2026-9 with the following modifications: Section B3, Adjournment (last paragraph) modified to read "... or by a majority vote of the City Council to a future meeting date."; and Section D1, Responses to Public Comment modified to read (first paragraph) "Councilmembers will not generally respond to comments..." and at the end of the first paragraph, adding "After any public comment, Councilmembers may request staff to address or follow-up on a concern, questions, or request heard by a member of the public." **Ayes:** Mayor Quinto, Councilmember Ktsanes, Councilmember Motoyama, Councilmember Wysinger **Noes:** Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman

9. CITY COUNCIL LOCAL & REGIONAL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor and City Council communications regarding local and regional liaison assignments, committee reports, and any required reporting under AB 1234 for meetings (as defined by the Brown Act) attended at the public's expense.

Councilmember Wysinger - reported on attendance at the Cal Cities Public Safety Policy Committee, and appointment to the Race, Equity, and Leadership Committee with National League of Cities.

Mayor Pro Tem Saltzman - reported on attendance at the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Commission meeting and election as the Chair.

Councilmember Motoyama - reported on attendance at the Cal Cities Revenue and Taxation Policy Committee, and Financial Advisory Board meeting.

Mayor Quinto - reported on attendance at the Bay Area Air Board retreat, the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce installation and luncheon, meetings with leadership in the California Assembly and Senate, Cal Cities Peninsula Division meeting, and upcoming Cal Cities Board meeting in El Cerrito.

10. ADJOURN REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. and will be held at Hana Gardens (10870 San Pablo Ave)

The regular meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the City Council meeting of February 3, 2026 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.

Holly M. Charl  ty, MMC, City Clerk



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 6.B.

Date: February 17, 2026
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Aaron Leone, Sergeant/CommSC Liaison, Police Department
Subject: Community Safety Committee Appointment

ACTION PROPOSED

Approve a Community Safety Committee recommendation to re-appoint Howard Hickman effective March 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Howard Hickman was first appointed to a partial term on the Community Safety Committee in November of 2024. In January 2026, Howard submitted an application for re-appointment to continue serving on the Committee for an additional term. On February 2, 2026 the Community Safety Committee unanimously voted to recommend to the City Council the re-appointment of Howard Hickman to continue serving on the Committee.

If the City Council approves this recommendation, the number of Committee members will be six out of a possible membership total of fifteen.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *High Performing Organization; and*
- *Community Safety; and*
- *Livability and Belonging.*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Pinkos".

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

Application(s) on file with the City Clerk



Date: February 17, 2026
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: William Cedrick Cobb, CommSC Chair; Aaron Leone, Sergeant/CommSC Liaison, Police Department
Subject: Community Safety Committee Recommendation

ACTION PROPOSED

Receive and file a recommendation from the Community Safety Committee.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to City Council Resolution 2024-16, Section 4, Advisory Body Recommendations shall be provided to the City Council on the consent calendar as a "receive and file" agenda item. If a member of the City Council wishes to further discuss any recommendation received, it may be requested as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Recommendation

On January 5, 2026 the Community Safety Committee made the following recommendation to City Council:

To extend the time in which a community member is given to fix any issues with their property regarding overgrown vegetation from the current timeline of 30 days to 45 days. Currently when the El Cerrito Fire Department notices a property owner that they need to trim trees, bushes, shrubbery, or foliage they are given 30 days to complete the work. The Community Safety Committee felt that this timeframe may not be long enough for some members to get the work done. Some of the factors that the committee discussed were; the availability of finding a work crew to complete the required work within the 30 days, and the availability of the property owner such as they are on vacation for two weeks and then only have an additional two weeks to get the work completed.

Moved/Second: Member (Dolgonas/Esquivel) **Ayes:** Members (Dolgonas, Gager, and Esquivel) **Noes:** Members (Cobb and Hickman) **Absent:** Members (Ehara)

ASSOCIATED WORKPLAN GOAL(S)/AREA(S) OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. [Vegetation management standards](#)



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 6.D.

Date: February 17, 2026
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: David Carvel, FAB Chair; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer/Staff Liaison, Finance Department
Subject: Financial Advisory Board Recommendation

ACTION PROPOSED

Receive and file a recommendation from the Financial Advisory Board.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to City Council Resolution 2024-16, Section 4, Advisory Body Recommendations shall be provided to the City Council on the consent calendar as a "receive and file" agenda item. If a member of the City Council wishes to further discuss any recommendation received, it may be requested as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Recommendation

On January 27, 2026 the FAB reviewed the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and made the following recommendation:

We want to recognize the City is in a different financial position than it has been in the past (pre-2020). We want to acknowledge the work of the Finance department in putting in place sound budget practices. However, we still have work to do. Many of the increases in revenue are due to circumstances outside of our control (e.g. ARPA, RPTT). We want the city to focus more on the items it can control, specifically expenses, which have increased over time. We recommend particular attention be paid to controlling and reducing expenses.

Moved/Second: Member White/Member Szlatenyi. **Ayes:** Chair Carvel; Vice-Chair McDougall; Members White and Szlatenyi; **Noes:** None **Absent:** None **Youth Member:** Watson-Lamprey Singer expressed support for the action.

ASSOCIATED WORKPLAN GOAL(S)/AREA(S) OF RESPONSIBILITY

[ECMC 2.04.300](#)

#5 To review the annual audit and management letter and provide the city council with recommended changes in financial practices



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 8.A.

Date: February 17, 2026
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Claire Coleman, Budget/Financial Services Manager; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department
Subject: Fiscal Year 2025-26 Mid-Year Budget Amendments

ACTION PROPOSED

Adopt a Resolution authorizing appropriation increases to the FY 2025-26 budget totaling \$1,593,905 from all funds, including an appropriation of \$1,142,493 from the unassigned General Fund balance.

BACKGROUND

On June 17, 2025, the City Council adopted the FY 2025-26 annual budget and spending authority as the second year of the FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 Biennial Budget. The adopted budget authorized total appropriations of \$74,859,180 across all City funds, including General Fund appropriations of \$53,764,017. General Fund revenues were adopted at \$53,779,792, resulting in a modest operating surplus of \$15,775 and reserves above adopted policy thresholds.

Since adoption of the FY 2025-26 budget, the City Council has approved several General Fund budget amendments. Through December 31, 2025, approved amendments totaled \$912,646 and included Council Chambers audio-visual system improvements, Pool replastering, the implementation of the Fire Local 1230 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and the carry-forward of incomplete prior-year purchase orders. On February 3, 2026, the City Council approved an additional General Fund appropriation of \$762,100 for the Pool renovation project, funded by unrestricted General Fund Balance. Together, these actions represent \$1,674,746 in General Fund appropriations approved during FY 2025-26 to date. These changes, offset by the original adopted surplus, result in an approved planned use of General Fund balance of \$1.66 million.

ANALYSIS

Staff recommend several adjustments to Citywide appropriations for FY 2025-26, as summarized below.

General Fund

Successor Agency Dissolution Final Adjustment

Staff recommend a required transfer of \$1,045,493 from the General Fund to Fund 780 related to the dissolution of the City's Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency and a commensurate increase in General Fund appropriation authority for FY 2025-26.

The El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency was dissolved on February 1, 2012 under California's Dissolution Act (ABx1 26), after operating under suspension provisions that allowed it to pay enforceable obligations using tax increment revenues. Following dissolution, the Successor Agency assumed responsibility for documenting and paying those obligations, but disputes arose with the Department of Finance (DOF) and County Auditor-Controller over whether tax increment funds received and spent before dissolution should be reclassified as "Redevelopment Property Tax" subject to later approval. These disagreements led to a disputed \$1.76 million "True Up Payment," which was settled without the City of El Cerrito or El Cerrito Successor Agency being required to make the True Up Payment.

Subsequent DOF due diligence reviews between 2013 and 2015 disallowed several transfers and expenditures, including funds transferred to the City and the Municipal Services Corporation and funds owed to the City by the Redevelopment Agency. The City and MSC filed litigation challenging the denials. The case was ultimately unsuccessful and resolved at the appellate court level in 2021. To cover resulting cash deficits, the City's General Fund had loaned the Successor Agency over \$1.3 million, later written off in 2021 when recovery was deemed unlikely. The City continued submitting previously denied costs in hopes of later ROPS approval. Many were denied, leaving the ongoing shortfall. In FY 2025–26, the Successor Agency was fully dissolved with all debt paid, leaving the City responsible for prior-period adjustments and denied expenditures prompting staff to request a transfer of \$1,045,493 from the General Fund to cover denied obligations and legal costs deemed unenforceable by the DOF. Additional information is included in Attachments 3 and 4.

One-Time Needs

Staff recommend three additional one-time uses of General Fund balance. The first is a professional services contract with NHA Advisors to support preparation of the City's report (authorized by Elections Code Section 9212) on the Citizens' Library Tax Initiative, consistent with City Council direction. The contract amount is \$29,500. If the tax measure is approved by voters, staff will evaluate whether certain one-time costs such as report preparation may be eligible for reimbursement.

The second recommended one-time use of General Fund balance is a contract for executive recruitment services in anticipation of the retirement of the City's current Community Development Director. Staff recommend appropriating \$30,000 for recruitment costs including engaging an external recruitment firm to ensure continuity of leadership and timely recruitment for this key position.

Finally, Public Works is requesting an appropriation increase of \$30,000 to address emergency tree maintenance resulting from winter storm events. Recent storms caused increased tree failures and hazardous conditions in streets and parks, requiring immediate response to protect public safety and maintain access. The Department exhausted its existing tree maintenance budget responding to storm-related emergencies and requires additional funding to address remaining tree needs through the end of the fiscal year.

Pickleball Fee Revenue Transfer to Capital Improvement Program Fund

Staff recommend an increase in General Fund appropriation authority to allow for the transfer of a portion of pickleball fee revenue from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund for future court resurfacing needs. This transfer is required to comply with the MOU between the City and the East Bay Pickleball Association. Staff recommend an appropriation increase of \$7,500 for this transfer. While this action represents a transfer between funds rather than a direct expenditure, all interfund transfers require City Council approval.

General Fund Balance and Reserves

The recommended General Fund appropriation adjustments reflect a planned use of available fund balance for one-time purposes and required transfers, consistent with prior City Council actions and adopted financial policies. As discussed in the FY 2025-26 Second Quarter General Fund Update, the City's General Fund reserves are projected to remain above the minimum levels established in the City's Comprehensive Financial Policy. The projected year-end General Fund balance includes \$7.5 million designated for the Emergency and Disaster Relief Fund and \$3.0 million in the Section 115 Pension Trust, both of which remain funded consistent with adopted policy targets.

If the recommended adjustments are approved, the total use of General Fund balance for FY 2025-26 would be \$2.8 million. After accounting for these actions, the General Fund is projected to end the fiscal year with \$10.8 million in unassigned fund balance, representing approximately 19% of annual General Fund expenditures.

Table 1: General Fund Balance Projection

Fund Balance Projection		
FY25 General Fund - Total Fund Balance		\$ 24,250,508
EDRF	(7,500,000)	
Section 115	(2,960,245)	
Non-Spendable	(175,376)	
 FY26 Projected Revenue	 53,779,792	
FY26 Projected Expenditures	(56,581,257)	
Change in fund balance		(2,801,465)
 Projected Total Ending FY26 Fund Balance		 21,449,043
EDRF (Internally Restricted)	(7,500,000)	
Section 115 (Restricted)	(2,960,245)	
Non-Spendable	(175,376)	(10,635,621)
Projected FY26 Unrestricted Fund Balance		10,813,422
 FY26 Expenditure Proposed Budget	 56,581,257	
FY26 17% Reserve Goal		(9,618,814)
 Projected discretionary as of June 30, 2026		 1,194,608
 FY 26 Projected Ending Total Fund Balance		 21,449,043
Projected unassigned (less Section 115)		10,813,422
Projected unassigned percent as of June 30, 2026		19%

Like many cities across California, El Cerrito is experiencing cost increases that are outpacing revenue increases. Non-personnel costs are projected to increase by over 5% annually, not including general liability insurance, which increased by nearly 17% from FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26 and is expected to increase by a similar amount in the next fiscal year. Personnel costs are increasing due to increasing medical insurance costs, new negotiated bargaining agreements, and pension costs. Table 2 shows a high-level overview of recent and projected personnel costs.

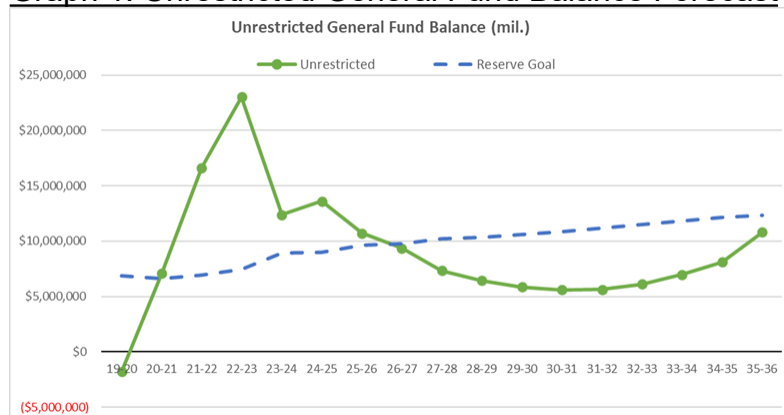
Table 2: Personnel Costs FY 2023-24 through FY 2026-27

	Actuals	Actuals	Budget	Projected
Category	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
Salaries and Benefits	17,168,751.10	18,485,393.57	19,869,517.14	21,226,370.89
Overtime and Part-Time	4,878,975.00	5,119,386.45	4,223,132.16	4,366,360.78
Retirement	8,191,937.68	9,298,093.16	10,022,594.93	11,323,236.20
Health	2,781,827.54	2,866,226.48	3,554,853.13	3,980,719.15
Other Personnel	2,140,098.06	2,111,821.39	2,280,410.62	2,656,103.67
Total Personnel	35,161,589.38	37,880,921.05	39,950,507.98	43,552,790.69
Annual % Increase		7.7%	5.5%	9.0%

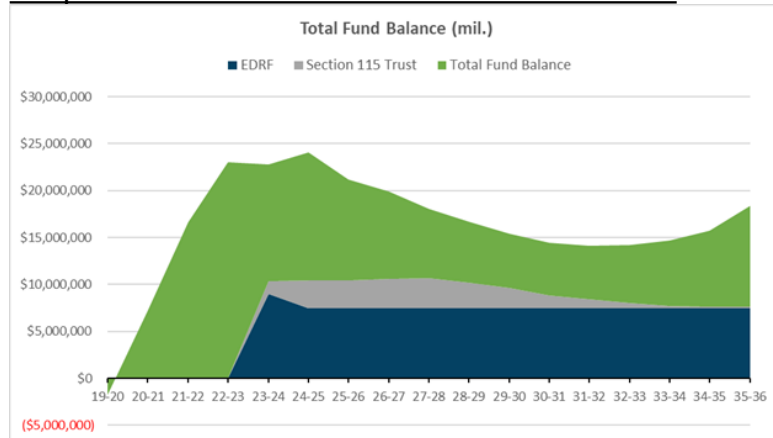
Graphs 1 and 2 show the City's General Fund forecast from FY 2019-20 through FY 2035-36. The model shows a point in time based on currently available information, including existing bargaining agreements, debt service, pension obligations, and other long-term fiscal obligations of the City. The forecast indicates how increasing costs and stagnating revenues result in a projected deficit if the City does not make changes to its projected expenditures beginning in FY 2026-27. City staff are in the process of developing the FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28 Biennial Budget, which will include significant community and City Council engagement and input.

The current point-in-time forecast indicates that the City could go below the 17% unassigned General Fund balance recommended by the City's Comprehensive Financial Policies. Graph 2 shows that, even if the City were to dip below the 17% policy reserve level, it would continue to hold robust reserves from the Emergency and Disaster Recovery Fund (EDRF) and the Section 115 Pension Trust.

Graph 1: Unrestricted General Fund Balance Forecast



Graph 2: Total General Fund Balance Forecast



Special Revenue and Enterprise Funds

Staff recommend appropriation increases in several Special Revenue Funds to support one-time and program-specific needs. All recommended adjustments would utilize existing fund balance in the respective funds and are consistent with allowable uses and restrictions. Projected beginning and ending fund balances as a result of the recommended changes are detailed in Appendix 2.

Special Revenue Funds

- Fund 201 – Gas Tax Fund: \$45,000 for consultant services supporting speed surveys, smart signals, and traffic evaluations due to staff vacancies. Additional budget is required for timely delivery of key transportation services and projects. Speed surveys for several collector and arterial roadways need to be updated to establish speed limits that can be enforced by the Police Department using lidar/radar. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority Smart Signals project, which will implement traffic signal equipment upgrades on Richmond Street, is requiring technical expertise for review of design documents. Due to a vacancy in the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department, consultant support will be required for traffic evaluations.
- Fund 205 – Measure J Storm Drain Fund: \$25,000 for additional CCTV inspection and sediment removal. Additional budget is required to investigate several localized flooding areas in the City and remove sediment that was reducing capacity of storm drain pipes.
- Fund 207 – Measure H Park and Recreation Facilities Fund: \$50,000 for playground equipment repairs at Cerrito Vista, Canyon Trail, and Arlington Parks. Due to the age of playground equipment at all City parks, the scope, frequency, and cost of repairs continue to increase. City staff is working to complete repairs at these three parks within the next couple of months while also working on assessing and developing replacement strategy for all playgrounds as part of the upcoming Capital Improvement Program update.

- Fund 222 – C.O.P.S. Grant Fund: Staff request additional appropriation authority of \$41,412 for replacement firearms for the Police Department using available funds in the COPS Grant Fund. The Police Department recommends replacement of its currently issued Sig P320 handguns due to safety concerns and training limitations resulting from bans imposed by firearm ranges and training providers. The department conducted a structured evaluation of replacement options, obtained vendor quotes, and identified a preferred option based on reliability, availability, and cost considerations.
- Fund 225 – Donations Fund: Staff request additional appropriation authority of \$40,000 for higher-than-budgeted Fourth of July event costs, fully offset by donations and festival revenue.

Enterprise Funds

Staff recommend approval of an interfund transfer of \$500,000 from the Integrated Waste Management Fund (Fund 501) to the Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Fund (Fund 601) to support budgeted vehicle replacement. Of this amount, \$250,000 reflects expenditures budgeted in the current fiscal year, and \$250,000 represents fund balance accumulated for this purpose in the prior fiscal year. Accordingly, this action includes an appropriation increase of \$250,000 in Fund 501 in addition to approval of the interfund transfer.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *High Performing Organization; and*
- *Community Safety; and*
- *Livability and Belonging; and*
- *Infrastructure and Amenities; and*
- *Environmental Sustainability.*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If approved, the recommended resolution would increase FY 2025-26 appropriations by \$1,593,905 across all funds, including an increase of \$1,142,493 in General Fund spending authority using Unrestricted General Fund Balance. A summary of the recommended appropriation changes by fund is provided in the appendices.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Approval of the attached resolution is required to amend the City's FY 2025-26 spending authority.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Pinkos".

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Midyear Appendices
3. Successor Agency Memorandum
4. Successor Agency Cash Balance Fiscal Years 2012 through 2026

RESOLUTION 2026-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO AMENDING
THE SPENDING AUTHORITY BY FUND FOR THE CITY OF EL CERRITO FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2025-26

WHEREAS, on June 16, 2025 the City Council of the City of El Cerrito adopted the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget with spending limits across funds (Resolution 2025-45); and

WHEREAS, changes to the spending limits throughout the year are necessary to account for unexpected opportunities, unforeseen changes, or if the City's financial position changes and additional spending authority is required to meet the needs of the City; and

WHEREAS, staff presented this update to the City Council of the City of El Cerrito for its consideration and the City Council has reviewed and analyzed it; and

WHEREAS, this update includes expenditure authorization for operational needs and Council approved projects; and

WHEREAS, proposed changes to spending authority from tax proceeds are within the City's Fiscal Year 2025-26 Gann Appropriations Limit as defined by California State Constitution Article XIIB.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of El Cerrito that it hereby amends the spending authority by fund for fiscal year 2025-26 as follows:

Fund	Amended FY 2025-26 Budget	Mid-Year Adjustments	Total Appropriations FY 2025-26
General Fund	\$55,438,763	\$1,142,493	\$56,581,256
Gas Tax Fund	\$788,521	\$45,000	\$833,521
Measure J Storm Drain	\$936,561	\$25,000	\$961,561
Measure H Park & Recreation Facilities	\$789,024	\$50,000	\$839,024
C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	\$385,013	\$41,412	\$426,425
Donations Fund	\$100,000	\$40,000	\$140,000
Integrated Waste Management (IWM)	\$5,448,744	\$250,000	\$5,698,744

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council hereby authorizes use of Unassigned General Fund Balance to support a budget increase of \$1,142,493 to ensure continuous City operations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of El Cerrito hereby authorizes the City Manager or their designee to:

1. Create such appropriations into such new accounts as may be appropriate for proper accounting in the City's financial system and to make any necessary non-material changes to finalize the budget document.
2. Apply correct accounting rules for the proper classification of interfund transactions, including transfers between funds, or other financial transactions as may be necessary to address bond or loan covenants or any other requirements imposed by formal, legal agreements between the City any other parties, as previously entered into by the City.
3. Approve payment of goods and services received by the City in accordance with the City's approved budgets, programs, and policies, subject to a limitation of \$45,000 for any single vendor in any one fiscal year, beyond which amount the City Council retains authority to approve payment with the exception of those items falling under other statutory authority (e.g., Public Works, State purchasing).
4. Shift expenditure authority within funds among departments, as may be necessary to meet the City's operational needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a regular meeting on February 17, 2026 the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on_____.

Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Gabe Quinto, Mayor

Appendix 1 - Summary of Recommended FY 2025-26 Appropriation Increases

Fund	Fund Name	Department	Description	Appropriation Increase
101	General Fund	Public Works	Emergency tree trimming and repairs from winter storms	\$30,000
101	General Fund	Recreation	Pickleball fee transfer to CIP	\$7,500
101	General Fund	Finance	RDA / Successor Agency reconciliation	\$1,045,493
101	General Fund	City Council / City Manager's Office	9212 Library Initiative fiscal impact report	\$29,500
101	General Fund	Human Resources	Community Development Director recruitment	\$30,000
Total General Fund (101)				\$1,142,493
201	Gas Tax Fund	Public Works	Traffic consulting (speed survey, smart signals, evaluations)	\$45,000
205	Measure J Storm Drain	Public Works	CCTV inspection and sediment removal	\$25,000
207	Measure H Park & Recreation Facilities	Public Works / Recreation	Playground equipment repairs	\$50,000
222	C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	Police	Replacement firearms	\$41,412
225	Donations Fund	Recreation	Fourth of July event costs (donation-funded)	\$40,000
501	Integrated Waste Management Fund	Public Works	Transfer to Vehicle / Equipment Replacement Fund	\$250,000

Appendix 2 - Fund Balance Summary (FY 2025-26)

Fund	Beginning Fund Balance	Original Adopted Appropriation Limit	Amended Appropriation Limit	Proposed Mid-Year Appropriation Increase	Total New Appropriation Limit	Budgeted Revenues	Projected Ending Fund Balance
101 – General Fund	\$24,250,508	\$53,764,017	\$55,438,763	\$1,142,493	\$56,581,256	\$53,779,791	\$21,449,043
201 – Gas Tax Fund	473,679	769,498	788,521	45,000	833,521	\$726,600	\$366,758
205 – Measure J Storm Drain	594,133	875,846	936,561	25,000	961,561	\$709,400	\$341,972
207 – Measure H Park & Rec Facilities	480,807	740,381	789,024	50,000	839,024	\$647,000	\$288,783
222 – C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	366,751	356,000	385,013	41,412	426,425	\$100,000	\$40,326
225 – Donations Fund	113,781.87*	100,000	100,000	40,000	140,000	\$100,000	\$73,782
501 – Integrated Waste Management Fund	4,280,289.00	4,850,083.00	5,448,744.00	250,000.00	5,698,744.00	\$4,583,861	\$3,165,406

*Funds available for use. Donations are recorded as unearned revenue until an eligible expense is incurred.



City of El Cerrito
Memorandum

TO: Mayor Quinto and Councilmembers
FROM: Crystal Reams, Finance Director
DATE: February 10, 2026
SUBJECT: Successor Agency Dissolution True Up Request

This memo serves as an explanation and additional detail for the requested transfer of \$1,045,493.28 from the General Fund to the Successor Agency.

The El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency, like all redevelopment agencies in the State, was dissolved on February 1, 2012 by implementation of ABx1 26, also known as the Dissolution Act, which had been enacted by the State of California in June 2011. Dissolution had been scheduled for October 1, 2011, but was delayed by four months when the California Supreme Court ordered a stay on that provision of the legislation while it considered the constitutionality of the Dissolution Act.

From July 2011 to January 2012, the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency had operated under the Dissolution Act's suspension provisions, identifying and paying its enforceable obligations with its existing funding sources, including that portion of the property taxes collected in the City's redevelopment area known as "Tax Increment." Redevelopment revenue spent during suspension included Tax Increment received both prior to suspension in May 2011 and during suspension in December 2011. As required by the suspension provisions of the Dissolution Act, the Redevelopment Agency identified its enforceable obligations to the California Department of Finance, which did not dispute their validity, and made payments on those obligations through the end of January 2012.

In February 2012, the El Cerrito Redevelopment Successor Agency began the process mandated by the Dissolution Act of semi-annually documenting the enforceable obligations of the former Redevelopment Agency and seeking approval to make payments from an oversight board and the State Department of Finance. The Successor Agency's initial funding sources were to include the cash reserve rolled over from the Redevelopment Agency, which was the unspent portion of the Tax Increment received during suspension, and the first semi-annual allocation of "Redevelopment Property Tax" to be distributed by the County Auditor-Controller sufficient to make those payments approved by the Oversight Board and Department of Finance.

The origins of El Cerrito's dispute were evident in March 2012, when the County Auditor-Controller and Department of Finance indicated that they considered the Tax Increment received and spent by the Redevelopment Agency prior to dissolution to be "Redevelopment Property Tax," which the Dissolution Act provided can only



be spent by the Successor Agency after dissolution, subject to Department of Finance approval. The implication was that the Redevelopment Agency had not needed the Tax Increment received during suspension, despite having significant payments due on its enforceable obligations and the authority and responsibility under the Dissolution Act to pay them.

Additionally, the Auditor-Controller and Department of Finance indicated that the first allocation of Redevelopment Property Tax that would be received by the Successor Agency could only be spent on the second semi-annual period being considered by the Oversight Board and Department of Finance. El Cerrito Successor Agency staff worked with the Auditor-Controller, the Oversight Board, and the Department of Finance throughout the review process for that first allocation of Redevelopment Property Tax, making adjustments to payment schedules to ensure that there would be no default on bond debt service due on June 27, 2012.

That same day, in an attempt to retroactively reallocate revenue that had been distributed to redevelopment agencies prior to their dissolution, the California Legislature hurriedly adopted and Governor Brown signed AB 1484 to modify and “clean-up” provisions in Dissolution Act. One provision of the AB 1484 required the County Auditor-Controller to demand a “True Up Payment” from redevelopment successor agencies of unneeded funds that would be redistributed to other public agencies.

The Department of Finance’s mandated True Up Payment calculation methodology required the County Auditor-Controller to demand repayment of any tax increment received by the Redevelopment Agency in December 2011 in excess of what the Successor Agency requested and the Department of Finance approved for payments due from January to June 2012. Unfortunately, the combination of adjustments made to the Successor Agency’s payment schedules for the first and second semi-annual periods, which were approved by the Oversight Board and Department of Finance in June 2012, and flaws in the Department of Finance’s calculation methodology resulted in the \$1.76 million True Up Demand that El Cerrito refused to pay.

El Cerrito staff and legal counsel had numerous settlement discussions with staff and legal counsel from the County Auditor-Controller, the Department of Finance and the Attorney General’s office before gaining agreement on the correct calculation of El Cerrito’s True Up Payment. Most notably, El Cerrito made the case that the Redevelopment Agency had both the need for and the authority to use the Tax Increment received in December 2011 for its enforceable obligations during suspension, which continued until January 2012. Therefore, the methodology was flawed because the Redevelopment Agency’s use of the December 2011 Tax

Increment disbursement for payments on enforceable obligations prior to dissolution should have been recognized as approved uses of the funds in El Cerrito's True Up Payment calculation.

Additionally, El Cerrito made the case that since the Successor Agency did not exist in January 2012, it would not have requested approval from the Oversight Board and Department of Finance of any payments made by the Redevelopment Agency during January 2012, as they had already been authorized by the Redevelopment Agency under the suspension provisions of the Dissolution Act. The Department of Finance had not contested any of the Redevelopment Agency's claimed enforceable obligations during the suspension period, when the Dissolution Act had provided it the opportunity and authority to do so.

The funds in dispute are illustrated in the following table comparing the difference in tax revenue available for obligations due in FY11-12 as a result of RDA dissolution, the amounts authorized by the RDA and DOF or required by statute, and the True Up Payment calculations.

**Estimated Obligations of Tax Increment and/or Redevelopment Property Tax for FY11-12
as Authorized by Redevelopment Agency (EOPS) or Department of Finance (ROPS I)**

	Redevelopment Agency			Successor Agency		Combined	True Up Calculation	
	FY11-12 Budget Adopted 6/6/2011*	EOPS Aug-Dec 2011 Approved 1/17/12	EOPS Jan 2012 Approved 1/17/12	Calculation from A-C 5/1/12	ROPS I Approved by DOF 6/22/12	Enforceable Obligations Jan-Jun 2012	Demand from A-C 7/9/12	Corrected Amount
Available Funds								
Reserves	584,205							
Tax Increment Revenue	5,102,500						2,710,783	2,710,783
Total Available	5,686,705						2,710,783	2,710,783
Estimated Obligations								
County Admin	49,000							
FY11-12 Debt Service	1,964,868	433,109				433,109		433,109
FY11-12 Pass-Thrus**	981,000	981,476		507,493		507,493		507,493
Non-Housing Housing	1,811,257 879,799							
EOPS items 6-27***		1,329,922	1,474,389			1,474,389		1,474,389
ROPS I/Non-Hsg					703,988	703,988	703,988	703,988
ROPS I/Hsg					781,152			
Successor Admin					250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Total Obligations	5,636,924	2,744,507	1,474,389	507,493	1,735,140	3,368,979	953,988	3,368,979
Residual							1,756,795	(658,196)

* FY11-12 Adopted Budget superseded by EOPS and ROPS I.

** Pass-thru payments were not paid by the A-C. Will be paid from RPT in FY11-13.

*** EOPS Items 6-27 include obligations of all sources of funds, not only tax increment.



On December 21, 2012, a judgment was issued, El Cerrito and the El Cerrito Redevelopment Successor Agency prevailed on all issues and did not require the agency to repay the \$1.76 million in the “True Up Payment”.

On May 22, 2013 the California Department of Finance issued an Other Funds and Accounts (OFA) Due Diligence Review (DDR) determination letter. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code (HSC) section 34179.6 (c), the City of El Cerrito Successor Agency (Agency) submitted an oversight board approved OFA DDR to the Department of Finance on March 7, 2013. The purpose of the review was to determine the amount of cash and cash equivalents available for distribution to the affected taxing entities. Since the Agency did not meet the January 15, 2013 submittal deadline pursuant to HSC section 34179.6 (c), the Department of Finance was not bound to completing its review and making a determination by the April 1, 2013 deadline pursuant to HSC section 34179.6 (d). The Department of Finance issued an OFA DDR determination letter on May 22, 2013. Subsequently, the Agency requested a Meet and Confer session on one or more items adjusted by the Department of Finance. The Meet and Confer session was held on June 18, 2013.

Based on a review of additional information and documentation provided to the Department of Finance during the Meet and Confer process, they completed its review of those specific items being disputed. Specifically, the following adjustments were made:

- Transfers totaling \$13,298,551 (\$748,000 + \$1,981,989 + \$10,568,562) were not allowed. Based on additional information provided during the Meet and Confer process, the Department of Finance reversed the \$748,000 of its adjustments and continues to object to \$12,550,551 (\$13,298,551 - \$748,000) of the transfers. The former Redevelopment Agency (RDA) transferred cash totaling \$748,000 to the City of El Cerrito (City). During the Meet and Confer process, the Agency provided clarifying information that this transfer was related to administrative costs incurred for fiscal year 2011-12 that were reported on the Enforceable Obligation Payment Schedule for July through December 2011 and the Recognized Obligation Payment Schedule for January through June 2012. Therefore, the Department of Finance reversed its adjustment of \$748,000.

The former RDA also transferred cash totaling \$1,981,989 and bond funds totaling \$400,243 to the El Cerrito Municipal Services Corporation (MSC) pursuant to a Cooperative Agreement (Agreement) between the City, MSC,



and the former RDA. Additionally, the former RDA transferred properties and capital assets to MSC totaling \$10,168,319.

The Department of Finance also noted that the Agreement was denied on the ROPS for the periods July 2012 through June 2013 and July through December 2013, which were upheld through the meet and confer process in the Department of Finance letters dated December 18, 2012 and May 18, 2013, respectively.

On October 22, 2013, El Cerrito, the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency Successor Agency and the El Cerrito Municipal Services Corporation entered an amended petition for writ of mandate and compliance declaratory relief. The petition challenged demands made by the California Department of Finance to remit \$1,981,989 to the Contra Costa County Auditor-Controller for the purpose of distributing the funds to affected taxing entities. The DOF demands were made in connection with the “due diligence review” (“DDR”) of the Successor Agency’s non-housing Other Funds and Assets. On September 3, 2024, the petition for writ was denied.

At the December 21, 2015 City Council meeting, the Council approved a repayment plan agreement. This resulted in \$1,981,989 being expended out of the Successor Agency, which caused the Successor Agency’s cash balance to run into a deficit. In 2017, the General Fund loaned the Successor Agency \$873,766.62. In 2018, the General Fund loaned the Successor Agency an additional \$447,422.47. The total negative was \$1,321,189.09. This amount was written off in 2021 after losing the final appeal, thus it was determined that denied charges would not be recovered.

From the inception of the Successor Agency, the City has continued to charge what it deemed eligible expenditures to the Successor Agency in hopes that they would be approved in the ROPS process in subsequent years. Various funds, such as the \$1.3 million contribution from the General Fund, have been transferred to cover some of the costs that had been denied. Unfortunately, the remaining denied or ineligible items charged to the Successor Agency were not ever approved and paid, resulting in a cash shortfall.

As of Fiscal Year 2025-26, the Successor Agency has officially been dissolved. All debt obligations have been paid and no additional funds are approved. The City is responsible for completing the prior period adjustments for fiscal years 23-24, 24-25 and 25-26. This process will result in the return of administrative fees totaling an estimated \$16,610. The official numbers for fiscal years 24-25 and 25-26 have not been finalized.



City of El Cerrito Memorandum

This request is for the transfer of \$1,045,493.28 from the General Fund to the Successor Agency to cover denied obligation requests and legal fees charged to the Successor Agency, as they were determined by the Department of Finance as not enforceable obligations related to the Redevelopment Agency.

Agenda Item No. 8.A. Attachment 4

Table to compare ending cash balance in the Successor Agency fund per the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), "Actual Cash", vs. what the cash balance should have been, "Cash Should Be"; resulting in the true negative cash balance "Negative Cash".
The cash was not negative in each of the years due to the pre-payment of the first Recognized Obligation Payment each year.

	<u>Actual Cash</u>	<u>Cash Should Be</u>	<u>Negative Cash</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2011	-		
Inflow	2,906,354.53		
Outflow	(2,500,214.60)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2012	<u>406,139.93</u>		
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2012	406,139.93		
Inflow	3,503,277.54		
Outflow	(2,443,719.29)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2013	<u>1,465,698.18</u>		
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2013	1,465,698.18		
Inflow	3,376,005.08		
Outflow	(3,545,218.28)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2014	<u>1,296,484.98</u>		
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2014	1,296,484.98		
Inflow	3,329,391.90		
Outflow	(1,199,114.06)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2015	<u>3,426,762.82</u>		
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2015	3,426,762.82		
Inflow	2,195,420.00		
Outflow	(5,492,856.06)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2016	<u>129,326.76</u>	<u>1,328,169.00</u>	<u>(1,198,842.24)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2016	129,326.76		
Inflow	790,726.93		
Outflow	(1,793,820.31)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2017	<u>(873,766.62)</u>	<u>681,599.00</u>	<u>(1,555,365.62)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2017	(873,766.62)		
Inflow	788,216.00		
Outflow	(1,235,638.47)		
Ending Cash Balance 06-30-2018	<u>(1,321,189.09)</u>	<u>806,599.00</u>	<u>(2,127,788.09)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2018	(1,321,189.09)		
Inflow	2,138,127.00		
Outflow	(2,138,127.00)		
Ending Cash available 06-30-2019	<u>(1,321,189.09)</u>	<u>868,327.00</u>	<u>(2,189,516.09)</u>
		\$1,321,189.09 loaned to SA by GF to cover Negative Cash	
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2019	(1,321,189.09)		
Inflow	2,554,468.00		
Outflow	(2,307,741.72)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2020	<u>(1,074,462.81)</u>	<u>1,004,227.00</u>	<u>(2,078,689.81)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2020	(1,074,462.81)		
Inflow	2,382,794.00		
Outflow	(2,323,119.32)		
Negative cash write off	1,321,189.09		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2021	<u>306,400.96</u>	<u>1,066,397.00</u>	<u>(759,996.04)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2021	306,400.96		
Inflow	2,094,578.00		
Outflow	(2,376,750.17)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2022	<u>24,228.79</u>	<u>778,181.00</u>	<u>(753,952.21)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2022	24,228.79		
Inflow	2,382,794.00		
Outflow	(2,375,543.51)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2023	<u>31,479.28</u>	<u>1,066,397.00</u>	<u>(1,034,917.72)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2023	31,479.28		
Inflow	2,251,718.00		
Outflow	(2,250,543.15)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2024	<u>32,654.13</u>	<u>1,060,322.00</u>	<u>(1,027,667.87)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2024	32,654.13		
Inflow	2,344,294.00		
Outflow	(2,344,433.97)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2025	<u>32,514.16</u>	<u>1,078,007.44</u>	<u>(1,045,493.28)</u>
Beginning Cash Balance 07-01-2025	32,514.16		
Inflow			
Outflow	(1,061,397.44)		
Ending Cash Available 06-30-2026	<u>(1,028,883.28)</u>	<u>16,610.00</u>	<u>(1,045,493.28)</u>
PPA 23/24	7,250.00		
PPA 24/25	7,110.00		
PPA 25/26	2,250.00		
Remaining balance needed	16,610.00		



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 8.B.

Date: February 17, 2026
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk, City Management
Subject: Discuss and Consider the Formation of a Library Task Force

ACTION PROPOSED

Consider the adoption of a resolution to form the City of El Cerrito Library Task Force to discuss and develop recommendations for options related to the modification or new construction of an El Cerrito Library.

BACKGROUND

Guided by the direction of the City Council, City Staff have worked for more than two decades towards a solution to address the current El Cerrito Library building's deficiencies and meet the community's desire and need for a new modern library facility.

On January 20, 2026 the City Council adopted Resolution 2026-04, accepting the sufficiency of an initiative petition that would, if passed by voters, potentially provide a funding source to build a new modern library or modify the existing library to improve the safety and ability to expand services. At the same meeting, the City Council directed staff to return with a discussion item to consider the formation of a Library Task Force. A Task Force would provide the best framework for community input and discussion the Council seeks regarding the El Cerrito Library.

ANALYSIS

It is staff's understanding that the City Council intends to form a Task Force in order to receive input and recommendations from a group of community members with a range of perspectives and knowledge. The defined tasks would be to discuss and make recommendations on a range of topics related to a Library in El Cerrito including, but not limited to the following:

- Site Feasibility Analysis
- Projected Costs
- Potential Funding Options
- Library Design and Features
- Public Engagement Process
- Any other work as assigned by the City Council

Membership

Staff recommend the task force be comprised of a total of seven voting members who currently reside in El Cerrito. It is recommended that one member be a youth member between the ages of 14–18 who resides in El Cerrito or attends El Cerrito High School.

In addition, staff recommends that the City Council consider the following be invited to attend and provide input at meetings of the task force but not having voting roles:

- Representative of the Contra Costa County Library Commission
- Contra Costa County Librarian or designee
- City Council Liaison

Application/Appointment Process

In order to remain consistent with current policies established by the City Council, staff recommend that the application and appointment process follow the same process as City Boards and Commissions. City staff would advertise the opportunity to apply by an established deadline, and schedule applicants to interview with the City Council at a special meeting. In addition, it is recommended that task force members be subject to the same policies as Board and Commission members.

Meeting and Timeframe

Staff recommends that the task force meet no less than every other month, and that all meetings be held subject to the Brown Act. The recommended timeframe to complete the work is one year from the appointment of its members. As with all other City Advisory Bodies, the City Manager will assign a staff liaison to coordinate meeting logistics and support the members.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *High Performing Organization; and*
- *Community Safety; and*
- *Livability and Belonging; and*
- *Infrastructure and Amenities; and*
- *Environmental Sustainability.*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The formation of a task force would impact staff resources including facilitating the appointment process and service by the staff liaison(s). However, no budget appropriations are proposed for this fiscal year with respect to the task force.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed resolution has been reviewed by the City Attorney and all legal considerations have been addressed.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Pinkos".

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution

RESOLUTION 2026-XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO CREATING A LIBRARY TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the City of El Cerrito, with direction from the City Council, has worked for more than two decades toward a solution to address the current El Cerrito Library building's deficiencies and to meet the community's desires and needs for a modern library facility; and

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2026 the City Council provided staff direction to bring forward a Resolution to form a Library Task Force.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of El Cerrito hereby establishes a Library Task Force, with the necessary staff liaison assigned by the City Manager, as follows:

1. The Task Force shall serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council with regard to a new or updated library for El Cerrito.
2. The Task Force shall review and become familiar with previous work completed by the City.
3. The Task Force may review, analyze, and/or make recommendations to the City Council regarding the Library including but not limited to the following items:
 - a. Site feasibility analysis
 - b. Projected costs
 - c. Potential funding options
 - d. Library design and features to include in a new library
 - e. Public engagement process
 - f. Any other work as assigned by the City Council
4. The Task Force shall be comprised of seven members, consisting of the following:
 - a. Seven El Cerrito residents
 - i. One member shall be a youth member who is enrolled as a student at El Cerrito High School, or an El Cerrito Resident, between the ages of 14-18.
 - b. Three non-voting invitees who are requested to attend and provide input at Task Force meetings:
 - i. A representative of the Contra Costa Library Commission
 - ii. The Contra Costa County Librarian, or designee
 - iii. A member of the City Council who will serve as the Council Liaison
5. The application and appointment process for all voting members shall be consistent with the established process for City Boards and Commissions.

6. The Task force shall meet no less than every other month and shall hold all meetings subject to the Brown Act.
7. The Task force shall have a limited duration of one year from appointment of its members to complete its work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on _____.

Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Gabe Quinto, Mayor



**SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIALS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
February 17, 2026
(revised 2/18/2026)**

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)

Public Comments (Not on the Agenda and Consent Calendar)

**Agenda Item No. 8.A. – Fiscal Year 2025-26 Mid-Year Budget Amendments
Presentation**

**Agenda Item No. 8.B. – Discuss and Consider the Formation of a Library Task Force
Public Comments**

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026 2:16:44 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hello Mayor Quinto, Council Members and Staff,

I am submitting the Following Comments into the Record:

1. I would like to Request that for a future Agenda, is that the Council should Invite Bike East Bay to Present on their Programs
2. I would Like to Thank the Council for Hosting the Mayors Conference in September

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Laura Brainin-Rodriguez](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [UNKNOWN SENDER] Public Comments - Agenda Item #4
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 3:52:04 PM

Please support Trail maintenance

I encourage the City to make public path restoration and signage a priority in the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan. With volunteers ready to provide labor and funding for materials, this is a low-cost, high-benefit project that should not displace other major priorities.

I also encourage the City to adopt a clearer and more workable framework for partnering with community organizations to deliver improvements efficiently.

As a 24 year El Cerrito resident I appreciate what has been done to make our beautiful hillsides accessible hiking areas.

Sincerely, Laura

Laura Brainin-Rodriguez

[REDACTED], El Cerrito, CA 94530

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Holly Charléty](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [William Ktsanes](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#)
Subject: Public Comment. Item 4. Not on the agenda (2/17/2026)
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 9:33:41 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

Before Thursday's vote, the public needs basic answers and more transparency.

Before signatures certified: Cost \$21 million

After signatures certified: Cost \$37 million or possibly much more depending on when built, if ever built

Why was there such a big increase?

####

Before signatures certified: 17 cent tax brings in \$2.5 million

After signatures certified: 17 cent tax brings in over \$3 million

Where are these numbers coming from? What are the assumptions?

####

Before signatures certified: Operating expenses \$900,000

After signatures certified: Operating expenses \$700,000

What is included in this? Are planning costs included?

###

Before signatures certified: Construction of Parcel C West presented as a sure thing

After signatures certified: No meaningful plans for building Parcel C West

###

Before signatures certified: Implied bond interest rate is 6.35%

After signatures certified: Interest rate is 5% for all scenarios even when it is clear the city cannot make minimum payments

Where do these numbers come from?

###

What does management project as the initial tax rate and what will be the budget for the first few years before anything is built?

###

The impact report has this sentence on Page 8. Please specify the other possible uses.

“The Initiative contains other authorized uses of the tax

not described here.”

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [Janet Byron](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Brian Richmond](#); [Avis Codron](#); [DG Gmail](#)
Subject: Comments for 2/17 council meeting from El Cerrito Trail Trekkers re: public path building
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 11:57:16 AM
Attachments: [EC Trail Trekkers Tassajara Park trail plan 4.12.25.docx](#)

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

To: City Clerk

From: Janet Byron, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers Public Paths Committee

Please accept these comments for tonight's meeting and also enter the [attached Tassajara Park trail plan](#) into the public record.

Dear City Council,

Unbeknownst to many in town, El Cerrito has several dozen public paths. These are city rights-of-way that connect upper and lower streets primarily in the El Cerrito hills. About a dozen paths are currently undeveloped.

El Cerrito Trail Trekkers has been attempting to partner with El Cerrito to improve these paths since Dave Weinstein formed the organization 15 years ago. As a result, improving public paths is in El Cerrito's Active Transportation Plan and the Parks and Recreation Commission's work plan.

In late 2021, the El Cerrito Park and Recreation Commission partnered with Trail Trekkers — which is one of the city's official community partners — to develop a workplan for improving public paths in El Cerrito. The commission adopted the plan in late 2022 and forwarded to the city council in early 2023. The workplan includes a catalogue of paths needing improvement and a detailed strategy for improving them with all-volunteer labor and El Cerrito Trail Trekkers providing covering all expenses for materials and tools. This model has been extremely effective for more than 25 years in Berkeley, where BPWA has built about 40 new paths for public benefit.

In July 2023, Dave Weinstein and then-Parks and Rec commissioner Avis Codron met with Councilmember Gabe Quinto and City Manager Karen Pinkos, who said that the matter would be taken up as part of the Capitol Improvement Project planning process — It wasn't.

Later in 2023, the public paths committee of El Cerrito Trail Trekkers was formed. Current members are Janet Byron; Avis Codron; Brian Richmond, co-president of El Cerrito Trail Trekkers; and David Gyorke, a longtime El Cerrito resident who is currently building paths with Berkeley Path Wanderers Association.

In June 2024, we secured a meeting with Stephen Pree, El Cerrito's environmental

programs manager. At that meeting, we were told that yes, we can build paths. Stephen showed us the tools at the Corporation Yard that we could use to build the paths — great! Volunteers would need to sign waivers — no problem! The only significant issue was that we would need to show Yvetteh Ortiz, El Cerrito's engineer/public works director, a plan for our pilot project at Tassajara Park, which would build a two-switchback trail to connect the lower and upper parts of the park where an historic wood staircase is long gone and park users must scramble up and down a steep, rocky slope.

We put together a detailed plan for the Tassajara Path and submitted it to Ortiz in April 2025, which was entered into the public record today.

Since then, we've had a series of meetings with Ortiz to secure the city's permission to build this path, with a planned start date of spring this year. We were asked to connect Ortiz with public works staff in surrounding cities of Berkeley and Kensington, where local governments are partnering with volunteer path advocacy groups — which we did (Terrance Salonga of Berkeley Public Works and Robert Rogers of Supervisor John Gioia's office). We were asked to provide examples of MOUs between other volunteer path-building groups and local agencies — which we did. We were asked to draft an MOU — which we did — based on the one used by East Bay Regional Parks District to work with its trail-building volunteers.

We were asked to provide a training program and a list of tools — which we did. In every case, we've in good faith done as the city has asked us. No other volunteer groups that work to improve city parks (El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, Friends of Five Creeks, Friends of Baxter Creek, Friends of Hillside Natural Area) have been asked to run the gauntlet that we have experienced.

Last week, we received an email from Yvetteh Ortiz, which said (in part):

"I've discussed your proposals with our City Manager. Unfortunately, due to several legal and liability issues that must be further evaluated, we won't be able to move forward with the Tassajara Park path this year."

We have received no further information about why our 100% volunteer project, with zero expenditure for the city of El Cerrito, is being put off indefinitely, until 2027, or never.

What is the city so afraid of? Other cities and municipalities are able to partner with volunteers to build trails for the public's benefit, while managing "legal and liability issues." What are the legal and liability issues that need to be evaluated? Like all other cities, El Cerrito manages liability from the public accessing numerous public facilities: roads, sidewalks, public parks, pools, police and fire, etc. What are the risks related to volunteers IMPROVING public paths on public rights-of-way, which in their unimproved state present a significant liability?

We are very frustrated, and would like answers.

Janet Byron
El Cerrito Trail Trekkers Public Paths Committee

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

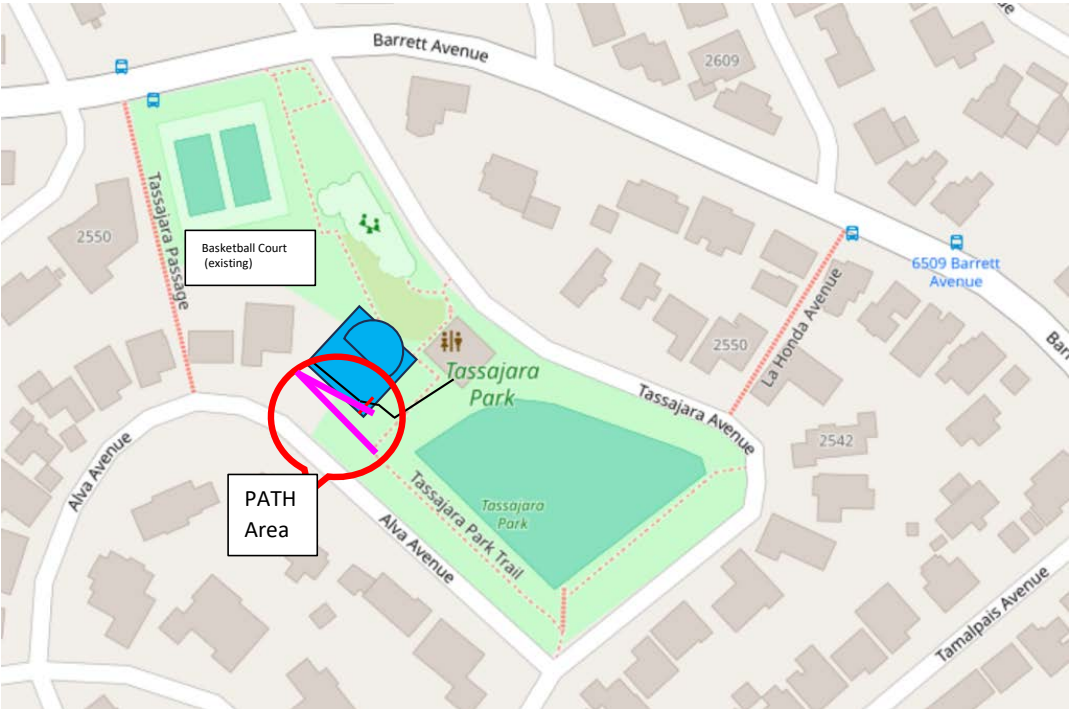
Completing El Cerrito's network of urban public paths has long been a goal of the [El Cerrito Trail Trekkers](#), and is included in El Cerrito's [2016 Active Transportation Plan](#). In November 2022, the city Parks and Recreation Commission approved and forwarded to the city council a [work plan](#) and [outreach procedures](#) for building urban public paths in El Cerrito with volunteer labor. The Public Paths Committee of El Cerrito Trail Trekkers was formed in late 2023 to develop plans for building public paths on El Cerrito's urban public rights of way. In June 2024, the committee met with Stephen Pree, El Cerrito environmental services manager, regarding moving forward with a pilot trail project. The committee has now developed a plan for the first item on [our list](#): a trail connecting the upper (field) and lower (basketball court) sections of Tassajara Park. In a plan review, we learned that a wooden staircase once connected these upper and lower sections. We propose an approximate 93-foot path with one switchback and either metal or wood handrails. All material costs and volunteer labor would be provided by El Cerrito Trail Trekkers. Path-building team will be led by David Gyorke, a 30+ year homeowner in El Cerrito, current path builder for Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, and former board president of Rebuilding Together – East Bay.

Section 1: Tassajara Park trail - Scope

1. Construct sloped, 93-foot pathway up the hill with one switchback, from basketball court up to Tassajara Park trail and field
2. Remove 3 feet of existing low-height border wall to start pathway from asphalt zone
3. Utilize path building guidelines, methods, and outreach procedures outlined in Section 2.
4. Install handrails on designated sloped sections
5. Install retaining wallboards on up- and down-slope sides of trail where deemed appropriate.
6. Apply methods to minimize stormwater drainage to pathway.

PROJECT LOCATION

Image 1 - map view



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



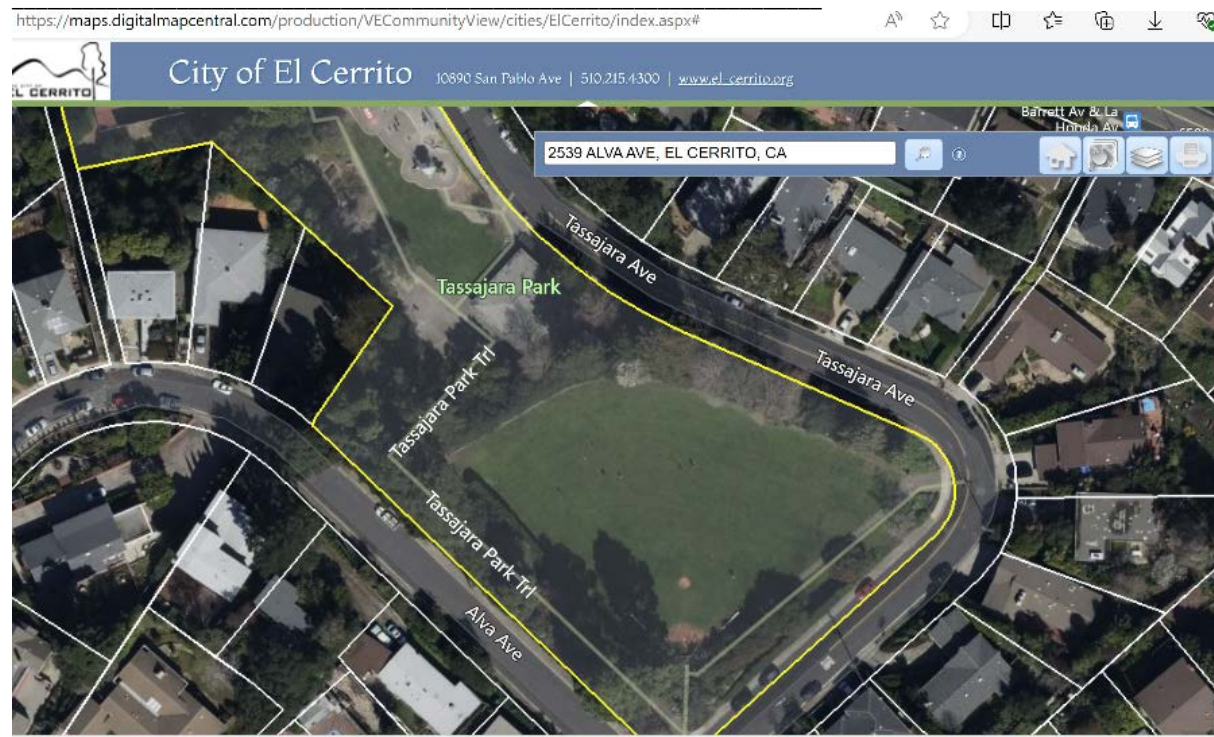
Section 2: Trail building plan

1. El Cerrito Trail Trekkers volunteers will provide planning information, project supervision, volunteer labor (with EC liability release) to implement plan for proposed pathway.
2. El Cerrito Trail Trekkers will make every effort to design and implement path work in the following order of priority to achieve:
 - a. Safe trails for toddler to senior citizens of El Cerrito. Examples: Slope, handrails, tread usage
 - b. Design for year-round use wherever possible, where path is available following wet weather. Examples: water runoff, soil erosion, and handrails where deemed necessary on sloped, terraced, spring-fed zones, or switchback path areas.
 - c. Design for extended usage, approximately 20 years before refurbishment is required. Usage of durable yet least ecologically impactful materials. Example: eucalyptus wood for treads and forms, pressure-treated wood for side and retaining wall construction, steel rebar and pipe for holding tread and wall forms, corrosion-resistant (zinc plated or other)–style steel for handrails.
3. El Cerrito Trail Trekkers will implement pre-construction [outreach procedures](#) as previously developed and approved in partnership with the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Commission.
4. El Cerrito Public Works Department to assist with site preparation (removal of one nonnative ornamental tree) and brush clearing as needed.
5. El Cerrito Trail Trekkers construction will interpret and apply the following general guidelines:
 - a. National Park Service: Trail Management & Maintenance: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/trails/trail-management-and-maintenance.htm>
 - b. California State Parks: Trails Handbook <https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1324/files/Chapter%2011%20-%20Principles%20of%20Trail%20Construction.FINAL.03.06.19.pdf>
 - c. USDA Forest Service: Combined Standard Trail Plans: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/combined-std-trail-plans.pdf>
 - d. East Bay Regional Park District: Standard Plans: <https://www.ebparks.org/public-info/bids-rfps/district-standard-plans#roads>
6. Install six (6)-inch high by three (3)–feet wide stepped construction on sloped sections. Generally use the following:

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

- a. Eucalyptus wood, typically 6"x6"x36", milled treads with 3/4" holes drilled at six (6) inches from each end. Shorter- or longer-distance widths of treads may be applied where needed.
 - b. 5/8" x 36" rebar obtained from local retail construction supply companies. Shorter or longer distance widths of treads may be applied where needed.
7. Install handrails on designated sloped sections. 1 ½ inch diameter typical, at 36" height.
8. Install retaining walls up to two (2) feet in height per wall, using pressure treated 2"x12" wood of various lengths and repurposed galvanized metal (steel or iron) pipe of 2 to 4 ft in length from salvage yard.
9. Exceptions on distances, slopes, material widths, depths and heights are made when rock, roots, trees, utility piping require alternate lengths. Consideration for right-of-way easement may also require adjustment to widths, depths, and heights.
10. Remove non-native vegetation where needed to achieve 3-foot high by 7-foot tall pathway corridor. Native plant trimming of root, stump or branches where needed, not to exceed three (3)-inch diameter
11. Partner with El Cerrito Garden Club and EC Trail Trekkers to replant non-native (i.e. ivy covered) park slopes with native plants (long-term).
12. Partner with El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, city of El Cerrito Public Works, and El Cerrito Garden Club on annual maintenance and weeding of paths.

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



Color KEY: **PROPERTY LINE**

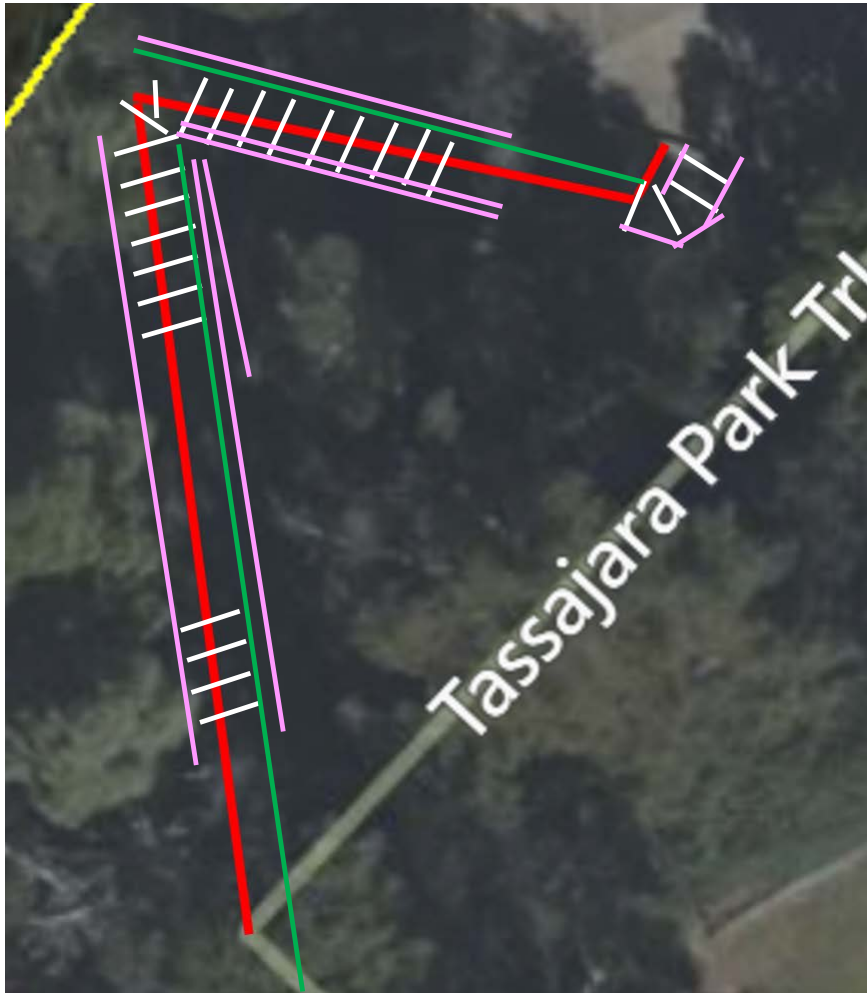
Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



Color KEY: **PROPERTY LINE**, **TRAIL**

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

Color KEY: **PROPERTY LINE**, **TRAIL**, **HANDRAIL**, **SIDEBOARD**, **TREADS**



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

PHOTOS OF MAPPED-OUT TRAIL SITE



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**



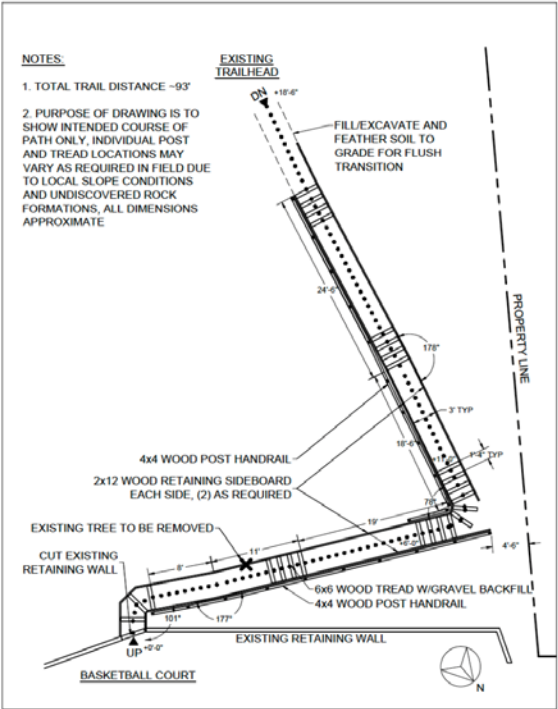
Video of Path: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zkm9F8i94iRwZphsnCUn3HsOqgl8HBmc/view?usp=drive_link

NON-NATIVE TREE REMOVAL AT ARROW



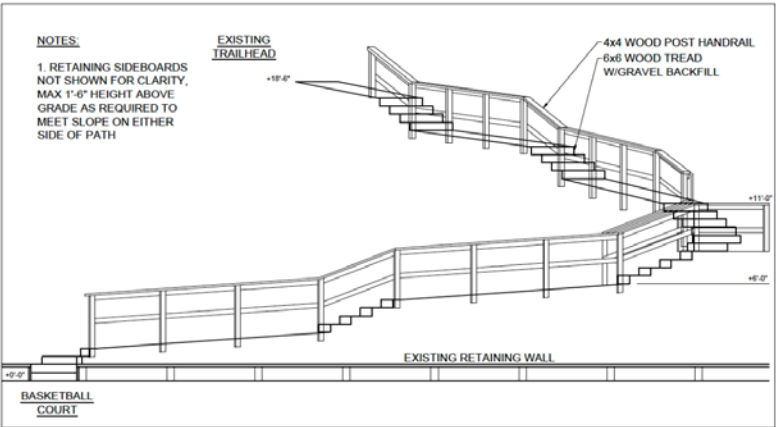


Project: Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path



PLAN 1/16" : 1'-0"

SITE ELEVATION PLAN (Side View)



ELEVATION FROM COURT 1/8" : 1'-0"

SITE ELEVATION PLAN (Top View)

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

Site Location	1	2	3	4	5 (corner as a "switch back")	6	7	Totals
Height (ft)	Origin - 0'	1.5	1.5	1.5	5.0	4.5	3.5	18.5
Cumulative height (ft)	0'	1.5	3.0	4.5	10.5	15.0	18.5	<i>left blank</i>
Estimated Angle (deg)	0'	20° Stair Tread @ 6"by16 " typ	11	8	12	10	10	<i>left blank</i>
Distance (ft) to each point	Origin - 0'	3.0	8.0	11.0	23.0	24.5	23.5	93.0
Cumulative distance (ft)	0'	3.0	11.0	22.0	45.0	69.5	93.0	<i>left blank</i>
Notes	Asphalt w/border wall.	Walled Treads from asphalt	Path to tree w/side wall	Treads up the grade w/sidewall	Treaded switchback ~300° arc	Treads half way up grade w/sidewall	Path w/sidewall	

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

Section 3: Materials List and Tools (preliminary estimates; all costs to be borne by EC Trail Trekkers)

Treads with Metal Handrail

		qty	units	Cost Each	Extend ed Cost	Source	Tool	Alternate source
1	Tread 6"x6"x36" with two ¾" holes (@100 pcs \$305 DELIVERY)	26	Ea	\$ 19.07	495.82	Green Waste Recycle	¾" auger bit at 8 inch depth	
2	Rebar 5/8" x 36" @ 2 per tread 100 pcs @ \$219 must pickup	52	Ea 3ft pc	2.19	113.88	PJ Rebar Frmont	A	
3	Retaining Wall 2"x12"x10'	(5x2)+(6x2) = 22	ea	31.58	694.76	Home Depot		
4	Pipe to hold wall 1 ½" diam x 36"- 48" @ 3 per segment est 48/12=4ft	(5+6)x3 = 33	33 ea x 4ft	0.75/ft	99.00	Urban Ore	B	
5	Gravel – ¾" crushed for drainage - must pickup	5	yards	40.50	202.50	Acapulco Rock	C	
6	Handrail – post every 8ft of handrail	113/8 =14 Add 10% = 16 or 8@10"	8 each	61.39	492.12	Home Depot	D	
7	Handrail – 1.5"x10" hand bar 32+10+2=44 & 44+25=69.... = 113	Add 10% = 125	each 10 ft length	61.39	767.37	Home Depot	B	
8	Handrail – concrete @ 3 sack (60#) = 180# / POST	3X16 =48	60# SACK	4.48	215.04	Home Depot	E	
9	Handrail – T-fitting McMaster Carr 4936T36		14 Ea	37.00	518.00	McMaster Carr	Allen wrench	
10	Handrail – 90 elbow McMaster Carr 4936T19		4 Ea	29.24	116.96	McMaster Carr	Allen wrench	
				total	3,715.45			

- 1) <https://www.homedepot.com/p/2-in-x-12-in-x-10-ft-Pressure-Treated-Lumber-Brown-Stain-Ground-Contact-WW-Actual-1-5-in-x-11-25-in-x-120-in-418912/202273857>

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

<https://www.homedepot.com/p/STZ-1-1-2-in-x-10-ft-Galvanized-Steel-Pipe-315-112X120/100536541>

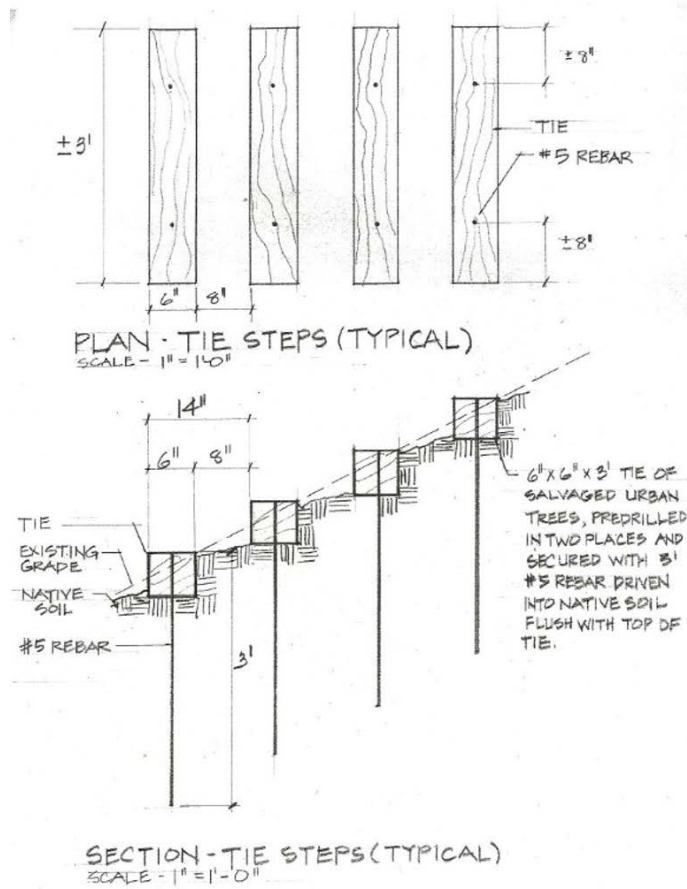
Treads with WOOD Handrail

Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

		qty	units	Cost Each	Extend ed Cost	Source	Tool	Alternate source
1	Tread 6"x6"x36" with two ¾" holes (@100 pcs \$305 DELIVERY)	26	Ea	\$ 19.07	495.82	Green Waste Recycle	¾" auger bit at 8 inch depth	
2	Rebar 5/8" x 36" @ 2 per tread 100 pcs @ \$219 must pickup	52	Ea 3ft pc	2.19	113.88	PJ Rebar Frmont	A	
3	Retaining Wall 2"x12"x10'	(5x2)+(6x2) = 22	ea	31.58	694.76	Home Depot		
4	Pipe to hold wall 1 ½" diam x 36"- 48" @ 3 per segment est 48/12=4ft	(5+6)x3 = 33	33 ea x 4ft	0.75/ft	99.00	Urban Ore	B	
5	Gravel – ¾" crushed for drainage - must pickup	5	yards	40.50	202.50	Acapulco Rock	C	
6	Handrail Dadoed Redwood (Common: 1-1/4 in. x 3-1/4 in. x 8 ft.; Actual: 1.25 in. x 3.25 in. x 96 in.)	16	each	12.98	207.68	Home Depot	Model #88810 (sold in qty=2 @ 25.98)	
7	Handrail – redwood framing 2 in. x 4 in. x 8 ft. Construction Common Redwood Lumber Nominal Product Length (ft.): 8 ft	16x3=48	each	14.68	704.64	Home Depot		
8	Everbilt Stainless Steel Decorative Handrail Bracket	16x2 = 32	each	12.93	413.76	Home Depot	Model #13538	
9	Handrail post - Pressure-Treated Timber HF Brown Stain (Common: 4 in. x 4 in. x 10 ft.; Actual: 3.56 in. x 3.56 in. x 120 in.)	16/2 = 8	each	23.18	185.44	Home Depot	Model #448645	
10	SAKRETE 60 lb. Gray Concrete Mix	3 X16 =48	60# SACK	4.48	215.04	Home Depot		
				total	3332.52			

Tools

- A. Hydraulic cutter. - <https://www.bnproducts.com/tools/dc-25x-1-portable-rebar-cutter/> & its oil....
https://www.grainger.com/category/lubrication/oils/hydraulic-oils?attrs=Container+Type%7CBottle~~ISO+Viscosity+Grade%7C68~ATTRS&filters=attrs%2Cprice&searchQuery=iso+68+hydraulic+oil&sst=4&tv_optin=true&price=0%7C50
- B. Pipe Cutter – miter saw with carbide blade DeWalt 704 @ 10" diam miter saw
- C. Wheel barrow for moving gravel around on site
- D. Auger 8 inch – for post digging to 24-36" depth – Harbor Freight gas engine type
- E. Mixing tub - <https://www.homedepot.com/p/Argee-14-Gal-Heavy-Duty-Mixing-Tub-2-Pack-RG176-2/301461147>;
<https://www.homedepot.com/p/SAKRETE-60-lb-Gray-Concrete-Mix-65200940/100321247>
- F. ¾" drain rock, recycled - <https://www.acapulcorock.com/price-sheet>



Project: **Tassajara Park trail - basketball court to upper hill path**

**CROSS-SECTION OF
TIE STEPS:**

Gravel to be placed
under and in back of
treads to improve
drainage with the goal
of elongating tread
service (dry rot is
slowed).

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: ["Janet Byron"](#); ["Brian Richmond"](#); ["Avis Codron"](#)
Subject: Comments for 2/17 EC Council Meeting from El Cerrito Trail Trekkers re: public path building
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:47:05 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

To: City Clerk
From: David Gyorke, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers Public Paths Committee

Please accept these comments for tonight's meeting and also enter the attached Tassajara Park trail plan into the public record.

I am David Gyorke, a 30+ year citizen of El Cerrito. I have a background in hillside trail building in the East Bay Hills through my years of volunteer trail work with the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association (BPWA). Currently I am a member of the BPWA Board of Directors.

In the past 2 years, I have been involved with the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers Organization (ECTT). I volunteered to lead the building of paths for the ECTT. The organization has been trying to work with the City of El Cerrito City Manager and Director of Engineering to get the path building program up and going. There are twelve (12) paths identified to be built, on locations outlined as City right-of-way's per the Accessor's maps,

In a good faith manner, ECTT has attempted to partner with the municipal staff to build paths in our own city. Unfortunately, this has become a stalled programmed for reasons that remain non-transparent to ECTT other than a "much greater than warranted anxiety" over liability to the City.

I believe there has been a progression of added burden applied to the ECTT program, notwithstanding that other El Cerrito volunteer organization such as Friends of Five Creeks, Friends of Baxter Creek, Friends of Hillside Natural Area have not had the same anxiety (legal reviews, program documentation) applied to their work... and they use the same equipment and volunteers as ECTT intends to use. Also, other volunteer led programs have demonstrated wonderful outcomes such as Sundar Shadi Display team *regardless* of whether the work occurred on PGE land or El Cerrito public land.

The El Cerrito paths are simple pathways to build. Many of the Berkeley Paths have sections that are steeper and have successfully utilized the very same design approach intended for El Cerrito paths. Berkeley has no review by city engineers, no attorneys, no over-arching concern for volunteer injuries or users ...for all 130+ paths. No overthinking of liability of path work... just paths that East Bay citizens enjoy using very much.

There is a basic **disagreement on the risk** associated with path design and/or

building with ECTT volunteers.

The constant “drumming of liability concerns” for the path workers and path design ignores the reality that it is a simple application of “common gardening tools” used by common home owners for the unbuilt paths of El Cerrito. It has been communicated that the current designs will follow the “no permit required” rules already stated in the city’s permit guidelines for retaining walls. (Less than 2 ft high, above grade on hillsides of 2Horiz / 1Vert (26.57 deg), then a building permit is **NOT** required... [https://elcerrito.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21640/RETAINING-WALL-PLAN-SUBMITTAL-REQUIREMENTS?bidId=\).](https://elcerrito.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21640/RETAINING-WALL-PLAN-SUBMITTAL-REQUIREMENTS?bidId=).)

Why are attorneys being asked by the City Manager & Engineer, along with consultants, to get involved (at taxpayer expense) when many other communities have decided that their hillside path program is ***an extremely low risk*** and is not worth the cost of city funds. We have incurred delay after delay for over a year.

We want answers... but what we really want is “the-go-ahead” to ***build three paths*** as a pilot program to demonstrate the program capability. Evaluate the outcome with those who have concerns. Then have the El Cerrito community (young and old) use these three paths to enjoy.

Regards,

David Gyorke



From: [Howdy Goudey](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment not on the agenda - Electrify My Block Program
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:49:01 PM
Attachments: [Electrify My Block Overview - El Cerrito.pdf](#)

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

Dear Mayor Quinto and Council members,

On January 13th, the City's [Environmental Quality Committee](#) (EQC) received a presentation ([presentation slides attached](#)) from Brian Barnacle with the [Building Decarbonization Coalition](#), the organization implementing [Electrify My Block Program](#) for PG&E, a unique pilot currently limited to select portions of Contra Costa County, including eligibility for up to \$35,000 in electrification rebates to 96 El Cerrito addresses in 11 specific areas. I am a member of the EQC but sending this comment as a public comment not representing the EQC.

The Electrify My Block Program is an important early opportunity to be part of the growing momentum, involving the State and utilities, to take the opportunity to transition gas infrastructure at the time of costly maintenance action, and instead retire it and invest in all-electric buildings conversion, by using the funds that would have been spent rebuilding gas infrastructure to instead pay for electrification home upgrades in the affected locations.

You may also be familiar with [SB 1221](#) and the very similar emerging pilot program from the CPUC and utilities to implement SB 1221. As far as I understand, Electrify My Block is an even earlier pilot of this idea and it is important to engage this opportunity because we are lucky enough to be one of the few eligible communities at the moment, and contributing to the success of the program will be crucial to the development, and wider deployment, of this transition strategy at large scale. It is important to note that utilities like PG&E are supporting this idea of infrastructure transition, as they see the financial burden of maintaining two infrastructure networks as not viable under the projected gas consumption reductions in coming decades.

At the February 10th EQC meeting last week, I was hoping we would be able to further plan how our volunteer committee could support the Electrify My Block program in El Cerrito, but instead we were informed by staff that a decision was made by the city to not support this program any further with staff time. I was very disappointed by this decision, made completely independently of committee consultation/input, after the committee was very positive about the program during our January meeting. This program fits squarely within the EQC work plan which includes a strong component of building electrification policy, outreach and education. And, of course, it is also an important opportunity to implement the [City's Climate Action and Adaptation](#) (CAAP) plan. The [El Cerrito Climate Dashboard](#) identifies two related adopted actions (BE1.3 and BE3.3) under the category "action needed," meaning they were identified in the adopted CAAP for action in the current phase, but no action has been taken yet. While I understand that there are limited staff resources to implement the CAAP, as adopted, showing support for and the Electrify My Block Program, and the subsequent SB 1221 programs, is an important action for the City to take and it should require very modest staff time, as the main thing that needs to happen is for Council to endorse the program/s as something the City recognizes as a positive Climate Action, as well as being fiscally prudent for the City and utility rate payers. This will help with outreach (largely by

others) to give residents more confidence in the program and boost adoption.

A motion was passed unanimously at the Feb EQC meeting to send Council a formal recommendation. You will see this come to your March 3rd, meeting, but I thought it was important to raise your awareness of this topic earlier, so that you can begin to learn more about it and hopefully start conversations that will lead to direction for staff to have the city endorse and support these programs within the available resources.

Thanks for your time and consideration,
Howdy Goudey
El Cerrito



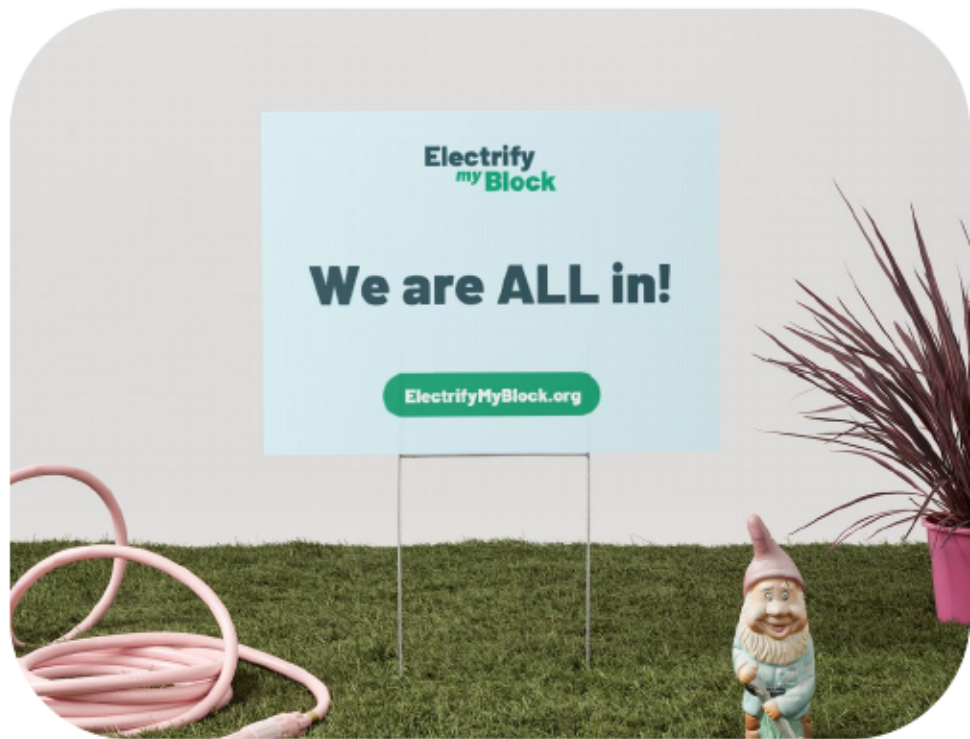
Program Overview

January 13, 2026

**Electrify
my Block**

Agenda

- Background and Context
- EMB Program Overview
- How You Can Help



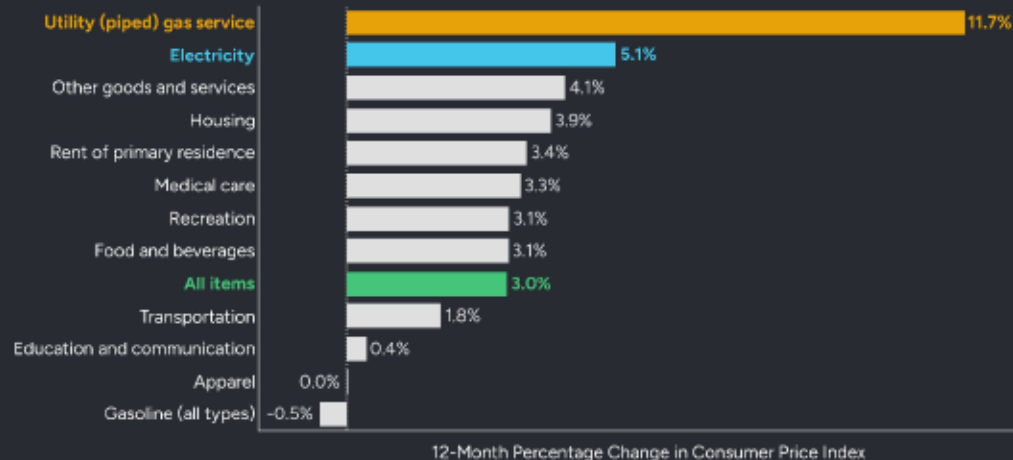
We're At A Fork In The Road



Electrify
my **Block**

Gas rates are increasing twice as fast as electric.

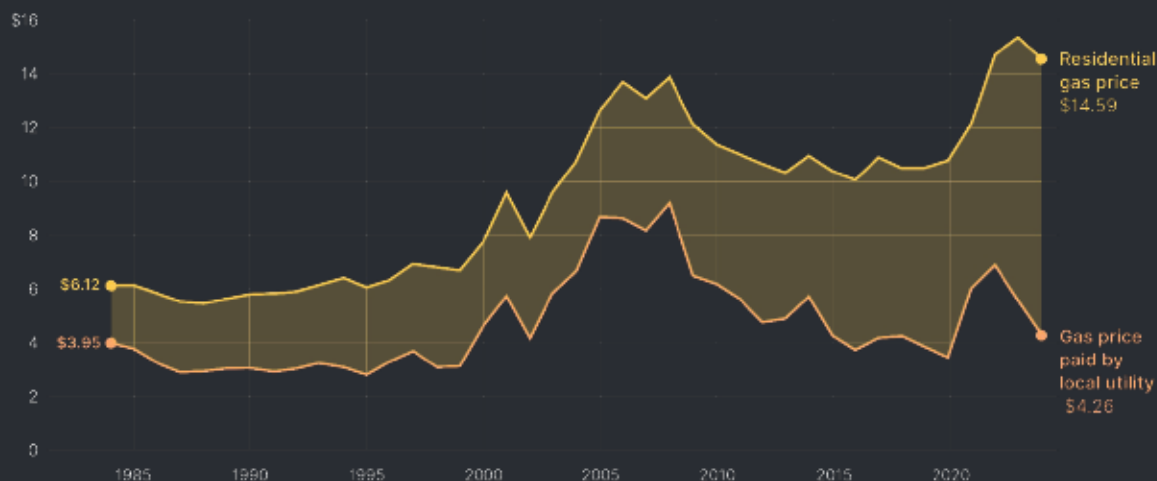
Over the last 12 months ending Sep 2025, **utility gas bills** have increased at double the rate of **electricity**



Rising costs are driven by infrastructure.

Residential natural gas bills pay for more than just gas

Price per thousand cubic feet



Declining demand and rising costs is an affordability problem.

GAS DEMAND BY 2050

 **11%**

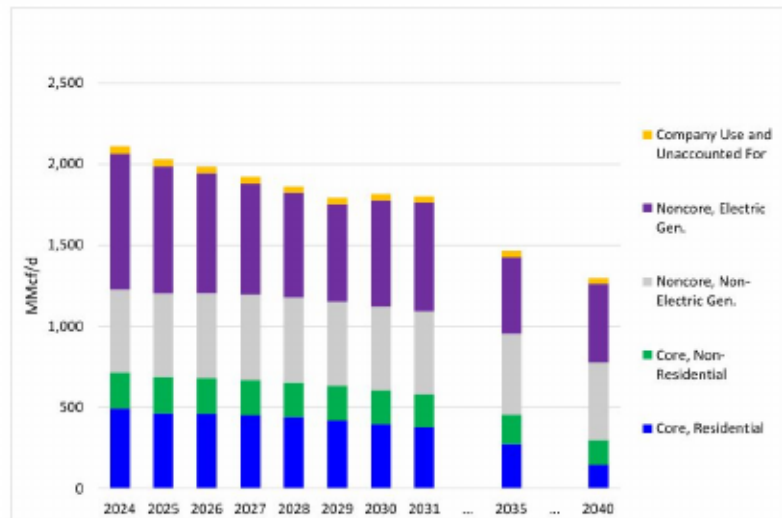
GAS RATES BY 2050

 **75%**

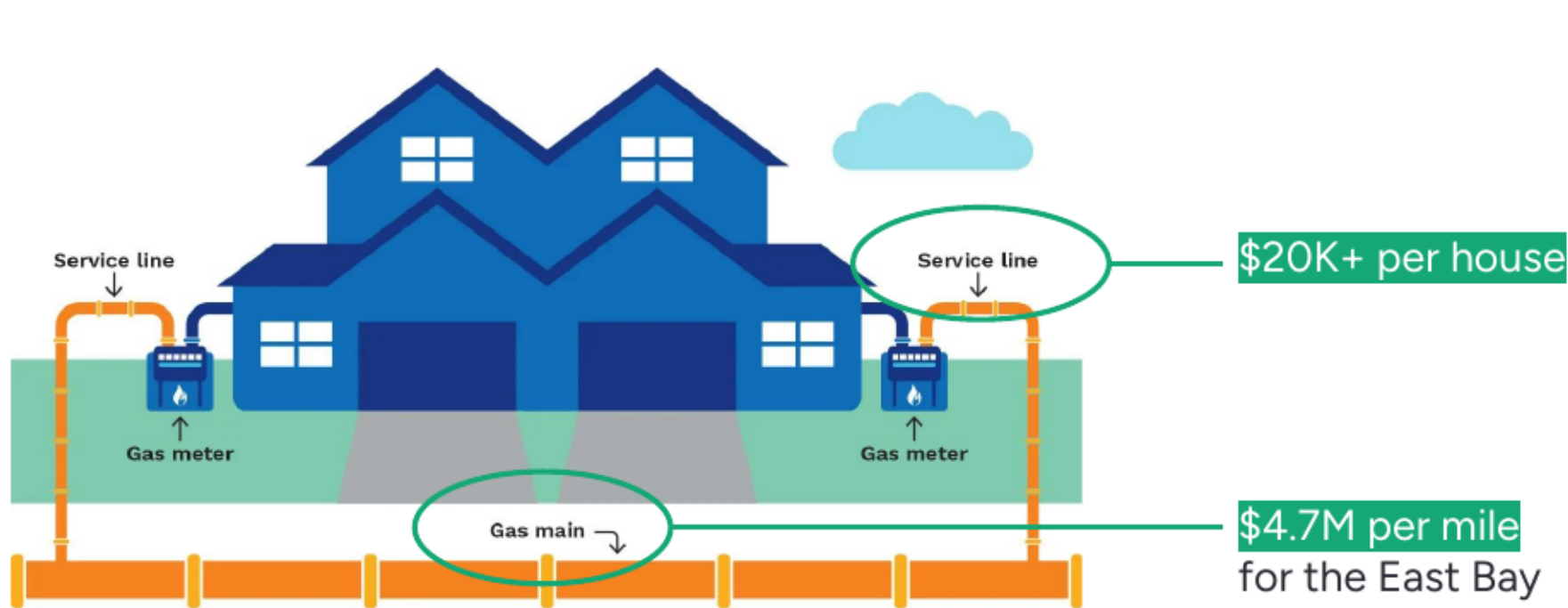
PG&E is forecasting declining demand and rising costs.

"By 2040, annual residential gas throughput is projected to be **70% lower** than forecasted 2024 throughput."

"The projected decline in total demand could result in gas system operating and maintenance costs being allocated over lower usage, causing customer gas rates to increase. Consequently, PG&E is actively developing programs to reduce gas system costs..."

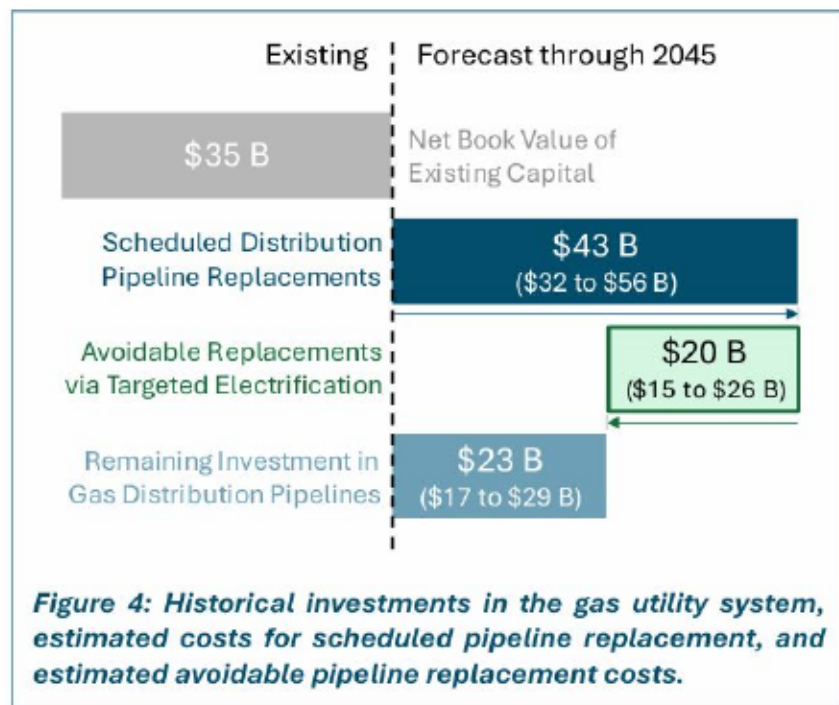


What Are The Costs?



Are The Costs Avoidable?

At scale across California, we estimate that targeted building electrification and gas decommissioning projects, implemented where feasible, could avoid \$20 billion in gas pipeline replacement costs by 2045 while only affecting 3% of current gas customers. In 2024, these savings would average approximately \$32,000 per affected customer.



Opportunity

Receive up to \$35,000 to cover cost of electrification:

- Energy efficient electric appliances
- Panel and wiring upgrades
- Insulation
- More!

The Catch:

Everyone in the zone must agree to join!

How It Works



1. Sign Up

Fill out the interest form



2. Walk Through

Complete your home or building assessment



3. Upgrade

Get your in-home or building installation



4. Quality Check

Enjoy your new appliances

2025 Metrics

- 31 zones engaged
- 1400+ doors canvassed
- 21 outreach events
- 173 interest forms submitted
- 50+ home assessments completed



Key Learnings

- Nothing is free; emphasize the upper bound
- This is not a scam; quickly tell people why they qualify (and emphasize choice)
- PG&E brand legitimizes the effort
- Awareness of electrification is mixed; be ready to listen and talk
- Implementation delays stall outreach progress
- Language and age require nuanced considerations

2026 Priorities



Accelerate momentum
where we have it



Target small zones with
high propensity
households

(S1) Take data to the streets—turn 100+ lines of data into insights for outreach staff.

Address	Name	Language pref	Building Type	Years in home	All-Electric?	Has Solar ?	Has Cooling ?	CARE Rate?	HPWH Bill Savings	HVAC HP Bill Savings	Energy use rank (all ZEEP)	Energy use rank (within zone)
			Res	4.6	no	no	yes	no	-\$148 - \$33	\$147 - \$197	17%	0%
			Res	11.2	no	no	yes	no	\$126 -\$140	\$313 - \$380	73%	75%
			Res	6.9	no	no	yes	no	\$73 - \$93	\$490-\$1358	72%	50%
			Res	3.2	no	no	yes	yes	\$161 -\$217	-\$966 - \$56	84%	100%
			Res	6.3	no	yes	yes	no	-\$148 - \$33	\$147 - \$197	54%	25%

(2) Foster neighbor-to-neighbor interactions that build confidence and momentum.

- Champion orientation and messaging guides
- Collaborative planning
- Warm handoffs
- Neighborhood gatherings
- Zoom meetings
- All-electric home tours
- Resident testimonials
- Yard signs



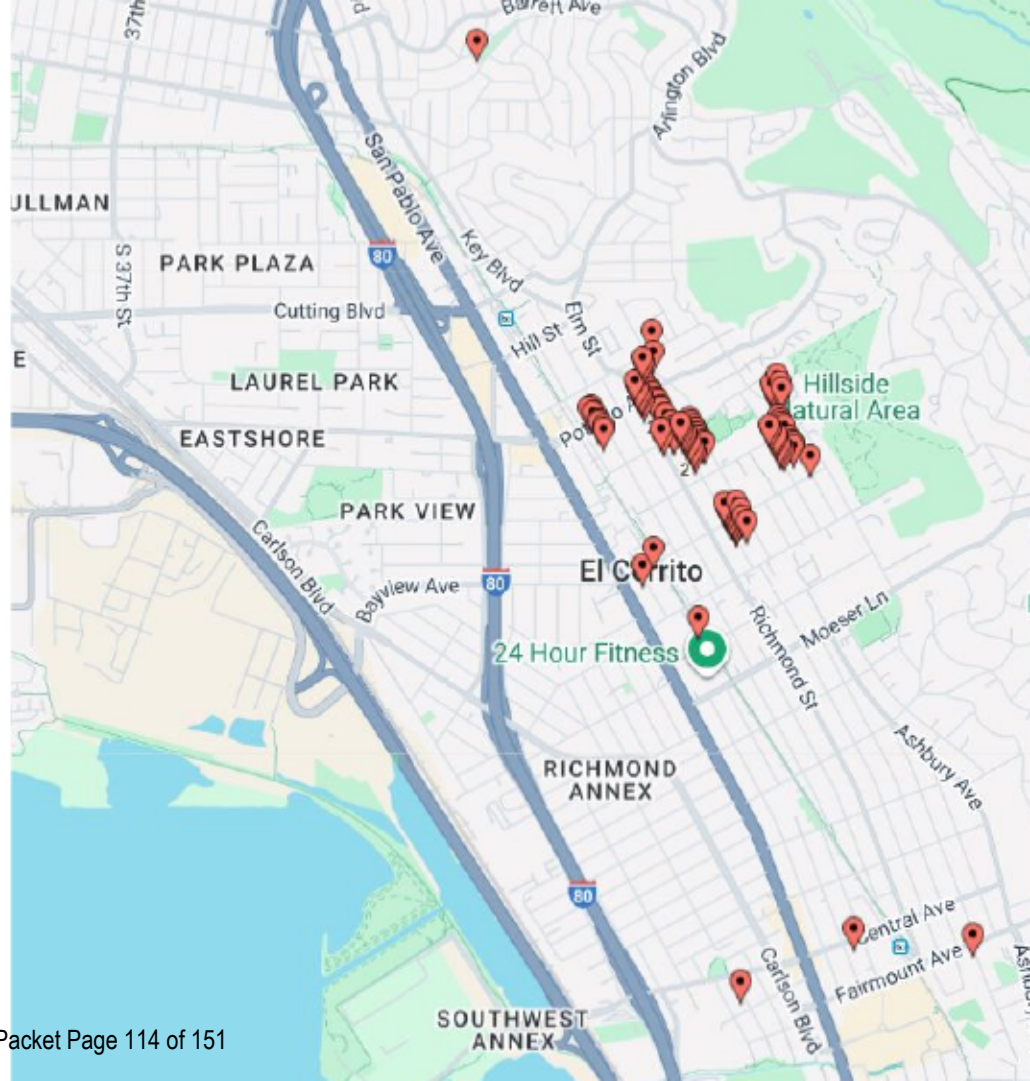
(3) Call, email, zoom—it is a cost-effective and flexible alternative.



- Phone banking with call targets (ideally with PG&E support)
- Scripts with quick pathways to completing interest forms
- Follow up cadence for residents who expressed interest at events
- Email reminders tied to key milestones
- Zoom calls to work around peoples' schedule

El Cerrito Zones

- 11 zones
 - Smallest: 1 address
 - Largest: 16 addresses
- 96 addresses
- 2 high scoring zones



How You Can Help

- Be a program partner (co-branding materials, partnering in outreach, promotion and recognition, etc.)
- Letter of support from the City
- Help us connect with people in the zone
- Connect us to trusted messengers in El Cerrito
- Help us canvass – planning to knock 40 doors in last 2 weeks of the month
- Co-hosting and/or attending a neighborhood event
- Talk about the pilot on owned channels (newsletter, website, etc.)

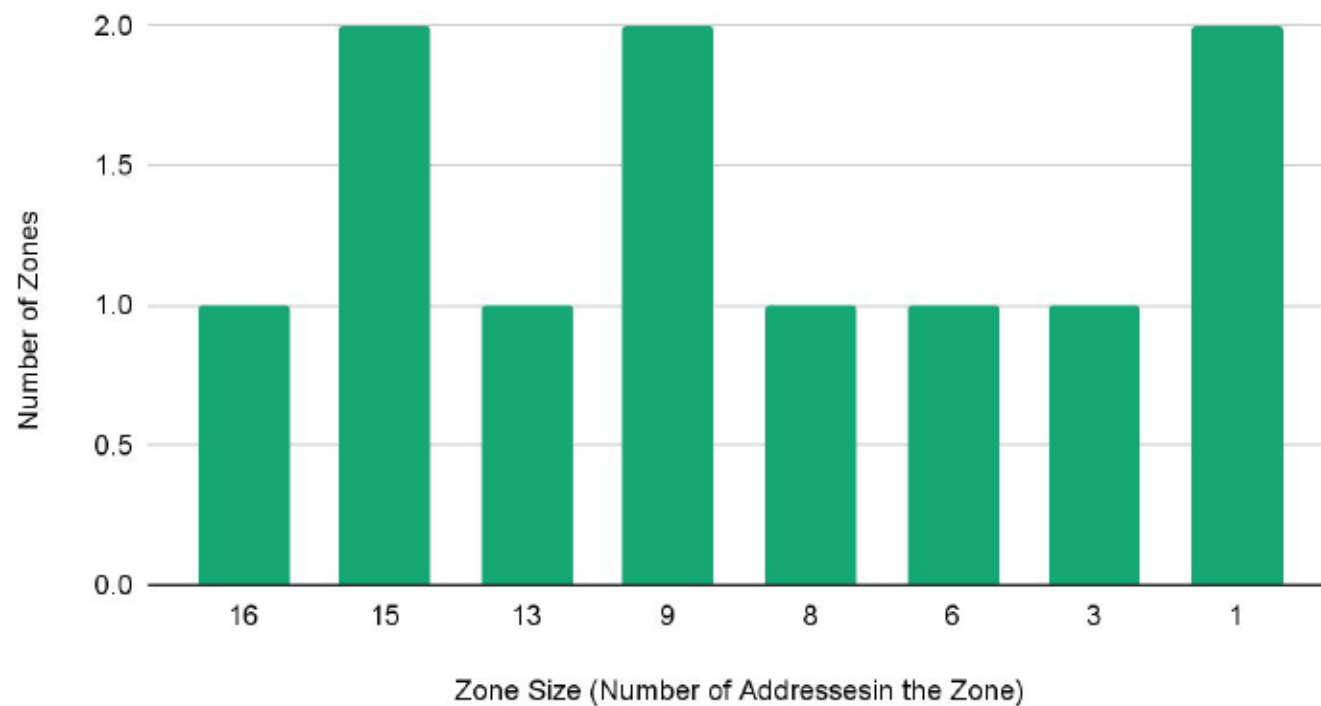
Thank You

For more information, contact:

Brian Barnacle
Manager Director
Building Decarbonization Coalition
Brian@buildingdecarb.org
(707) 373-6414

Electrify *my* Block

Number of Zones vs. Zone Size



Recommended Mid-Year Adjustments Fiscal Year 2025-26

February 17, 2026



Summary of Recommended Amendments



Fund	Fund Name	Department	Description	Appropriation Increase
101	General Fund	Public Works	Emergency tree trimming and repairs from winter storms	\$30,000
101	General Fund	Recreation	Pickleball fee transfer to CIP	\$7,500
101	General Fund	Finance	RDA / Successor Agency reconciliation	\$1,045,493
101	General Fund	City Council / City Manager's Office	9212 Library Initiative fiscal impact report	\$29,500
101	General Fund	Human Resources	Community Development Director recruitment	\$30,000
Total General Fund (101)				\$1,142,493
201	Gas Tax Fund	Public Works	Traffic consulting (speed survey, smart signals, evaluations)	\$45,000
205	Measure J Storm Drain	Public Works	CCTV inspection and sediment removal	\$25,000
207	Measure H Park & Recreation Facilities	Public Works / Recreation	Playground equipment repairs	\$50,000
222	C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	Police	Replacement firearms	\$41,412
225	Donations Fund	Recreation	Fourth of July event costs (donation-funded)	\$40,000
501	Integrated Waste Management Fund	Public Works	Transfer to Vehicle / Equipment Replacement Fund	\$250,000

General Fund as of December 31, 2025



- Revenues at 42% of budget, consistent with normal mid-year timing
- Expenditures at 52% of budget, aligned with typical front-loaded costs and planned spending patterns
- Personnel and insurance costs driving year-over-year expenditure growth, most other categories trending close to budget



Approved General Fund Budget Amendments



- Amendments approved by the City Council after budget adoption
- Includes amendments approved as of February 3, 2026
- Offset by original projected surplus of \$15,774, total use of General Fund balance of \$1,658,972

Department	Description	Amount
Citywide	Purchase Order Roll Forward	\$ 291,695
City Council	Audio-Visual System Improvements	317,535
Public Works/Recreation	Initial Swim Center Allocation	183,300
Fire	Local 1230 new MOU	120,116
Public Works/Recreation	Final Swim Center Allocation	762,100
Total Expenditure Increases		\$ 1,674,746

Proposed General Fund Amendments



- Library Tax Initiative Report (\$29,500)
 - Expert consultant support for the 9212 Fiscal Impact Report on the Library Initiative
- Executive Recruitment (\$30,000)
 - Professional recruitment services for the Community Development Director position
- Emergency Tree Maintenance (\$30,000)
 - Urgent tree trimming and hazard mitigation needs to reduce public safety risks
- Pickleball Fee Transfer to CIP (\$7,500)
 - Transfers collected user fees to the appropriate capital fund to support court maintenance, as required by signed MOU

Successor Agency Dissolution

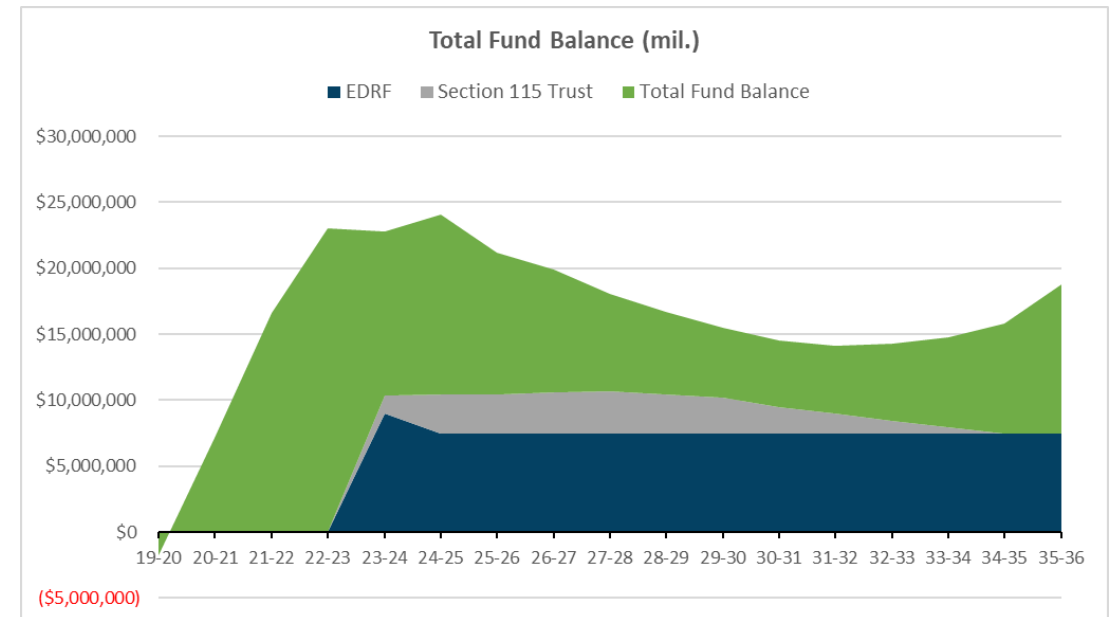
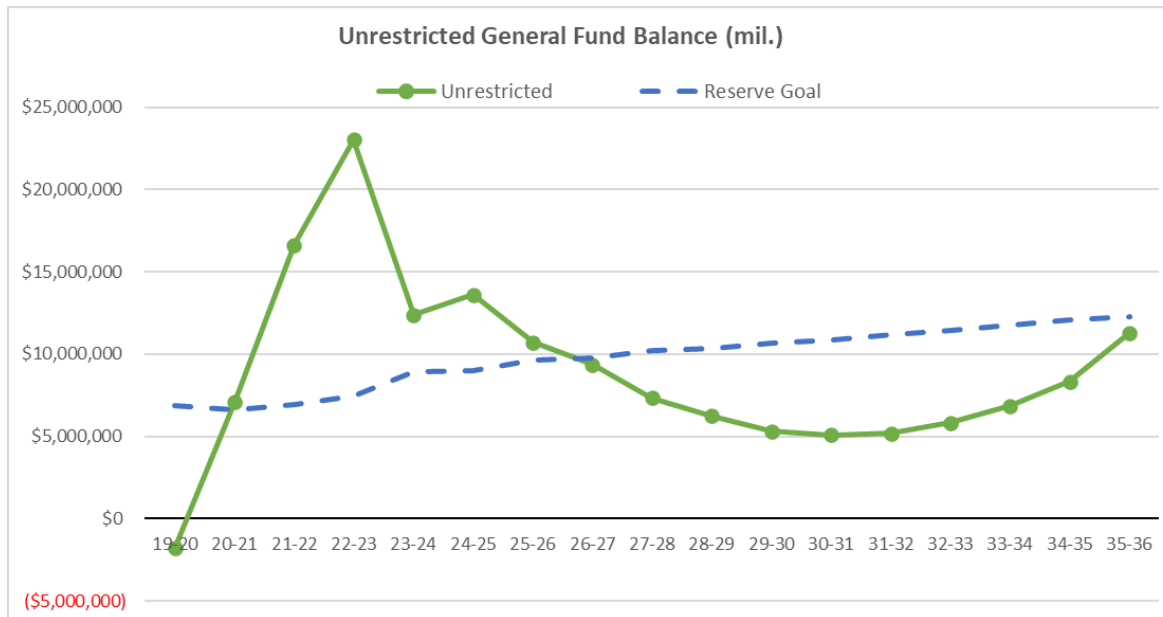
- Redevelopment Agency (RDA) dissolved in 2012; subsequent State “True Up” and Due Diligence Review (DDR) disputes over allowable use of tax increment
- City prevailed on initial \$1.76M True Up demand, but later State DDR rulings disallowed additional transfers and costs
- General Fund previously transferred \$1.32M to cover Successor Agency deficits after denied charges
- Successor Agency now fully dissolved; all debt obligations paid and no further Recognized Obligation Payment Schedule (ROPS) approvals available
- Recommended transfer of \$1.04M from the General Fund to cover remaining denied obligations and legal fees

General Fund Balance

- FY25: \$24.25M →
FY26: \$21.45M
- Unassigned Reserves: 19%
not including Pension Trust
or EDRF
- \$1.2M discretionary reserves
projected at year-end for
FY26
- Includes all proposed GF
amendments

Fund Balance Projection			
FY25 General Fund - Total Fund Balance		\$	24,250,508
EDRF		(7,500,000)	
Section 115		(2,960,245)	
Non-Spendable		(175,376)	
FY26 Projected Revenue		53,779,792	
FY26 Projected Expenditures		(56,581,257)	
Change in fund balance			(2,801,465)
Projected Total Ending FY26 Fund Balance			21,449,043
EDRF (Internally Restricted)		(7,500,000)	
Section 115 (Restricted)		(2,960,245)	
Non-Spendable		(175,376)	(10,635,621)
Projected FY26 Unrestricted Fund Balance			10,813,422
FY26 Expenditure Proposed Budget		56,581,257	
FY26 17% Reserve Goal			(9,618,814)
Projected discretionary as of June 30, 2026			1,194,608
FY 26 Projected Ending Total Fund Balance			21,449,043
Projected unassigned (less Section 115)			10,813,422
Projected unassigned percent as of June 30, 2026			19%

General Fund Forecast



- Forecast based on FY 2026 amended budget
- Includes all recommended mid-year adjustments, CalPERS pension obligations, and all existing long-term debt
- Assumes use of Section 115 trust without additional contributions

Other Amendments



- Gas Tax Fund (\$45,000)
 - Traffic signal and engineering consultant support to maintain system reliability and compliance.
- Measure J Storm Drain Fund (\$25,000)
 - Storm drain system inspection (CCTV) and sediment removal to maintain capacity and prevent flooding
- Measure H Parks Fund (\$50,000)
 - Urgent playground repairs and maintenance to preserve safety and extend asset life
- COPS Grant Fund (\$41,412)
 - Grant funding for replacement firearms consistent with equipment lifecycle needs
- Donations Fund (\$40,000)
 - Authorizes spending of donated funds for the July 4 event; fully offset by revenue.
- Integrated Waste Management Fund (\$500,000)
 - Includes \$250,000 current-year appropriation increase
 - Transfers funds to the Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Fund to support fleet replacement

Note: All funds have sufficient available balance for these expenses, and all are allowable expenses under each fund's restricted uses.

Conclusion

- Recommendation:
Adopt resolution
amending FY 2025-26
appropriations
- Total increase: \$1.59
million across all
funds, including \$1.14
million from the
General Fund

Fund	Beginning Fund Balance	Proposed Mid-Year Appropriation Increase	Projected Ending Fund Balance
101 – General Fund	\$24,250,508	\$1,142,493	\$21,449,043
201 – Gas Tax Fund	473,679	45,000	\$366,758
205 – Measure J Storm Drain	594,133	25,000	\$341,972
207 – Measure H Park & Rec Facilities	480,807	50,000	\$288,783
222 – C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	366,751	41,412	\$40,326
225 – Donations Fund	113,781.87*	40,000	\$73,782
501 – Integrated Waste Management	4,280,289.00	250,000.00	\$3,165,406

*Funds available for use. Donations are recorded as unearned revenue until an eligible expense is incurred.

Thank you!



From: [Rebecca Milliken](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments, 2/19/2026, Agenda Item #4
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 3:23:38 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I write to urge you to place the **El Cerrito Library Initiative** on the **June 2 ballot** to consolidate the special election with the Statewide Primary. I attended the very informative January 20 Council meeting and appreciate the effort the City Clerk and staff put into clearly explaining the ballot options, providing examples of modern libraries from other Contra Costa cities, and outlining various library replacement scenarios.

While I understand that there is an additional cost to the City to place the Library Initiative on the June ballot, the results will provide the necessary information for city staff and the community to move forward.

The City has been planning for a new library for decades. Let's get the information we need about the voters' will to fund the project sooner rather than later.

On January 20, I listened to the concerns of some of my fellow residents who oppose a library tax, and I realized that misinformation or a lack of information may be driving some of their fears. By placing the Library Initiative on the June ballot, we can begin the work needed now to engage and educate El Cerrito residents so they can make an informed decision.

While some residents are opposed to any property tax increases, everyone who spoke on January 20 expressed their love of libraries and the importance of a modern library in El Cerrito. Please help move the Library Initiative forward by placing it on the June 2 ballot.

Thank you,
Rebecca Milliken



From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Holly Charléty](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#)
Cc: [William Ktsanes](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Item 3A: Forever Parcel Tax
Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 9:33:39 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

I ask the people who wrote this ambiguous and ill-conceived petition to withdraw it. It will not lead to a new library. It is simply a tax supplement to the general fund

When I spoke to the petition gatherers, I was told the proposed library would be located in El Cerrito Plaza and would cost \$21 million. Tax advocates also incorrectly stated that the tax would be limited to 30 years.

Given that signatures were gathered using demonstrably incorrect information, the proposal should be withdrawn.

What we now have is a proposal that would give the City Council the authority to raise taxes every year indefinitely. Yet the tax advocates have provided no clearly stated timeline explaining how a library would actually be built in Plaza Parcel C West. Instead, they speak in abstract terms about how wonderful libraries are.

But this ballot measure is not about abstract ideas. It is about spending money on a specific library in El Cerrito.

Since the advocates for higher taxes will not provide a detailed timeline, I will.

Assume the tax passes in June 2026.

- **May 2026** – Likely deadline to apply for Strategic Growth Council (SGC) funding. These grants are highly competitive, especially because El Cerrito is not a disadvantaged community. The application process is extremely complex, as City officials acknowledged in May 2025.
- **June 2026** – Tax passes.
- **July 2026** – Citizen committee forms.
- **November 2026** – Regional transportation tax is voted on, which will affect BART and potentially Parcel C West.
- **May 2027** – Next SGC grant deadline.
- **July 2027** – Citizen committee issues report.
- **May 2028** – Developer receives grant or loan from the City.
- **May 2028** – Developer applies for SGC grant.
- **December 2028** – Developer miraculously wins SGC grant on the first attempt (other El Cerrito projects did not).
- **January 2030** – City sells bonds.

The City's consultant estimated that the cost of a Plaza library in January 2027 would be approximately \$37 million, assuming a 6% annual construction escalator. If the library instead opens in 2030, the cost would exceed \$44 million using the City's own consultant assumptions.

For illustration:

January 2027

Principal: \$37,224,000
Interest: 5%
Term: 30 years
Annual payment: \$2,421,475

January 2030

Principal: \$44,334,380
Interest: 5%
Term: 30 years
Annual payment: \$2,884,015

Note that I am using an extremely optimistic 5% interest rate. That rate may not be attainable. There is significant interest rate risk.

Now consider operating costs. In November 2023, operating costs were estimated at \$900,000 annually. For January 2027, the estimate was reduced to \$700,000 — a difficult number to accept, but I will use it.

Applying a 6% annual escalator for three + two years results in approximately \$936,000 for a January 2032 opening, assuming two years of construction.

That means the City would need roughly \$3.8 million per year for bond payments plus operating costs — and that assumes the unrealistic 5% interest rate. A 17 cent per square foot tax is insufficient using the city's varying estimates of how much the tax would bring in.

To those promoting higher taxes: if you also genuinely support building a new library, please withdraw this

proposal and return with something that can actually work. Perhaps start with a 40-cent-per-square-foot tax and build from there.

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [No Reply](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Submission
Date: Sunday, February 15, 2026 4:53:55 PM

This sender is trusted.

Submitted by: Chelsi Micaela Sparti
Email Address: [REDACTED]

Commented on event: <https://elcerritoca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/930/overview>

If you are having trouble viewing the URL above, cut and paste the string into your browser window.

User comment: I live in El Cerrito, a few blocks from the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station. I fully support a modern library in El Cerrito. I urge the City Council to do the following today: 1) Place the library measure on the June ballot. 2) Appropriate funds for a bond consultant. 3) Designate one of the non-voting Task Force members to serve as an independent facilitator; perhaps the County Library Commission Representative. The facilitator should *not* be an elected official. 4) Open the applications for library task force members *now*. I agree with Mayor Pro tem Saltzman and Councilmember Wysinger that we should launch the task force work when funding is approved. Though the visionary action is to prepare *today* and have a task force seated with members, ready to begin work the moment funding is secured. Success for our City depends on maximizing time. Placing the Library initiative on the June ballot is necessary to leverage library initiative funding: - We can write stronger grants to individual donors, foundations, and the State with a June initiative - It allows us to pay for 2026-2027 expenses like the bond consultant, and - To pay for the June ballot initiative itself. - June gives us DOUBLE the time for public engagement and negotiation with developers. - More time means a better deal. El Cerrito City Council, let's do this!

From: [No Reply](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Submission
Date: Sunday, February 15, 2026 5:09:10 PM

This sender is trusted.

Submitted by: Jesús Buil-Macarty

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Commented on event: <https://elcerritoca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/930/overview>

If you are having trouble viewing the URL above, cut and paste the string into your browser window.

User comment: I live two blocks from the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station. I fully support a modern library in El Cerrito. I urge the City Council to do the following today: 1) Place the library measure on the June ballot. 2) Appropriate funds for a bond consultant. 3) Designate one non-voting Task Force member to serve as an independent facilitator; perhaps the County Library Commission Representative. The facilitator should *not* be an elected official. 4) Open the applications for library task force members *now*. Preparation today with seated task force members means they will be ready to begin work as soon as funding is secured. Success for our City depends on maximizing time. Placing the Library initiative on the June ballot is necessary to leverage library initiative funding: - Our City and partners can write stronger grants to individual donors, foundations, and the State with a June initiative - It allows the City to pay for 2026-2027 expenses like the bond consultant, and - The City could pay for the June ballot initiative with initiative funds. - June gives us DOUBLE the time for public engagement and negotiation with developers. - More time means a better deal.

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Holly Charléty](#)
Cc: [William Ktsanes](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment. Item 8B Committee Formation (2/17/2026)
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 9:43:14 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

I oppose the wasteful spending on a committee. The proposal as currently drafted, which is unamendable, is flawed. Instead please draft a resolution that asks parcel tax proponents to redraft their petition to come up with something more reasonable.

Since it will be almost impossible to build a library that is based on the petition, please stop calling it a “library tax”. Doing so demonstrates bias. This will simply be a tax that supports excessive general fund spending.

Below is an explanation as to why the current draft is unworkable.

The El Cerrito draft is based on the San Rafael measure, but it differs in fundamental ways.

❑First: What San Rafael’s Measure P Actually Authorizes

San Rafael Measure P authorizes:

Core Purpose

- Planning
- Construction

- Equipping and furnishing
- Bond financing
- Upgrades to branch libraries (if funds remain)

Important Limitation

San Rafael explicitly states:

“Tax proceeds must not be spent on administrator salaries or other operating expenses.”

That is a hard prohibition.

Financing Authority

San Rafael allows:

- Bond issuance
- Bond issuance costs
- Architectural/engineering/legal
- Litigation costs
- Construction management
- Staff development and training
- Contingency
- Temporary relocation costs

So yes — San Rafael includes many of the same “soft cost” categories.

2 Now: El Cerrito’s Initiative Scope

El Cerrito authorizes:

- Planning, permitting, environmental review
 - Construction
 - Furnishing
 - **City library operating costs for 10 years**
 - Bond issuance
 - Capitalized interest
 - Credit enhancement
 - Interest rate hedging
 - Election reimbursement
 - Legal defense of the tax
 - Administrative costs
 - Staff training
 - Relocation costs
-

3 Why El Cerrito Is Not “Typical” Even If It Is Modeled on San Rafael

There are three structural differences that matter.

A. El Cerrito Includes 10 Years of Operating Costs — San Rafael Does Not

San Rafael:

“Tax proceeds must not be spent on administrator salaries or other operating expenses.”

El Cerrito:

Allows operating costs for ten full years after completion.

Why This Matters

Most California library parcel taxes fall into two categories:

1. Operations-only (like Oakland, Berkeley)
2. Capital-only (like San Rafael)

El Cerrito is a hybrid.

Hybrid measures are less typical because:

- Bond markets prefer clean capital pledges.
- Operating expenses reduce debt service cushion.
- It creates internal competition: construction vs operations.

That materially expands fiscal risk.

B. El Cerrito Explicitly Authorizes Election Reimbursement and Legal Defense

El Cerrito allows:

- Reimbursement of election costs
- Paying to defend the tax in court
- Paying attorneys' fees
- Paying operating costs related to defending the tax

San Rafael's Measure P does **not** contain an explicit

election reimbursement + legal defense clause in the same direct form in the “Use” section.

Why This Matters

Election reimbursement is unusual in capital library parcel taxes.

Legal defense language appears occasionally, but not always as explicitly broad.

These items:

- Do not build the library.
- Do not operate the library.
- Can be open-ended if litigation occurs.

That increases fiscal exposure.

C. El Cerrito’s Financing Language Is Slightly Broader

El Cerrito authorizes:

- Capitalized interest
- Reserve funds
- Credit enhancement
- Interest rate hedging
- “Any other financing costs”

San Rafael authorizes bond issuance and related costs but does not emphasize hedging/credit enhancement language in the same way in the summary section.

Why This Matters

Interest rate hedging and credit enhancement:

- Introduce counterparty risk.
- Introduce termination risk.
- Can create unexpected liabilities.

These tools are sophisticated and are not standard in smaller municipal parcel tax library financings.

That expands complexity and risk.

4. The Real Difference: Financial Context

San Rafael:

- Larger tax base
- Larger annual revenue (~\$6.37M estimated)
- Larger population (~60,000)
- Larger project scale

El Cerrito:

- Smaller tax base
- Tighter DSCR constraints (based on your prior documents)
- Mixed capital + operating pledge

When a measure has:

- Thin debt service coverage,
- Operating draws from the same tax stream,
- And broad financing flexibility,

Risk increases materially compared to a capital-only parcel tax.

5 What Is Typical in California Library Parcel Taxes?

Typical features:

- Very narrow purpose clause
- No operating costs (if capital measure)
- No election reimbursement clause
- No interest rate hedging authority
- Simple bond issuance language
- Strict “no supplanting” clauses

San Rafael fits the “capital-only with upgrades” model.

El Cerrito is:

Capital + 10-year operations + election reimbursement + litigation defense + advanced financing tools.

That is not the standard template.

6 Does This Materially Expand Fiscal Risk?

Yes, in three ways:

1. Operating Draw Reduces Debt Cushion

Ten years of operating costs compete with debt service.

2. Litigation + Election Reimbursement Is Open-Ended

These costs are not capped in the text.

3. Advanced Financing Tools Increase Complexity

Hedging + credit enhancement increase risk surface.

The difference is not cosmetic.

It changes how the tax stream behaves financially.

Bottom Line

Even though El Cerrito borrowed structure from San Rafael:

San Rafael = Capital-only construction measure with strict prohibition on operating expenses.

El Cerrito = Hybrid capital + operations + legal + administrative + advanced financing authorization.

That combination is materially less typical in California library parcel taxes and materially expands fiscal flexibility — which in turn expands fiscal risk.

Ira Sharenow

El Cerrito, CA

PS The analysis assisted by ChatGPT

From: [Patrick](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [UNKNOWN SENDER] Public Comments - agenda item 8 (Library initiative)
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 12:13:01 PM

Subject: Public Comments

Honorable Mayor Quinto and Council:

My wife and I have lived in El Cerrito for over 35 years and raised our family here. We are strongly in favor of having a new or renovated library in El Cerrito, if it can be constructed and operated in a fiscally responsible manner.

We understand that about 70% of the approximately 2,500 citizens, that submitted signatures to qualify the library initiative for the ballot, indicate they support building a new library as our city's top priority. So let's hammer out a plan, estimate our costs, refine, refine, refine and see what we can afford, right? But here we are heading into an election, to fund the library construction and ten years of operating costs, without a clear understanding of what we are voting for beyond the special property tax increase.

Below I am reiterating several points raised by responsible neighbors and some noted by Councilmember Ktsanes at the January 20, 2026 council meeting.

1.
Consider our financial past and future. El Cerrito's designation of being in *serious financial distress* (by the California State Auditor) was just removed in December 2024. Kudos to our city leaders and staff for working hard to improve our fiscal health and financial management. Surely we should proceed cautiously before taking on any poorly defined, long-term, significant financial obligations.
2.
Why the rush to a June 2026 election? It was distressing to hear how quickly the council (other than Councilmember Ktsanes) dismissed the idea of holding off on the library initiative until the November election. Deferring to November would save \$80,000 and allow more time to refine cost estimates and maybe even eliminate a few of the five library scenarios. Also, the November date would allow for greater voter engagement and turnout. Why is that a bad thing?
3.
Recognize the rapidly escalating construction costs. As others have noted, library construction costs have increased about 75% from the prior 2021 new library estimates (\$20 - \$25 million) to our 2026 high end scenarios (\$35 - \$48 million). The external factors driving construction costs (e.g., materials, labor, supply chains, tariffs, inflation) are expected to continue rising over the next five plus years with the best case scenario suggesting moderate cost increases. With all the various

pressing needs our city has, can we really allocate what could be \$50 - \$70 million towards a new library? Or flipping the question, how much new library can we buy with our property tax increase given rising costs and a realistic library completion time frame of 2030 - 2032?

4.

What will our operating costs be? The library tax is expected to fund 10 years of operations after construction. We haven't seen estimates of these costs tied to each of the construction scenarios. We know operating costs (e.g., staff salaries/benefits, technology, maintenance, utilities) will be rising over the next five plus years. If we triple the size of our existing library, do our operating costs also triple? Can we see operating cost estimates for each viable scenario for 2030 to 2040?

These points, all voiced by neighbors that support a new or renovated library, are meant to inform what's truly feasible and fiscally responsible. We sincerely want a new or renovated library for our city. It should be a gem that we are all proud to visit and support. But to succeed it absolutely needs to be affordable.

Our request is for the city to do additional, detailed forecasting and, perhaps through that effort, reduce our scenarios to a more reasonable set of two or three affordable options – including construction and operating costs with realistic time frames. As it stands, we don't really know what we are voting for and what it will cost.

Thank you.

Patrick Shannon

From: [Ann Baugh](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Agenda item 8B for 2/17/22 meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 12:10:48 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Allow sender](#) | [Block sender](#)

Dear City Clerk,

I would like to submit three requests to the Council about tonight's agenda item and related issues.

1. Please modify the resolution to specify that the committee include equal representation of those who oppose the recently certified "citizen's initiative." It is important that all points of view be represented on the committee.
2. Please make a commitment to present the "citizen's initiative" at the general election in November, rather than at an earlier date. An earlier election would have the effect of suppressing the emergence of alternative solutions, which might emerge from the library task force.
3. Please make a commitment to present any future library taxation proposals through the normal channels that require a 2/3-majority vote for approval.

I am one of the many voters who love libraries, and would usually be voting for a library tax. But I cannot vote in favor of the current "citizen's initiative." This is because the current initiative disenfranchises 17% of voters in my point of view. And also because I feel the current parameters and proposed location do not meet the needs of the full community.

Thank you for your consideration.

With respect,

Ann Baugh



From: [Michael Fischer](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Gabe Quinto](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [Carolyn Wysinger](#); [William Ktsanes](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#); [Karen Pinkos](#); [Holly Charléty](#)
Subject: [UNKNOWN SENDER] Public Comments - Agenda Item 8-B (February 17, 2026 City Council Meeting)
Date: Sunday, February 15, 2026 12:31:25 PM

Public Comment - Agenda Item 8-B (February 17, 2026 City Council Meeting)

Dear Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and Council Members:

As you know, I am the El Cerrito designated Contra Costa County Library Commissioner as appointed by the City Council. I regret that I cannot attend Tuesday night's council meeting due to a unavoidable conflict. I have the following comments concerning the proposed El Cerrito Library Task Force which are informed by my service as Library Commissioner since 2017 including service for two years as Chair of the Commission and numerous conversations with library staff and observing the library operations both in El Cerrito and elsewhere in the county.

1) I generally support the formation of the Task Force.

Most importantly the Task Force will provide for a public engagement process to develop recommendations for a new or modified library. As you know, the ballot measure does not mandate any form or location of a new or modified library. It solely provides funding for a new or modified library, appropriately leaving the ultimate decision to the City Council after public input. I view the formation of the Task Force as an important but not final step in the public engagement process required by the provision of a new or modified library.

2) I question the utility of formation of the Task Force before the results of the citizens' initiative ballot measure which will provide funding for the new or modified library.

The ballot measure provides funding for a new or modified library. As various reports to the City Council have shown, the cost of any new or modified library is something that cannot be funded by the existing revenue resources of the city. Thus, until funding for a library is ensured, there is nothing to be planned for. The cost and pressure on staff resources for any Task Force work will be wasted should the ballot measure not pass.

3) The ballot measure provides funding for all activity involved with a new or modified library.

As noted under Financial Considerations on the agenda bill, "no budget appropriations are proposed for this fiscal year with respect to the task force." If the ballot measure passes, the costs of the Task Force will not be wasted and will be provided for by the funding in that measure.

4) The inclusion of a non-voting member who is a Library Commission representative is a good idea.

The Library Commission members are regularly informed about library issues and have

been given much valuable information by the library staff about the various issues that can arise in the creation of a new or modified library. The Library Commission itself is knowledgeable about who of its members are most informed and would be a valuable member on the Task Force. Because I am closely involved with the ballot measure campaign and with the Committee for a Plaza Station Library, I would inform the Commission that I would not serve as their representative on the Task Force.

5) There should be two City Council members as liaison to the Task Force.

There is some potential division among City Council members as to the ballot measure funding the new or modified library. Because of this potential division, there should be two City Council Liaison non-voting members on the Task Force. The City Council itself is knowledgeable of the potential division and thus should ensure that both sides of this issue are represented as City Council Liaison.

6) The ultimate importance of the work of the Task Force should be its noting the various issues involved and presenting all sides of these issues, not on any votes by its seven members.

The issues that are proposed to be addressed by the Task Force are numerous and very important in regard what happens in regard to any new or modified library. The report of the Task Force will be very useful to informing the public engagement process and ultimate City Council decision on a new or modified library if its defined tasks are not simply to "discuss and make recommendations on a range of topics." Rather the mandate to the Task Force should be to "discuss and study a range of topics and present the various arguments in favor of or opposition to each of these topics."

Insofar as the Task Force votes on any of the issues, there is a danger that the public and even the City Council would conclude that the votes of the Task Force are determinative or at least subject to undue weight. Since there are a variety of views in the city concerning all aspects of a new or modified library, it is more helpful to the City Council, the ultimate decision maker, to have a clear delineation of the issues involved first as framed by its Task Force and then as informed by the many El Cerritans who will comment on those issues as part of the public engagement process. Ultimately the decision on a new or modified library will be by the City Council and that decision should be informed by but not subject to vote counting of either the 7-member Task Force or the sum total of people expressing views as part of the public engagement process.

Thank you for your consideration of these views and, more importantly, for your care and concern for providing El Cerritans with the best affordable and appropriate 21st Century library.

Kind regards,

Michael

Michael A. Fischer (he him his)

El Cerrito City Designated Library Commissioner
Member and Former Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

Parliamentarian, Friends of El Cerrito Library
Founding Director and Secretary, Library Foundation of Contra Costa
Honorary Director, El Cerrito Library Foundation
Member, Committee for a Plaza Station Library

Working for an Affordable and Appropriate 21st Century Library for El Cerrito

From: [No Reply](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Submission
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 3:01:21 PM

This sender is trusted.

Submitted by: Paul Fadelli

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Commented on event: <https://elcerritoca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/930/overview>

If you are having trouble viewing the URL above, cut and paste the string into your browser window.

User comment: I want to applaud the City Council who may — for the first time in 10 years — be allowing an opportunity to decide through a ballot measure whether this town and its residents will invest in an exciting and important new chapter in El Cerrito's history. It sounds like most of us in town want an improved library experience — but have concerns about cost. All civic local developments have price tags. My view is that this proposal, the BART Plaza location, and the promise of a new optimistic chapter for El Cerrito is well worth the cost for all who live here. Thank you for scheduling a referendum on this important matter for June 2026, so El Cerritans can decide. Paul Fadelli El Cerrito