



AGENDA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Saturday, January 26, 2013 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers

Meeting Location
El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

Greg Lyman – Mayor

Mayor Pro Tem Janet Abelson
Councilmember Rebecca Benassini

Councilmember Jan Bridges
Councilmember Mark Friedman

9:00 a.m. ROLL CALL

CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting Purpose: *City Council to provide direction on vision, values, goals and strategies for the City of El Cerrito.*

1. Welcome and Introductions

Purpose: Overview of how the day will proceed.

2. Public Comment

Purpose: Receive public comment a vision for the future and goals and strategies to get there. Public comments will only be received during this agenda item. The balance of the meeting will focus on City Council deliberation.

3. Review Strategic Planning Work Completed to Date

Purpose: Review background information followed by City Council discussion of Strategic Planning process and progress.

4. Review Environmental Scan and S.L.O.T. Analysis

*Purpose: Review current and future factors affecting El Cerrito.
Presentation and review of Strengths-Limitations-Opportunities-Threats (“SLOT”) analysis followed by City Council discussion of conclusions and analysis.*

5. Review Draft Vision and Values

Purpose: City Council to provide input on El Cerrito’s vision (what the City should become in the future) and values (what the City stands for in fulfilling its purpose and achieving its mission).

6. Review Draft Goals and Strategies

Purpose: City Council to provide input on proposed goals and strategies.

7. Summary and Next Steps

Purpose: Facilitator will summarize the meeting and identify next steps.

8. ADJOURN SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

- This meeting will not be televised.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk, (510) 215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

PACKET MATERIAL:

Attachment 1. Background Materials (Agenda Item #3)

Attachment 2. Environmental Scan Document (Agenda Item #4)

Attachment 3. S.L.O.T. Analysis (Agenda Item #4)

Attachment 4. Notes from 9/22/12 Council Workshop (Agenda Item #5)

Attachment 5. Draft Goals (Agenda Item #6)

STRATEGIC PLANNING BACKGROUND MATERIALS

Themes Identified through Council Members, Focus Groups and Survey

An effective strategic plan is informed by knowledge of current trends and demographic data that affect and shape the community. In addition, an effective plan reflects common or shared perspectives and opinions about the organization and community. This document summarizes the results of considerable outreach and public input gathered through the following means:

- Council interviews
- Focus groups
- Community input in public settings and via an online survey

Management Partners held one-on-one interviews with all five City Council members and conducted six focus groups, which engaged supervisors, managers, line staff and an array of community representatives. The City conducted outreach to the community through a number of community events and via an online survey, including the Fourth of July Celebration, an Open House at City Hall, Futbol Club Opening Day and an online survey.

Please review the information presented on the following pages prior to our workshop on Saturday, September 22. The information has been used to inform the activities and discussion we will engage on as a team. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Nancy Hetrick of Management Partners at (408) 437-5400.

Section I below presents compiled themes from Council interviews and stakeholder focus groups. Additional input gathered through community outreach is presented in Section II that follows.

I. Council and Focus Group Themes

El Cerrito's strengths and uniqueness

- Changing and progressive city built upon an educated community
- Confidence in municipal leadership and employees who are trusted by the public and known for their dedication to professionalism and customer service
- Good rapport is maintained between the city staff, city council and community
- Transparency is maintained and improved by incorporating technology and a "Be Obvious" mentality
- Community engagement, involvement and willpower to fix issues
- Varied demographics
- Ethnic and economic diversity in the community

- Small town in an urban setting
- Location, including its proximity to San Francisco and Berkeley
- Geographic features and climate
- Lower crime rates than neighboring cities
- A higher quality of life, thanks to well-educated families and higher incomes
- Responsive city staff with excellent customer service skills who listen to community ideas
- Prompt, capable and responsive public safety
- Available and involved city staff at community events
- Long-term commitment to environmental issues
- Regionally renowned recycling center
- Accessibility to Greenway bicycle/pedestrian trail
- Widespread support for community arts and music, such as “worldOne”
- Good, safe place to raise a family in a community oriented environment
- Attractive neighborhoods with affordable housing
- Well maintained parks and open space
- Good roads
- Access to a Community Center and various community resources
- City resourcefulness to maintain service during a rough economy
- Homey, friendly and familiar community
- Strong resident outreach via newsletter and the informative city website

Limitations

- Lack of a central hub or city center
- Impacts due to budget cuts and available funds from the State government
- Lack of improvements and upgrades to the library, community centers and public facilities
- Lack of control over outside agencies (roads/Caltrans, BART, sewers)
- Funding to attend to conflicting priorities from the City and the community
- Lack of diversity within City leadership
- Lack of establishing a common and well known community identity
- Lack of dining options, entertainment venues, shopping, and grocery stores
- Lack of walkability
- Lack of funding for the library
- Business hostile environment through the City
- Limited city finances available in the budget
- Limited State & County budgets
- Lack of sporting facilities and programs for teens and adults
- Lack of playgrounds and child recreational opportunities
- Struggling school systems
- Lack of in-town employment
- The city is built out



Opportunities for El Cerrito

- Develop a comprehensive business strategy to foster more commercial growth
- Raise awareness and take action towards sustainable operations including building community gardens and prompting the public to invest in alternate methods of transportation
- Partner and cooperate with neighboring cities, counties and communities to coordinate development and growth
- Look at how to redevelop sites like Portola and Windrush or re-designate unused parking for other purposes
- Focus on adopting a General Plan and Economic Development Plan
- Creating long term goals and strategies for business development
- Develop a clear roadmap for businesses including streamlining and making it easier for them to establish and do business
- Greater transparency from the City, including breaking down how tax dollars are spent and creating more opportunities to connect with elected officials
- Create and host more public and community events
- Establish a stronger and more concrete community identity, utilizing effective public relations
- Attract top restaurants and chefs, but more dining in general (particularly fine dining)
- Determine how office space opportunities could be used for retail advantage and how to fill vacant spaces
- Support pop-up options for retail or art studios for vacant spaces
- Utilize proximity to UC Berkeley and the new LBL facility in Richmond for business opportunities
- Build a destination where the old Safeway is located where retail, community gardens, food trucks or 24-Hour Fitness might prosper
- Develop a new library and improve public facilities

Threats

- Budget cuts and the lack of available funding from the State government
- Insuring quality education is delivered in local schools via funding and politics
- Negative impacts from the recession on the community and the City and its ability to maintain service levels and provide needed improvements and upgrades to public facilities
- Climate change and natural disasters
- The State's budget cuts and lack of available funding, including the dissolution of Redevelopment Agencies
- Unfunded mandates and liabilities including pensions for city workers
- Animosity between businesses and the City
- Fire threat or oil refinery accidents
- Isolationism from not partnering/collaborating with other communities (Richmond, San Pablo, Berkeley)
- Municipal budget restraints including a loss of revenues and tax increases



- Other cities recruiting talent away from El Cerrito
- Neighboring cities and counties offering better and more programs and events for the public
- Falling real estate prices and property values

Desirable goals and priorities

- Improve infrastructure including public facilities, utilities and public transportation (BART, trolley, bike and pedestrian paths)
- Maintain high levels of public safety
- Focus on economic development with a strong civic center
- Stimulate local entertainment, shopping, and dining
- Seek outside funding to support development projects
- Business development, especially small business development
- Establish a local identity
- Provide more funding/resources for the library, schools, playgrounds, and public facilities
- Increase the amount of open space and parks
- Provide more opportunities for youth and family, especially daycare, skate parks, and after school programs

Words that describe a vision for El Cerrito's future

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| • Pride | • Affordable | • Charming |
| • Family-friendly | • Cool | • Paid for |
| • Unique | • Engaged | • Beautiful |
| • Special | • Community-driven | • Inviting |
| • Destination | • Accessible | • Booming |
| • Sustainable | • Safe | • Interesting |
| • Smart | • Inclusive | • Creative |
| • Energetic | • Fun | • City Center |
| • Leader | • Comfortable | • Vibrant |
| • Innovation | • Diverse | • Walkable |
| • Wild | • Eventful | • Cooperation |

Phrases to express a vision for El Cerrito's future

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Easy access to open space (Bay Trail to Tilden) | • Enthused, younger population |
| • Freedom of choices for living, working, transportation, schools, and programs | • Transit-oriented areas developed |
| • Engaged community | • Diverse population |
| • Beautified city trees | • Sidewalks without cracks |
| • Happy people | • Dynamic |
| | • Interactive, know and interact with neighbors |



- Destination (attractions, street
scapes/bike racks, place to
gather/shop, hike trails, easy-to-use
transit, theaters/party venues,
restaurants)
- Safe to walk around
- Cars more slowly (not because of
congestion)
- Good schools and facilities
- State of the art public facilities
- High walk scores
- Economically healthy
- Intergenerational opportunities
- Scholastically superior
- Cutting-edge/risk-taking
- Healthy destination
- Good reputation

Values in El Cerrito

- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Sustainability (the 3 E's – Economics,
Environment, Equity)
- Pragmatism
- Functionality
- Low key
- Honesty
- Transparency
- Innovation
- Dedication (employees, recognize
quality work and people)
- Efforts for the good of the whole
- Positive interaction
- Respect
- Friendliness
- Transit
- Customer Service
- Fiscal responsibility
- State of the art / cutting edge

Most Pressing Issues

- Leadership training
- Maintaining a balanced budget
- Responsible transition from redevelopment and honor redevelopment commitments
- Negative impacts of the economy on the community, city finances and state resources

Most Pressing Issues in Five Years

- Resources to maintain new facilities
- Development/economic development
- Relationship with State of California
- Maintaining public safety
- Improve traffic conditions and congestion
- Sufficient and affordable housing options



II. Community Themes

The community's ideas about El Cerrito are summarized in the themes listed below.

I love El Cerrito because...

Amenities

- Well-funded and accessible amenities
- Cerrito Theater, El Cerrito Plaza
- History walk on San Pablo Avenue
- It has a lot of beautiful places to walk (e.g., Ohlone Greenway, Hillside trail)
- Has well cared for parks, dog parks, play structures
- Great Recycling Center/program, which offers curbside recycling/compost
- Community center offers well-rounded recreational program
 - Soccer and baseball clubs; baseball fields; swim center
 - Good schools, including elementary schools, the new high school, and EL Cerrito Preschool Cooperative (ECPC)
- Wide variety of community events (i.e., movie night)
- Beautiful City Hall

Location

- Great weather, location and views of the Bay
- Centrally located for diverse activities
- Access to public transportation (BART), easy access to I-80, SF
- Good selection of rental houses with more affordable rents than Berkeley/Albany

Community

- Diverse, creative, kid-friendly place with community events
- Friendly, awesome people
- Small town in urban setting
- It's not Berkeley
- Peaceful, easy, calm, clean
- Attractive neighborhoods
- People have a "green attitude," are open to building a sustainable community
- Anyone who wants to can contribute, make things better, or change what they don't like

Government

- Thoughtful city government, they seem to balance budget with improvements
- El Cerrito continues to grow and improve with all our "Stakeholders"
- Police and Fire Departments committed to creating a safe community (bicycle patrol)
- Accessible city government; easy to talk to City departments
- San Pablo Avenue improvements



El Cerrito is unique because...

Amenities

- There is a focus on a wide variety of amenities, services, community events
- Excellent senior center and recreational program for kids and adults
- Our own movie theatre and performing arts venues
- Chung Mei Orphanage/Building, Beautiful, historic structure worth protecting
- Library open every day
- State of the art Recycle Center
- Bike-friendly streets
- Open spaces: Ohlone Trail, Canyon Trail Park, Hill-side Park

Location

- Quite, attractive, small city adjacent to a large city
- It's in a central location for recreation, transit, employment
- It has two BART stations within 2 miles

Community

- El Cerrito is a clean, helpful, productive, creative, diverse community
- People are free to have individual + unique opinions without having to agree with the current popular status quo
- Small enough for real community, large enough for diversity
- Environmental focus and environmental history
- It shares its history
- It's still small enough to feel safe, and people are kind
- Great walkability
- Foresighted commitment to environment
- Variety of affordable homes

Government

- Well run city with good Police Department
- Animal ordinance
- City is small enough that officials listen to the community

El Cerrito could improve upon... / I'd love to see...

Amenities

- New, better-equipped library
- More parks and improvement park on Eureka for young families, add benches to Hillside trail
- Maintaining quality of schools; need new middle school
- More teenagers activities (ice skating, laser tag, indoor swimming, mini-golf, skate park)
- Increased hours at swimming pool
- More dedicated sports fields (soccer/baseball)
- Bicycle lanes/paths



- More family events at Cerrito Theatre
- Better restaurants and shopping (need children's clothing store), more mom-and-pop stores
- Car-sharing (Zipcars)

Safety

- Keep bushes and trees trimmed near crosswalks so drivers can see pedestrians
- Safer high school transportation
- City needs to be more pedestrian safe/friendly
- Crime; there are lots of car burglaries

Traffic/Roads

- Improve traffic congestion on main thoroughfares and at the El Cerrito Plaza
- Kearny (Wall to Conlon) and North end of Ohlone need better lighting
- Fewer speed bumps and other obstacles to hinder drivers
- A crossway at Richmond & Waldo

Community

- Enhance historic preservation efforts
- Fewer empty, unattractive storefronts
- More places to walk, gather, hang out, run into friends and neighbors

Government

- Commitment to funding for public schools

Challenges facing the City

Economic/Fiscal

- Redevelopment of empty San Pablo Ave storefronts; attracting and retaining businesses to fill available/vacant real estate
- Financial deficit/diminished funds with downturn in economy
 - Obtaining funding needed for projects, library, parks, infrastructure, other meaningful and important amenities

Public Safety

- So close to Richmond crime
- Parking enforcement
- Reducing the crime, homelessness, and loitering that is in our public areas, neighborhoods, and near the schools

Amenities and infrastructure

- Better restaurants and outdoor dining, and shopping
- Bring in more entertainment options for teens and adults
- Public building need renovations, including library, public safety building, senior center
- Modernize community center
- Maintain parks
- Traffic
- Sidewalks



Community

- Shifting demographics
- Preventing overcrowding and saying “no” to overdevelopment
- How to keep families in El Cerrito after elementary school
- Adding more trees on blocks that do not have them in front of homes
- Preserving our historic resources, including periodical archives
- Defining the city in a more creative way
- Need a downtown/community centric focus
- Maintaining or improving diversity of population
- Attracting and keeping young people
- Encouraging development/growth while maintaining history and a sense of “place”

Government

- There’s a lot of diversity, but it’s often not represented in public life
- Budget
- Underground(ing) utilities
- Getting more people involved in community actions
- BART modification and construction more thoroughly reviewed with community and user group feedback



Words to Describe El Cerrito Right Now:



Words to Describe the Future Vision of El Cerrito:



COMMUNITY VOICE SUMMARY

"Community Voice" was launched in the Fall of 2012. It is an online tool on the City of El Cerrito's website to share and discuss ideas you think are the most important for the City to focus on over the next five-year period. The following pages incorporate the input received via "Community Voice" through January 14, 2013.

el cerrito needs a new library

by nancy Poulos on 11/24/2012

our library serves a great many people and offers many events and opportunities for the community. it is, however, desperately in need of expansion and updating. new library systems and technology have increased use and opened libraries to many more people with diverse needs. bursting at the seams the e.c. library should be a primary item on the city's agenda

Activity

7 "thumbs' up" votes

3 comments

60 views

Comments

1. Amalia Cunningham I agree 100%!
Nov 30, 2012 7:15 PM

2. NikkiH Agreed - and I would put a priority on finding extra space not just for the books but for patrons. I rarely take my toddler to the library because I always feel I am disturbing everyone else. A dedicated children's room would certainly help.
Nov 30, 2012 7:38 PM

3. Al Miller I agree, too, and I believe the new library is our most pressing need. But EC also needs a new Senior Center and Public Safety Building. The city needs to develop a plan and schedule showing how all our capitol needs will be identified and discussed with the people of El Cerrito to get an informed opinion of our priorities. We need to create an awareness in all city residents and property owners of the importance of replacing these facilities. Then we need to get the users and supporters of all three facilities working together to make it happen. If we fight each other, chances are nothing will happen.
Dec 23, 2012 10:16 PM

Community Voice Summary – as of January 14, 2013

Getting citizens to mark up El Cerrito maps

by Steve Price on 12/17/2012

The Community Voice effort is a great way of sounding out the community. I've learned a lot about El Cerrito's citizenry just by reviewing the input and comments so far. Another way to get citizen input would be to use a service like Crowdbrite that allows online marking up of maps. That brings in the other half of the brain and encourages location specific comments and dialog. Check out <http://www.crowdbrite.com/>.

Activity
0 votes
0 comments
36 views

Expedite completion of San Pablo plan and zoning

by Mike Cunningham on 11/26/2012

San Pablo Ave has a wealth of vacant, underutilized, and blighted properties that, if appropriately developed, would provide much more tax revenue to the city, as well as improved businesses and aesthetics. With an eye towards a recovering economy, developers elsewhere are currently evaluating, optioning, and entitling projects to be built in a couple of years. But as long as the San Pablo Ave specific plan/rezoning process remains unresolved, property owner and developers are going to sit on their hands (or, rather, sit on their lands). By prioritizing completion of the San Pablo plan and associated zoning by mid-2013, El Cerrito will be positioned to engage interested property owners and developers, and to attract investment that will strengthen our community's economy and tax base while beautifying our main commercial district.

Activity

5 “thumb’s up” votes

0 comments

41 views

Economic development on BOTH sides of San Pablo Ave

by Mike Cunningham on 11/29/2012

San Pablo Ave is our Main Street and our primary commercial district (and opportunity) but it's basically an afterthought to Richmond. El Cerrito can propose to Richmond that EC be responsible for economic development for ALL properties on San Pablo Ave, including those w/in Richmond's boundaries. Richmond must handle its own local review and permitting, but EC can be lead on working with property owners, developers, existing businesses, and new businesses to market the corridor, identify and develop prospects, and support existing businesses. To keep the effort affordable (and hence attractive) to Richmond, EC can be compensated for services with a modest monthly retainer, plus performance payments that Richmond would pay based on actual outcomes.

Activity

2 “thumb’s up” votes

0 comments

40 views

Intense Restaurant Recruitment

by Amalia Cunningham on 11/30/2012

As the resident survey confirmed, there is not too much diversity in the range of dining choices in EC. I would suggest that the city ED staff undertake an intensive restaurant recruitment. First, interview every single property owner with a suitable space on San Pablo. Quantify why they are not leasing to a restaurant. Next, depending on those results, get the city council to approve a incentives (such as streamlined permits), a loan program, sign grants, ADA assistance, whatever the issues are. Then go out and personally visit every restaurant of a type not already represented here on Solano Avenue (then Rockridge, downtown Alameda, Lafayette, etc. etc.) and encourage them to open a second location in El Cerrito at these specific "pre-approved" sites. A lot of legwork, but I think the residents will appreciate the results! :)

Activity

4 "thumb's up" votes

1 comments

44 views

1. **NikkiH** I definitely agree with this. El Cerrito is seriously lacking in restaurant options, from low to high end and everything in between. Although I do think one of the problems is that many of the restaurants which are here just don't *look* very appetizing. I quite like the Hawaiian place, but it took me a year to even step inside because it looks so dingy on the outside. (Inside, it's quite clean and well run.) Maybe some community effort to get restaurant owners to improve their "curb appeal" would also help?

Nov 30, 2012 7:36 PM

Establish and promote an "open for business" mentality and policies

by Mike Cunningham on 12/2/2012

Even in the best of economic times El Cerrito will have economic development challenges, because we're a very small, low-profile town, on the remote outer edge of the dynamic North Oakland-Berkeley-Emeryville-Albany region, and part of the not-so-prosperous West Contra Costa County area. EC needs, therefore, to go the extra mile to establish and promote policies and an attitude that make this a great place to invest and do business, such as:

1. Adopt and implement the East Bay Economic Development Authority "Open For Business" pledge. <http://bit.ly/QZ3Qs9>
2. Implement a temporary (2 years) fee moratorium on any new business or development that occupies a spot that has been vacant for at least 18 months. The new tax revenue from these businesses will more than make up for the lost fee revenue.
3. Promote the policies (and El Cerrito itself, as an innovative biz dev leader) through earned media, biz dev conferences and magazines, etc.

Activity

5 "thumb's up" votes

0 comments

54 views

Neighborhood Traffic Calming

Nov 30, 2012 by Amalia Cunningham

Scrap the new NTMP; it makes it harder for neighbors to work together on needed improvements; creates additional bureaucratic process; and wastes staff time (and residents'). Go back to old as-needed process with neighbors submitting a majority petition to start process. We have been waiting over a year and a half for improvements in our neighborhood - that cannot have been the intention!

Activity

1 “Thumb’s up” vote

0 Comments

More Hiking Trails at Hillside Nature Area

by Ken & Molly Ong on 1/1/2013

Create more hiking trails at the Hillside Nature Area. Encourage more volunteers to work on improving the existing trails and build new ones with the City's help.

Activity
0 votes
0 comments
19 views

Engage El Cerrito parents

[Todd Groves](#) Nov 24, 2012

Engage El Cerrito parents with school age children on their expectations from school. Create a dialogue between the city, residents and the school district around the discovered expectations.

Activity

4 “thumb’s up” votes

3 comments

56 views

[docbeck](#) Mr. Groves, I look forward to your representation on the school board-- I have a couple of questions--- What initial goals do you have in your first year? Also how do you wish to engage with parents of school age children? Nov 24, 2012 10:32 PM

[Todd Groves](#) According to emeritus board members, the first two years of a good trustee are absorbed by becoming a good trustee. It's quite a learning curve. My primary concern is the adoption of the Common Core standards over the next two years, the figurative operating system of our schools. The board must shepherd a transition that leaves our students in a better position than they are presently. We also must push forward with the Middle School Math Initiative. I would hope also begin dialogue on the issues of concern collectively and by community. Engagement can take many forms. As a board member, I plan to maintain a public blog and use social media. Our board meets jointly with all city councils. As you can see by the results of EC's strategic planning process, schools are a high priority for EC's residents. The situation calls for collaboration and creativity between city and district. Nov 25, 2012 12:41 AM

[Karin Watson-Steier](#) I also would add that you should engage El Cerrito parents with pre-school aged children as that is when many of us begin to think about the quality of education our children will receive, and whether we'll have to move in order to receive the high quality of education we envision for our children. Nov 28, 2012 2:27 PM

Make El Cerrito public schools the FIRST choice of El Cerrito families

Nov 26, 2012 by Mike Cunningham

WCCUSD is providing wonderful school facilities, and EC provides wonderful after-care, but local schools still struggle to attract local families, esp after 6th grade. Though the city has no formal role in the schools, it can nonetheless provide support and exert influence to improve the schools and broaden their appeal.

By establishing a formal city strategic priority to "Make El Cerrito public schools the FIRST choice of El Cerrito families," the city will be positioned to work with WCCUSD, local principals, PTAs, parents, students, and neighbors to develop an action plan of the things that are within the city's ability and authority. For example:

- Monthly City Council discussion with a WCCUSD Board member about progress towards EC school goals
- City/school/PTA partnership to pro-actively engage local parents at key decision points (before K, before 7th grade).
- EC city parcel tax for class size reduction in EC schools.
- More/better ideas would come from the community

5 "thumb's up" votes

2 Comments

85 views

1. [Christian Roman](#) As the new Castro middle school becomes a reality, we need to engage with parents to find out exactly WHY they are opting for private school once their children reach 7th grade. Perhaps we need to improve the quality of ALL the elementary schools in El Cerrito to ensure that the students enter into 7th grade with more equal footing.

Dec 13, 2012 9:45 AM

2. [cgroch](#) Rather than developing a specific set of ways to support our schools in a void, I suggest El Cerrito talk to WCCUSD to develop ideas concerning El Cerrito support and aid for their efforts to improve our schools.

Jan 7, 2013 2:15 PM

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN



Table of Contents

- Environmental Scan Purpose
- City of El Cerrito Mission Statement
- Environmental Scan Categories
- Overall Demographic Profile
- Summaries of Environmental Scan Categories
- Additional Considerations
- Conclusions

Environmental Scan Purpose

- The Environmental Scan provides critical data and a foundation for the creation of goals and strategies
- The Scan identifies factors which will influence the organization both today and into the future
- Major Sources of data used throughout Scan:
 - US Census
 - Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
 - National Citizen Survey
 - City of El Cerrito

City of El Cerrito Mission Statement

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

Environmental Scan Categories

These categories are derived from the City's Mission Statement and guide the overall Environmental Scan:

- ▣ Exemplary and Innovative Services
- ▣ Public Places and Infrastructure
- ▣ Public Safety
- ▣ Economic Sustainability
- ▣ Environmental Sustainability

Overall Demographic Profile

- El Cerrito's population is relatively stable
- Overall population age is getting slightly older
- Number of families with children is increasing
- Household income is rising
- El Cerrito is a diverse community

Population

Population	1990	2000	2010	2020 Projected	2030 Projected
El Cerrito	22,869	23,171	23,549	24,400	25,600
CoCo County	803,732	948,816	948,816	1,177,400	1,273,700

HOUSEHOLDS

	2000	2010
Total households	10,208	10,142
Family households	5,970	6,166
Families w/children under 18	2,114	2,394
Average household size	2.25	2.31
Average family size	2.81	2.84

Demographics:

Last Ten Calendar Years

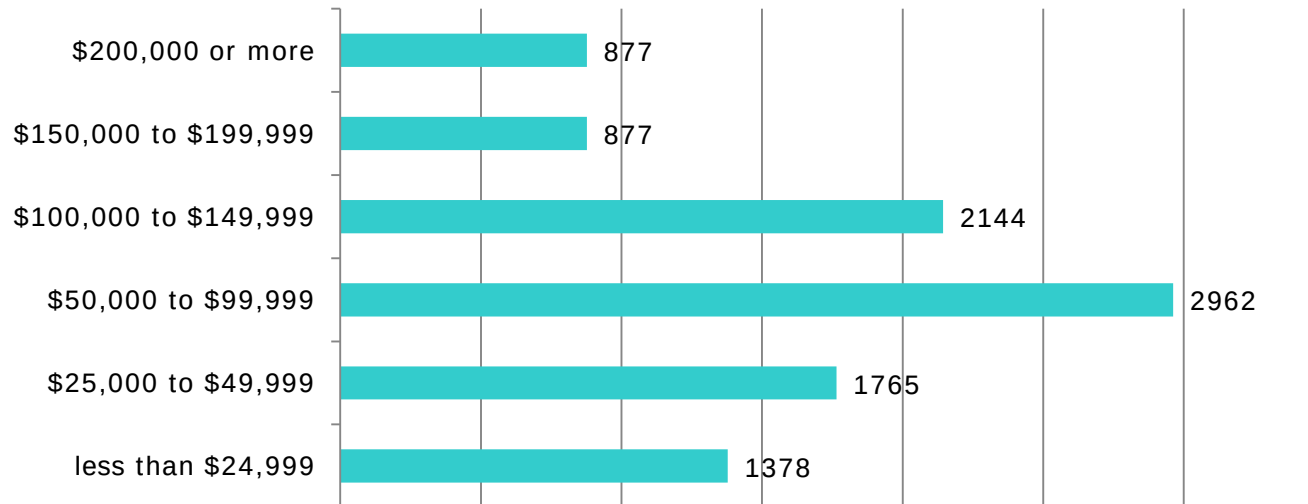
Calendar Year	City Population	Median Population Age	Unemployment Rate	Public School Enrollment	Contra Costa County Population	% of County Population
2003	23,550	42.7	5.0%	3,939	994,900	2.37%
2004	23,440	42.7	5.4%	3,989	1,003,900	2.33%
2005	23,398	42.7	4.8%	3,989	1,020,898	2.29%
2006	23,471	42.7	4.3%	3,989	1,029,377	2.28%
2007	23,407	42.7	3.8%	3,989	1,042,341	2.25%
2008	23,320	42.7	4.1%	3,082	1,051,674	2.22%
2009	23,461	42.7	5.5%	3,082	1,061,223	2.21%
2010	23,666	44.4	9.2%	3,076	1,072,953	2.21%
2011	23,648	43.1	10.0%	3,076	1,056,064	2.24%
2012	23,774	43.7	9.3%	3,316	1,065,117	2.23%

El Cerrito Household Income

(2010 Census)

- Median Household Income: \$81,503
- Mean Household Income: \$94,920

El Cerrito Household Income



Diversity: Languages, Birthplace

- **Languages Spoken in El Cerrito:**
 - **English only** **63.6%**
 - **Language other than English** **36.4%**
 - Spanish 8.0%
 - Other Indo-European languages 8.0%
 - Asian & Pacific Islander languages 19.5%
 - Other languages 0.9%
- **Those who speak English less than "very well": 16.5%**
- **67.3% of El Cerrito population born in USA**
 - 43% born in CA
- **31.5% of El Cerrito population foreign-born**

65%.9 Asia	2.5% Africa
18.5% Latin America	1.3% North America
11.5% Europe	0.3% Oceania

 - **Of foreign-born, 56% are naturalized US Citizens**

Exemplary and Innovative Services

- ❑ Services provided to residents, businesses and general public by the City of El Cerrito
- ❑ El Cerrito is a “full service” city
 - ❑ Despite recent economic challenges, no service cuts have been implemented
- ❑ El Cerrito has been recognized regionally, nationally and internationally for its innovative programs and projects

National Citizen Survey Data (2012)

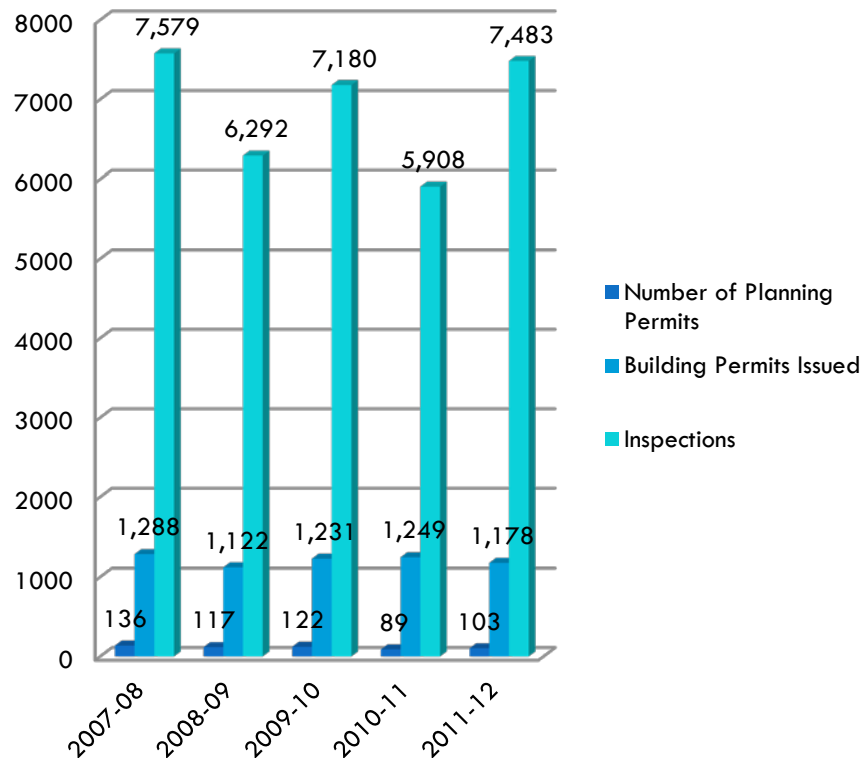
Percentage rating of “Excellent” or “Good” on City Services

- Overall Community Quality
 - Quality of Life: 83%
 - Neighborhood as place to live: 87%
 - El Cerrito as place to live: 89%
- Public Trust
 - Value of Services for taxes paid: 61%
 - Overall direction El Cerrito is taking: 64%
- Services provided by the City of El Cerrito: 78%

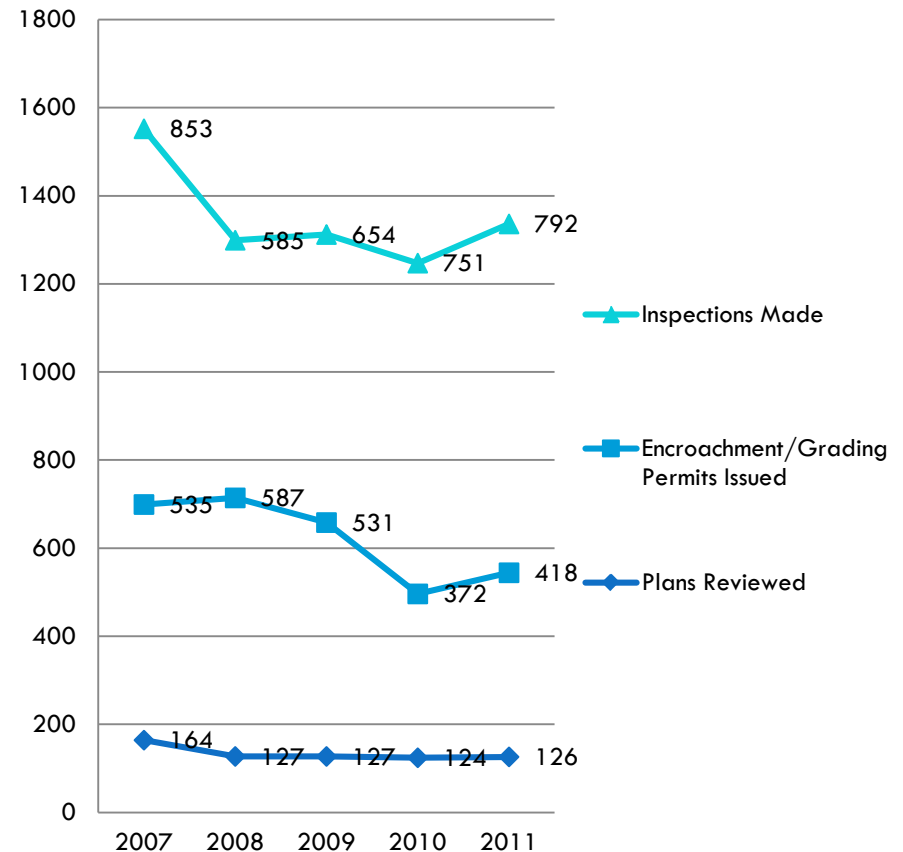
Development Services & Engineering

Operating Indicators

Development Services (Building and Planning)

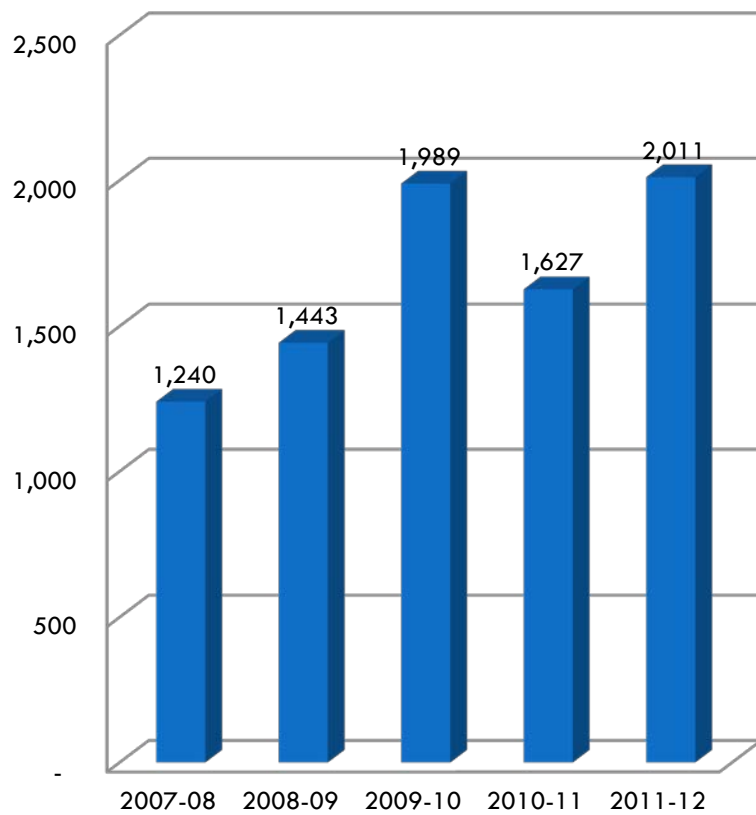


Engineering

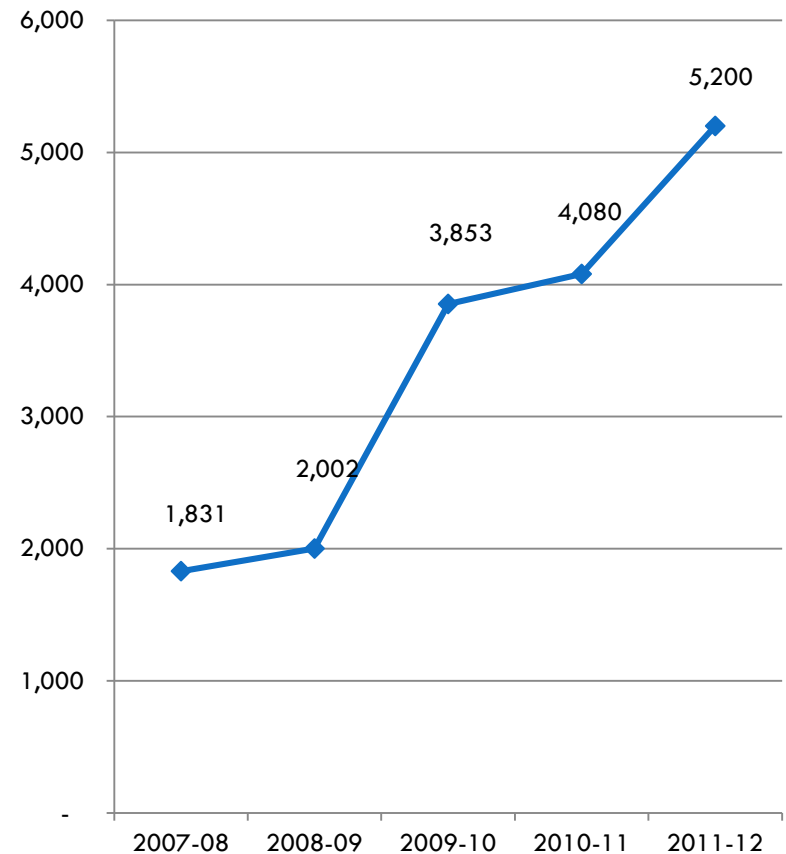


Recreation Operating Indicators

Childcare Participants



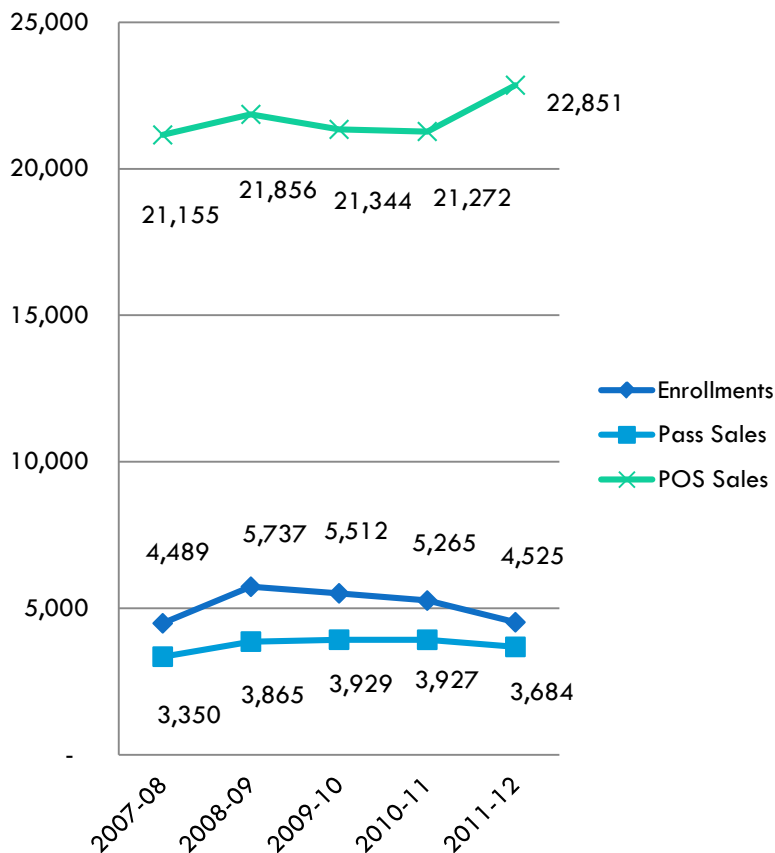
Youth Services Enrollments



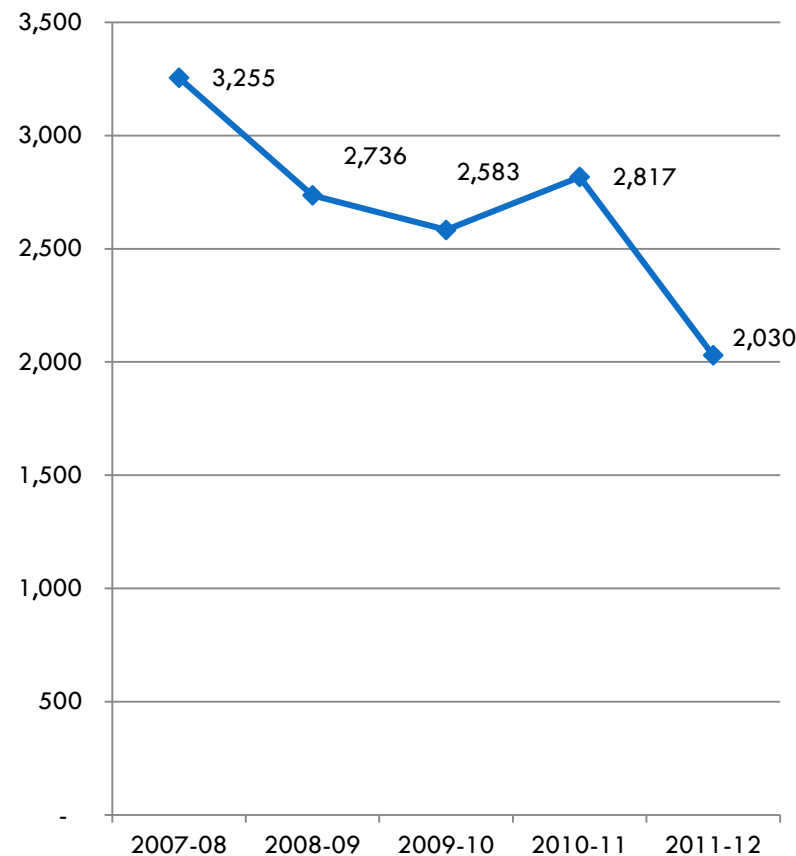
Recreation Operating Indicators

(cont'd)

Aquatics



Senior Services Enrollments



Workforce Challenges

- Staff Vacancies
 - ▣ Many recruitments for positions are in place or upcoming
 - ▣ Loss of “institutional knowledge”
 - ▣ Provides opportunities to re-structure the organization
 - ▣ Will gain new people/ new ideas
 - ▣ Allows City to consider contracting for some positions or services
- Benefit Costs are rising
 - ▣ Medical costs
 - ▣ Retirement/pension obligations
- Ability to recruit talented employees is impacted by salary and benefit levels offered by the City
- Training will continue to be critical for all employees
- Possible compensation restructuring should occur in near future

Organizational Performance

- National Citizen Survey data on City staff performance (% ratings of “Excellent” or “Good”)
 - Knowledge: 82%
 - Responsiveness: 74%
 - Courtesy: 79%
 - Overall Impression: 76%
- Staff has decreased in the past several years by holding open vacancies, however service levels have not been reduced
- Keeping up with technology to provide better service both internally and externally to customers is challenging

Public Places & Infrastructure

- ❑ El Cerrito has many public facilities that are aging and/or have serious maintenance or seismic issues
- ❑ Funds for maintenance of current facilities is limited and planning for future needs has been challenging
- ❑ Additional open space is at a premium
- ❑ Plans mandated by outside agencies need to be initiated and/or completed
- ❑ Non-City infrastructure owned by outside agencies (EBMUD, Stege, Caltrans, School District, etc.) also in need of maintenance & have impact on City operations
- ❑ Funding for new facilities has not been identified

City Facilities, Infrastructure, and Parks

□ **City Buildings:**

- ▣ Fire Stations: 2
- ▣ Police station: 1
- ▣ City Hall: 1
- ▣ Recycling Center: 1

□ **Public Works:**

- ▣ Miles of streets: 68
- ▣ Street Lights: 1 606
- ▣ Traffic Signals: 1 1

□ **Culture and Recreation:**

- ▣ City Parks: 1 1
- ▣ City park acreage: 31.6
- ▣ Open space acreage: 99.9
- ▣ Playgrounds: 7
- ▣ City trails: 3
- ▣ City trails-miles: 3.5
- ▣ Library: 1
- ▣ Community Center: 1
- ▣ Senior Center: 1
- ▣ Clubhouses: 5
- ▣ Swimming pools: 1
- ▣ Performing arts center: 1
- ▣ Tennis court sites: 6
- ▣ Baseball/softball diamonds: 4

Capital Needs -- Unfunded

- Facilities
 - ▣ Library
 - 60 years old
 - Size of building & outdated equipment below per capita needs
 - ▣ Public Safety
 - 50 years old
 - Seismic & Engineering Issues
 - Non-ADA compliant
 - Inadequate restrooms, locker rooms & sleeping quarters for female employees
 - ▣ Senior Center
 - ADA issues
 - Inadequate parking
 - ▣ Seismic Upgrades for facilities
 - ▣ ADA Upgrades for facilities
- Parks
 - ▣ Upgrades for current fields
 - ▣ Additional field space for programs and users
 - ▣ Upgrades for Clubhouses
 - ▣ Open space
- Streets & Transportation Needs
 - ▣ Wildcat Drive
 - ▣ Traffic Safety
 - ▣ Del Norte TOD
 - ▣ Safe Routes to School
 - ▣ ADA Upgrades
- Storm Drains

Operations & Maintenance Needs

- Facility Maintenance
 - ▣ Maintenance that has been deferred is now becoming critical
- Street Trees
 - ▣ Also need to address deferred maintenance in this area
- Parks
 - ▣ With increasing use of parks and fields, maintenance to expected standards has been challenging
- Special Habitats
 - ▣ Creeks need upkeep in addition to new daylighting
 - ▣ Hillside Natural Area
 - ▣ Rain Gardens and other Low Impact Development (LID) areas
- Clean Water Program
 - ▣ Funding limitations versus rising expectations

Public Safety

- ❑ Public Safety is a high priority among residents
- ❑ Statistics provide information that can help bridge the gap between perception of safety and reality; the best measure of safety lies in the sense of safety felt by individuals
- ❑ External factors, such as geographic location, State realignment, and regional trends have a direct impact in El Cerrito
- ❑ Readiness in the event of emergencies, disasters, and unforeseen incidents is a key priority to protect residents, businesses, and the general public
- ❑ Given difficult financial challenges, the City is consistently examining means of maintaining the expected high service level without additional cost

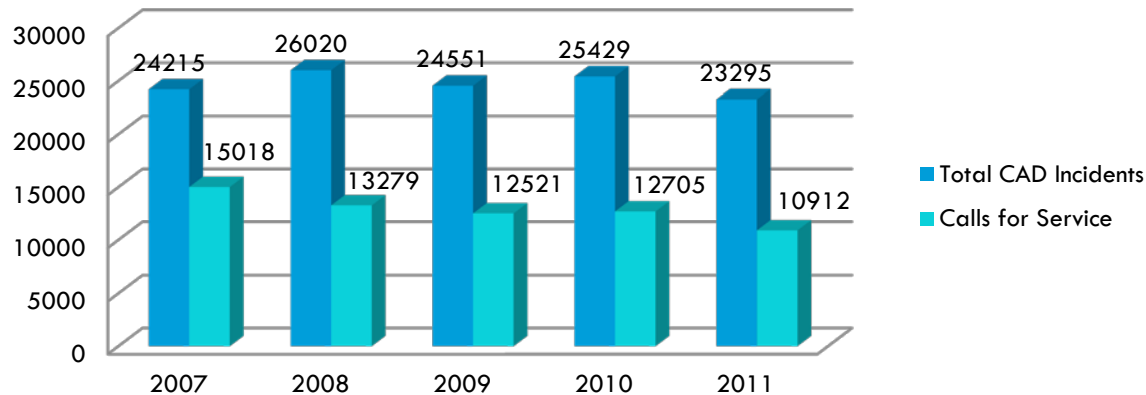
National Citizen Survey Data (2012)

Percentage rating of “Excellent” or “Good” for Public Safety Services

- Safety
 - ▣ In neighborhood during day: 92%; after dark: 64%
 - ▣ In commercial area during day: 89%; after dark 52%
 - ▣ From violent crime: 68%
 - ▣ From property crimes: 52%
 - ▣ From environmental hazards: 74%
- Service ratings
 - ▣ Police: 83%
 - ▣ Fire: 92%
 - ▣ Ambulance/Emergency Medical: 89%
 - ▣ Crime Prevention: 64%
 - ▣ Fire Prevention & Education: 76%
 - ▣ Traffic Enforcement: 59%
 - ▣ Emergency Preparedness: 56%

Police Department: Calls for Service

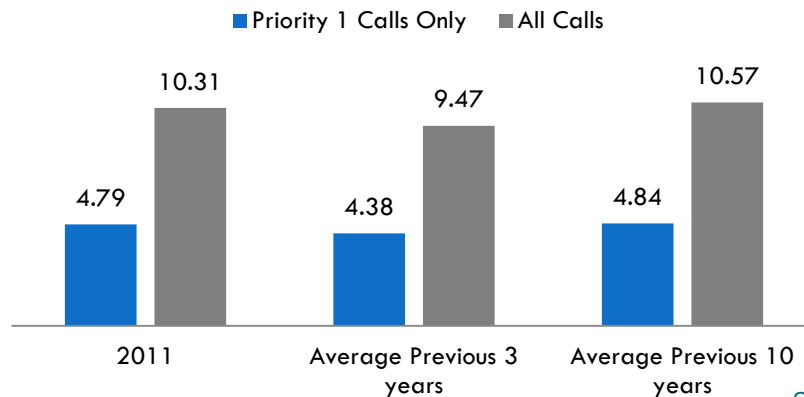
Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Incidents & Calls for Service



CAD Incidents: All self-initiated activity conducted by Dept. personnel

Calls for Service: Incidents generated by Dispatch pursuant to calls from residents

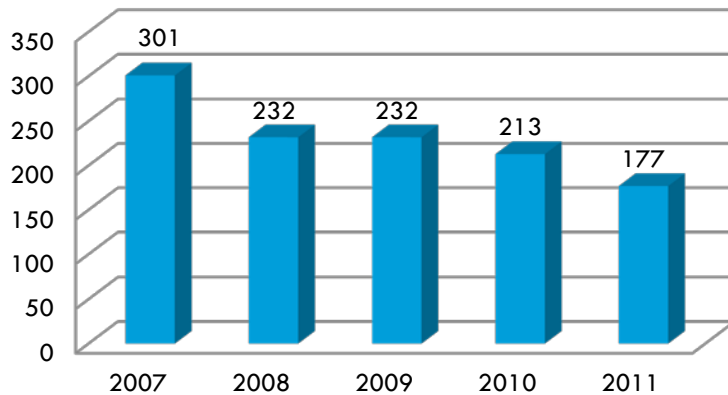
Average ECPD Response Times (in minutes)



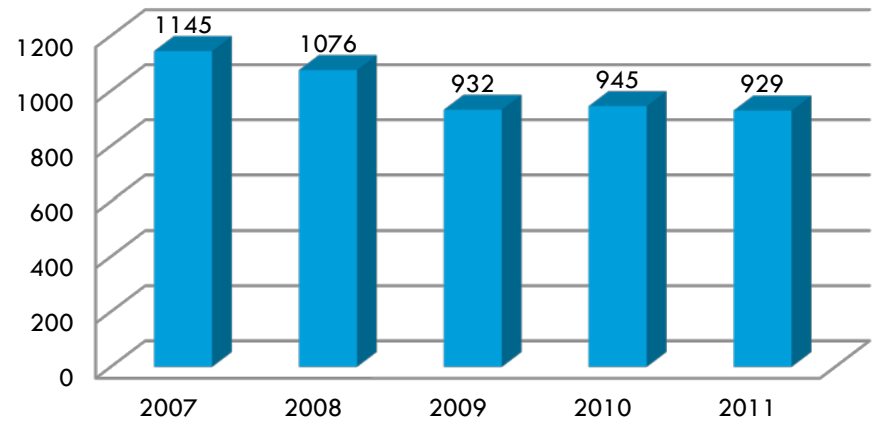
Priority 1 Calls: Requires immediate Police response

Crime Statistics

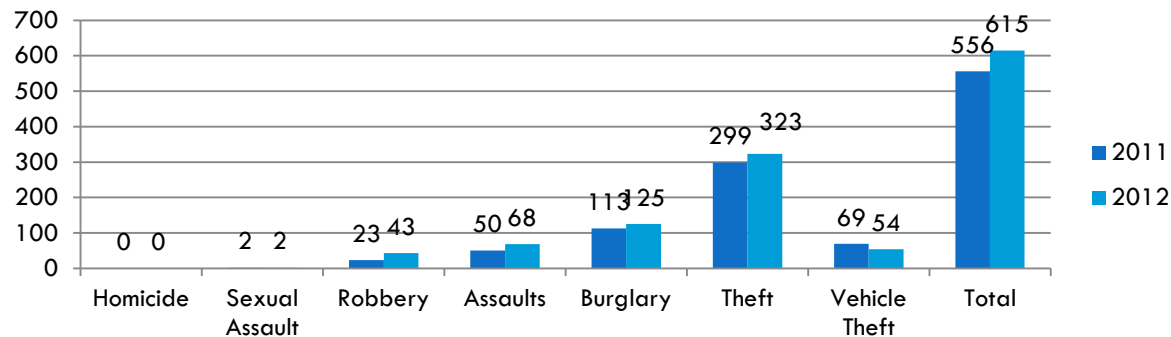
**Violent Crimes, 5-Year Trend
(Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault)**



**Property Crimes, 5-Year Trend
(Burglary, Larceny-Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft)**

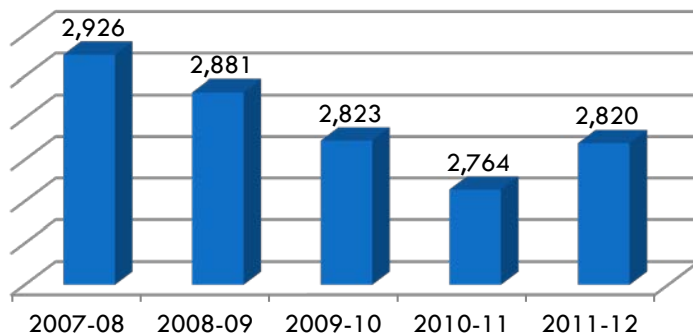


Part 1 Crimes 2011 vs. 2012

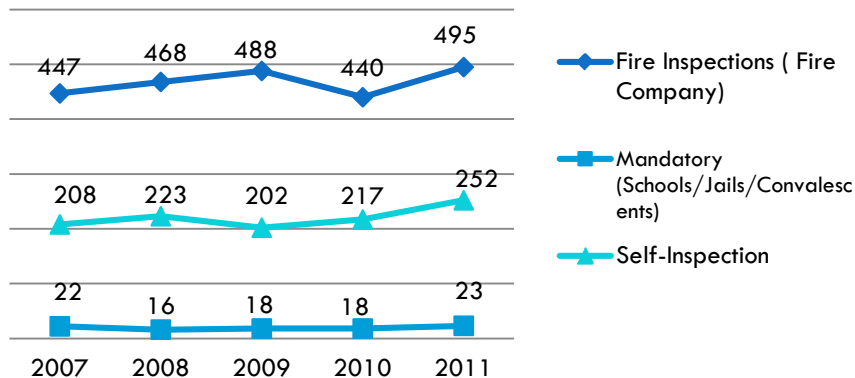


Fire Department Operating Indicators

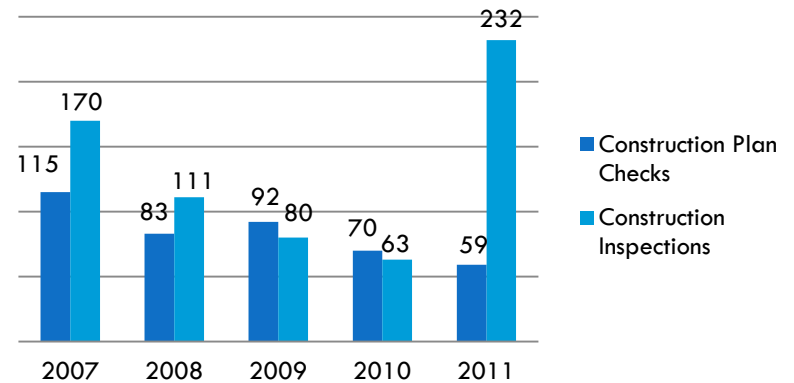
Fire Department Number of Responses



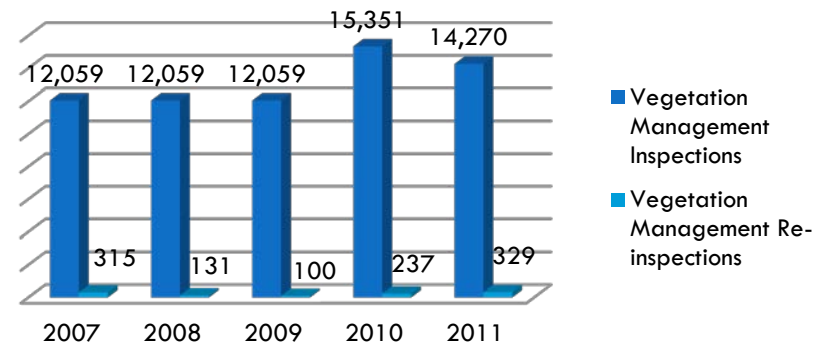
Inspection Activities



Construction Inspection Activities



Vegetation Management Activities



Disaster Preparedness Issues

- A 6.7 magnitude or larger earthquake is likely by 2037
 - ▣ Public Safety, Senior Center buildings are in need of seismic retrofitting
- Zones that exist throughout the City to be aware of for disaster situations:
 - ▣ Landslide/mudslide zones
 - ▣ “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones” (Urban housing and Wildland Area)
 - ▣ 100 year Flood Zone
- Nearby Hazardous Materials facilities & transportation routes have impact on City’s preparedness as well

Public Safety Partnerships

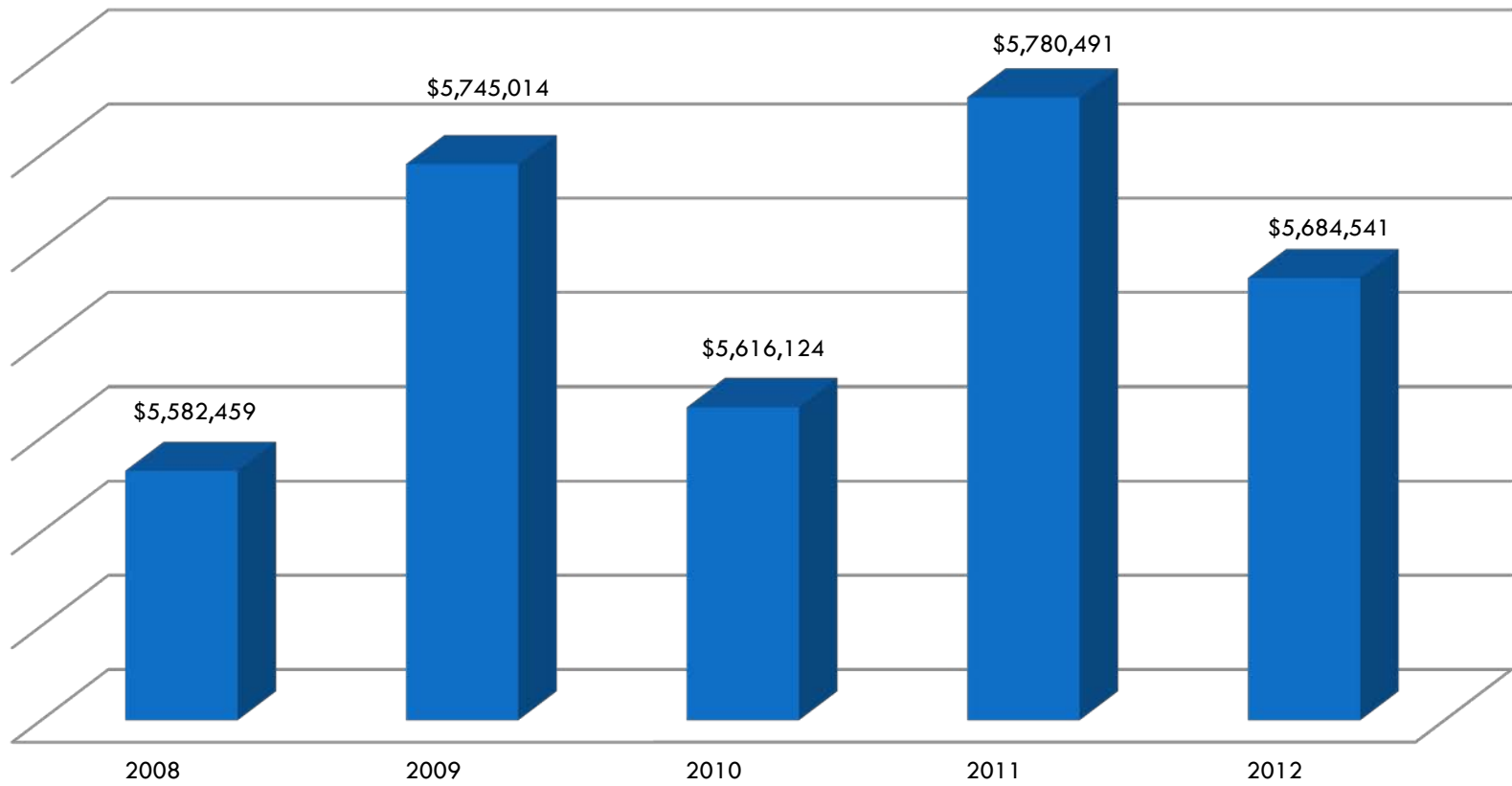
- ❑ El Cerrito provides Fire services to Kensington Fire Protection District via contract
- ❑ Automatic Aid occurs with City of Richmond, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, City of Albany
- ❑ State Master Mutual Aid Program and State Office of Emergency Services
- ❑ Richmond Police Department provides Dispatch via contract
- ❑ Crime Lab, Animal Control Services provided by Contra Costa County via contract
- ❑ California Department of Justice/West Contra Costa County Narcotics Task Force
- ❑ State of California Identification System
- ❑ East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership

Economic Sustainability

- ❑ National, State and local economic conditions are impacting the City
- ❑ Property values impacting City revenues
- ❑ Funding constraints affect all departments, yet staff has made it a priority that service delivery remains at the levels residents expect

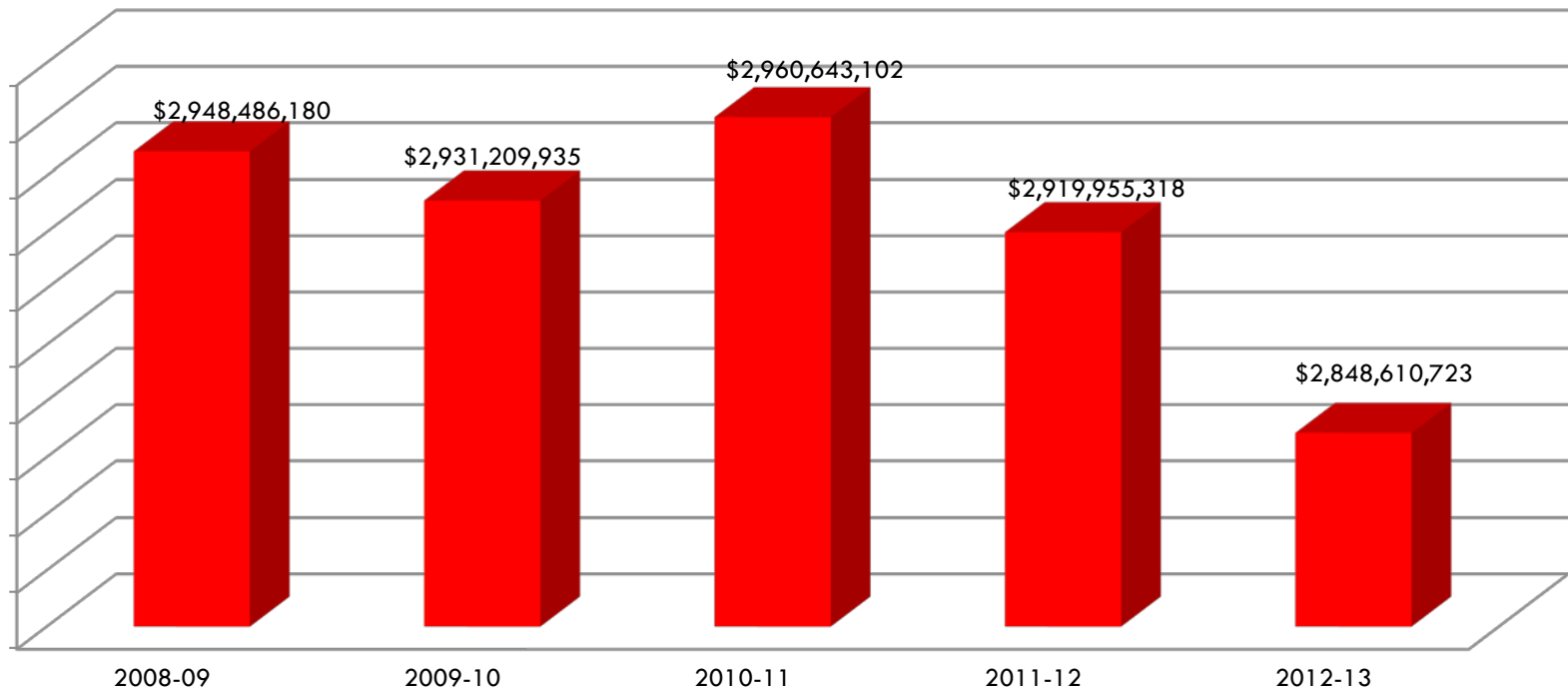
Property Tax Trends

Property Tax Revenues



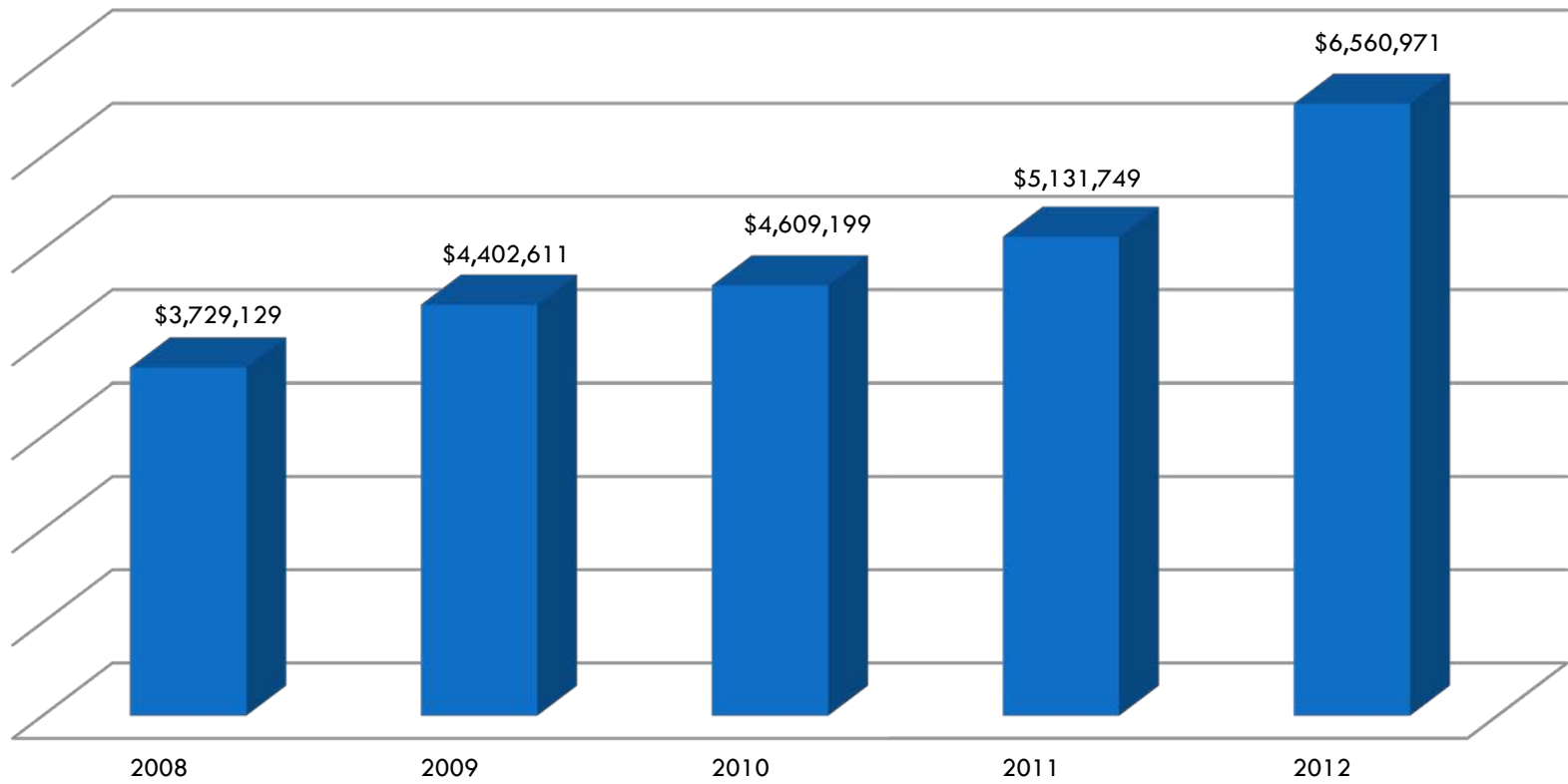
Assessed Values Trends

**Citywide Assessed Values:
Net Taxable Value**



Sales Tax Trends

Sales Tax Revenues
(including Measure R)



Funding Constraints

- External factors (economy, State actions, property values) have impacted City finances
- Current funding sources cannot support infrastructure needs
- Measure R
 - ▣ Local ½ percent sales tax approved in 2010 for general purposes
 - ▣ Sunsets May 30, 2018
- Federal/State grant opportunities are being sought out, but availability is very competitive and administration is challenging
- Declining State & County revenue may increase squeeze on local governments

Citywide Revenues

Citywide Revenues FY 2009-10 to FY 2012-12

Revenue Category	Actual FY 2009-10	Actual FY 2010-11	Amended FY 2011-12	Proposed FY 2012-13	% Change
Taxes					
Property Taxes	\$ 5,616,124	\$ 5,780,491	\$ 6,025,000	\$ 6,819,452	13.2%
Sales Taxes	4,609,199	5,131,749	6,815,000	6,840,000	0.4%
Utility User Tax	3,181,028	3,188,260	3,450,500	3,500,000	1.4%
Local Parcel Taxes	1,896,445	1,908,127	1,907,000	1,908,000	0.1%
Franchise Taxes	939,189	982,799	1,050,000	1,050,000	0.0%
Business License Tax	625,461	673,257	675,000	675,000	0.0%
Other Taxes	539,238	635,883	658,321	662,321	0.6%
Total Taxes	17,406,684	18,300,566	20,580,821	21,454,773	4.2%
Licenses & Permits	579,275	562,760	656,800	669,936	2.0%
Fines and Forfeitures	352,866	267,673	341,000	265,000	-22.3%
Use of Money and Property	389,759	443,200	515,662	483,780	-6.2%
Intergovernmental Revenues	7,099,893	9,084,889	11,094,734	10,414,604	-6.1%
Charges for Services	5,387,839	6,069,034	6,693,281	7,113,224	6.3%
Other Revenues	150,675	460,048	1,435,394	499,400	-65.2%
Total Revenues before Transfers	31,366,992	35,188,171	41,317,692	40,900,717	-1.0%
Interfund Transfers	7,326,894	8,615,766	5,041,205	4,146,341	-17.8%
Total	\$ 38,693,886	\$ 43,803,937	\$ 46,358,897	\$ 45,047,058	-2.8%

Citywide Expenditures

Citywide Expenditures by Department, FY 2009-10 to FY 2012-13

Department	Actual FY2009-10	Actual FY2010-11	Amended FY2011-12	Proposed FY2012-13	4-yr % change	1-yr % change
City Management	\$ 1,903,743	\$ 1,990,357	\$ 1,924,867	\$ 3,174,892	66.8%	64.9%
Administrative Services	3,941,686	4,055,414	4,004,272	3,986,068	1.1%	-0.5%
Police	8,700,371	9,236,699	10,939,165	10,763,365	23.7%	-1.6%
Fire	7,364,612	7,330,512	11,458,995	8,128,200	10.4%	-29.1%
Public Works	3,392,138	3,485,183	3,251,314	3,427,980	1.1%	5.4%
Env & Dvpmnt Services	2,851,104	3,039,231	3,674,472	3,423,320	20.1%	-6.8%
Recreation	4,056,059	4,099,377	3,979,360	4,162,180	2.6%	4.6%
Capital Outlay	12,945,489	8,950,897	5,504,798	4,961,501	-61.7%	-9.9%
Total Before Transfers	45,155,201	42,187,670	44,737,243	42,027,506	-6.9%	-6.1%
Transfers	4,431,716	3,878,400	4,329,136	4,146,341	-6.4%	-4.2%
Total Expenditures	\$ 49,586,917	\$ 46,066,070	\$ 49,066,379	\$ 46,173,847	-6.9%	-5.9%

Economic Development

- National Citizen Survey Data on Economic Development (% responding “Excellent” or Good”)
 - Employment Opportunities: 26%
 - Shopping Opportunities: 55%
 - El Cerrito as a place to work: 53%
 - Overall quality of business & service establishments in El Cerrito: 59%
- El Cerrito does not have major employers; most residents migrate out of the city to other employment centers
- Major development potential exists around the City’s BART stations; economy has stalled development for the past few years
- Due to land constraints and lack of identification as an office address, El Cerrito is not able to attract large office or corporate tenants
- Future growth is limited to small in-fill opportunities and re-use of existing sites

Principal Employers in El Cerrito (2011-12)

- West Contra Costa Unified
- City of El Cerrito
- US Post Office
- Home Depot
- Orchard Supply Hardware
- Honda of El Cerrito
- El Cerrito Royale
- Shields Nursing Center
- Prospect Sierra School
- Tehiyah Day School
- Lucky's
- Safeway
- Trader Joe's
- Mira Vista Golf and Country Club
- Bed Bath & Beyond
- Nation's
- Romano's Macaroni Grill
- Fat Apple's Restaurant
- Barnes and Noble
- CVS Pharmacy

Environmental Sustainability

- ❑ Environmental stewardship is a City Council and community priority
- ❑ El Cerrito is seen as a regional leader in this area, despite our small size
- ❑ Multi-modal transportation and future housing needs are considerations
 - ❑ Transit ridership is increasing; El Cerrito serves as a regional transit hub
 - ❑ The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation methodology indicates El Cerrito's share of housing units should increase by 397 units by the year 2022

Environmental Trends

- National Citizen Survey: overall quality of natural environment rating 72% “excellent” or “good”
- High level of community participation in “green” initiatives
 - ▣ World class, award winning Recycling + Environmental Resource Center
 - ▣ High level of participation in Curbside Recycling program
 - ▣ Environmental Quality Committee is a valuable volunteer resource
- Climate Action Plan: adoption in 2013
 - ▣ Includes implementation strategy to meet City Council Greenhouse Gas Emission reduction targets
 - ▣ Local Climate Action plans will be key part of regional/State Climate protection goals
- County/Regional/State initiatives the City participates in:
 - ▣ SB 375-Sustainable Communities
 - ▣ Clean Water Program
 - ▣ Healthy Eating/Active Living
 - ▣ East Bay Green Corridor

Commute to Work

(from 2010 Census)

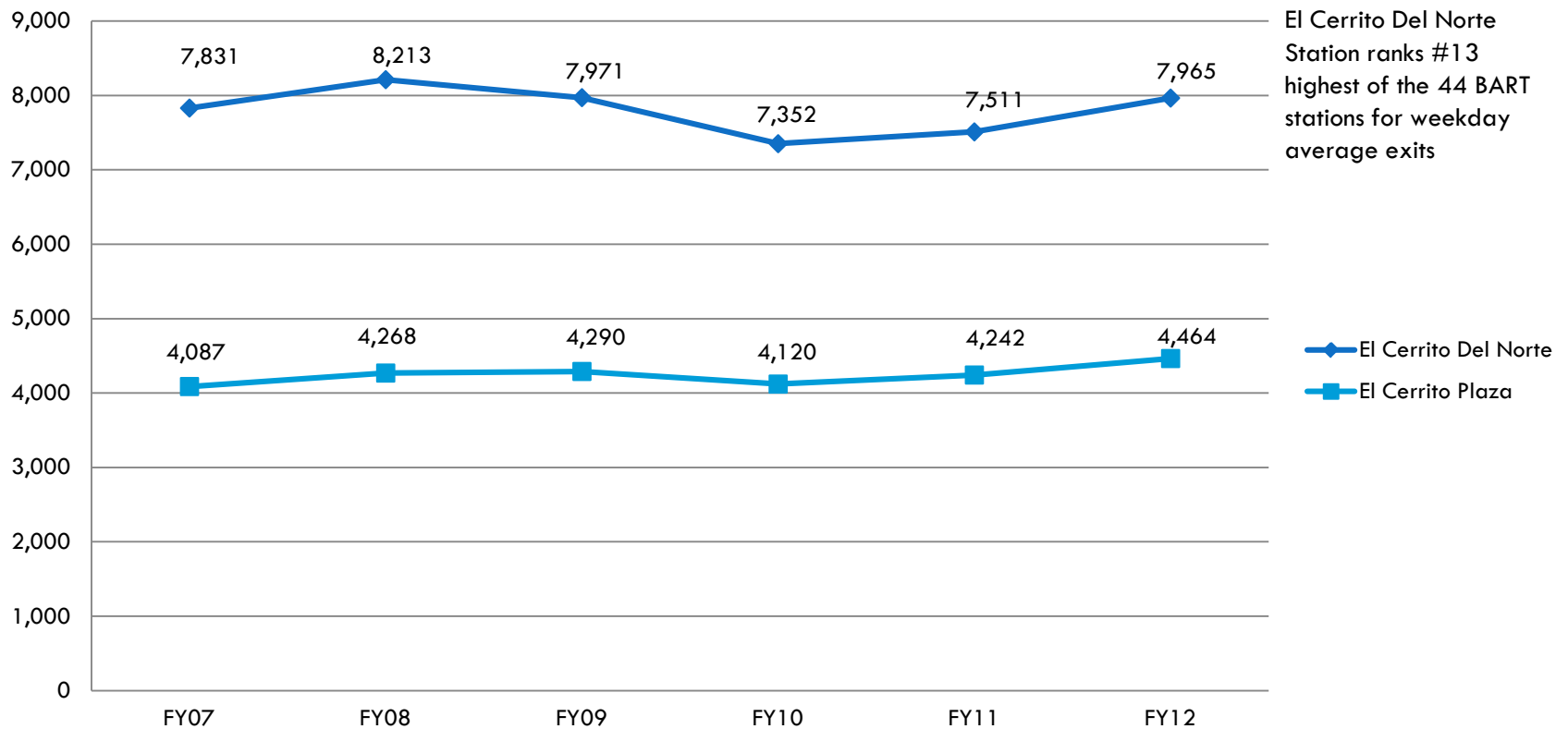
	El Cerrito	Bay Area
Drove Alone	56.6%	67.4%
Public Transportation	22.2%	10.1%
Carpooled	8.2%	10.7%
Worked at Home	7.7%	5.4%
Other Transportation Means	2.9%	1.0%
Walked	2.3%	3.6%

El Cerrito residents reported:

- Mean travel time to work = 30.9 minutes
- 93.1% have 1 or more vehicles, while 6.9% do not have a vehicle

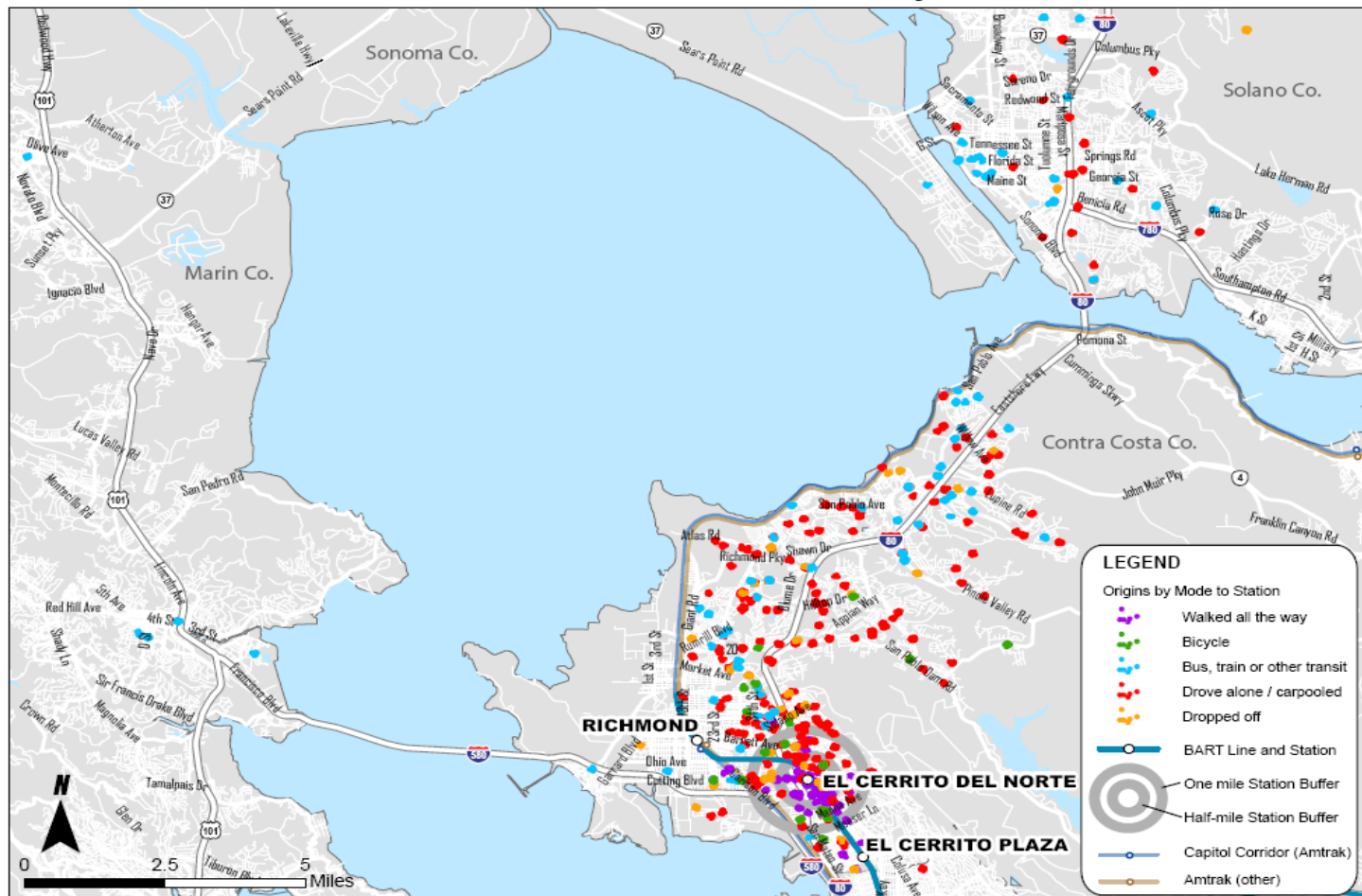
BART Ridership

BART Fiscal Year Weekday Average Exits El Cerrito Stations



Where Del Norte BART Riders Live

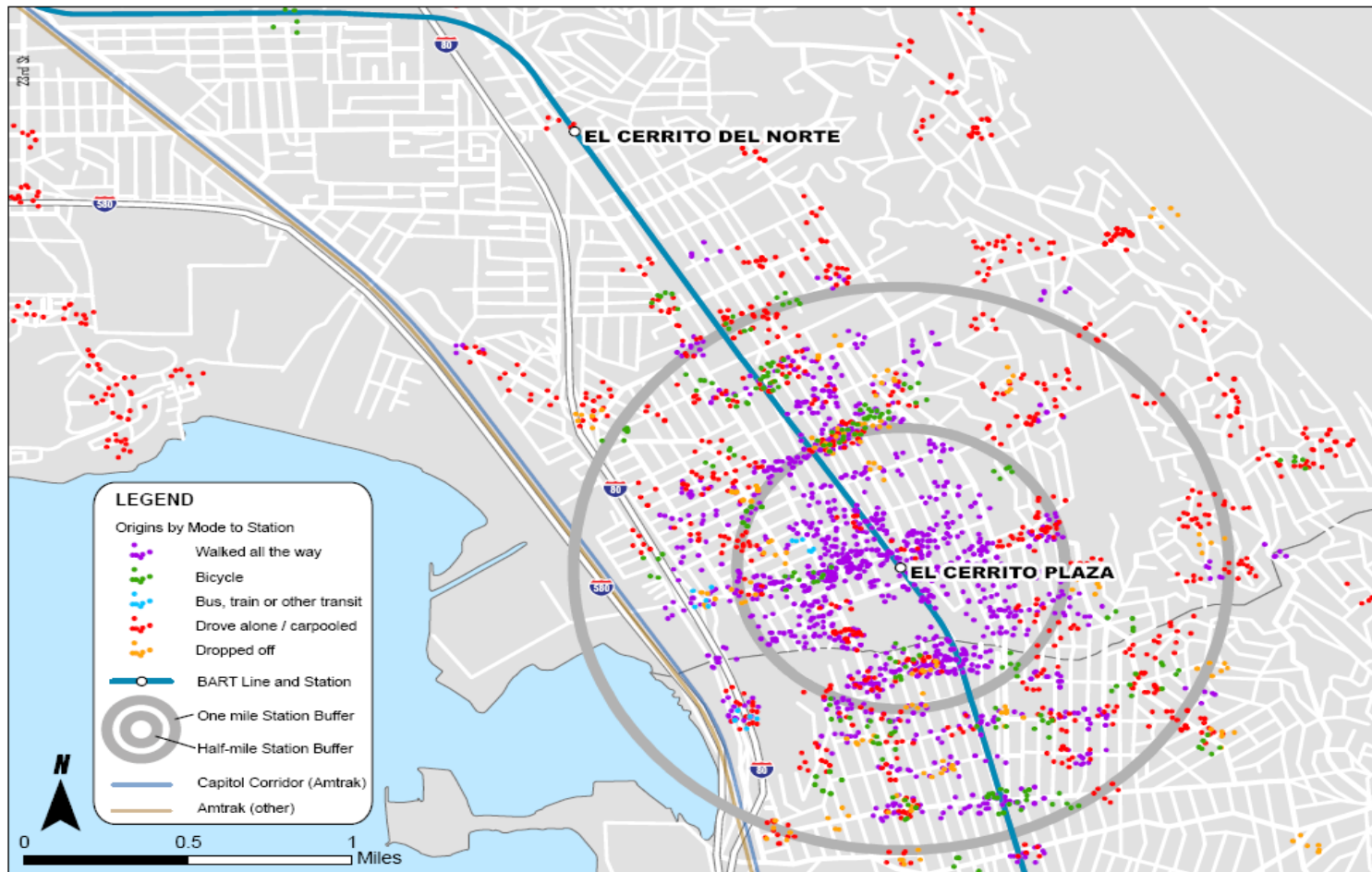
El Cerrito del Norte Station: Home Locations of BART Riders by Mode



Data Sources: ESRI, 2008 BART Station Profile Study (weekday only; data are weighted from survey sample to represent average weekday ridership)

Where Plaza BART Riders Live

El Cerrito Plaza Station: Home Locations of BART Riders by Mode



Data Sources: ESRI, 2008 BART Station Profile Study (weekday only; data are weighted from survey sample to represent average weekday ridership)

Housing Units (2010 Census)

HOUSING OCCUPANCY

- Total housing units: 10,716
 - Occupied housing units: 10,142 (94.6%)
 - Vacant housing units: 574 (5.4%)
 - For rent: 230 (2.1%)
 - Rented, not occupied: 19 (0.2%)
 - For sale only: 68 (0.6%)
 - Sold, not occupied: 26 (0.2%)
 - For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use: 49 (0.5%)
 - All other vacants: 182 (1.7%)
- Homeowner vacancy rate: 1.1%
- Rental vacancy rate: 5.4%

HOUSING TENURE

- Occupied housing units: 10,142
 - Owner-occupied housing units: 6,145 (60.6%)
 - Population in owner-occupied housing units: 14,474
 - Average household size of owner-occupied units: 2.36
 - Renter-occupied housing units: 3,997 (39.4%)
 - Population in renter-occupied housing units: 8,982
 - Average household size of renter-occupied units: 2.25

Age of Housing Stock

Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Year	Number of Units	Percentage
1939 or earlier	1,145	10.7%
1940 to 1949	3,223	30.2%
1950 to 1959	3,262	30.6%
1960 to 1969	1,237	11.6%
1970 to 1979	884	8.3%
1980 to 1989	365	3.4%
1990 to 1999	312	2.9%
2000-2004	88	0.8%
2005 and later	159	1.5%
Total	10,675	100%

Median Rental Rates in El Cerrito and surrounding Cities (2009)

Source: 2010-2015 Contra Costa County Draft Consolidated Plan

City	Type: Bedroom (BR)/ (BA)					Average Rent
	Studio	1BR/1BA	2 BR/1BA	2BR/1+BA	3BR/1+BA	
El Cerrito	\$756	\$1,217	\$1,260	\$1,515	\$1,387	\$1,227
Pinole	\$800	\$944	\$1,082	\$1,798	\$1,610	\$1,246
Richmond	\$985	\$888	\$1,026	\$1,510	\$2,450	\$1,372
San Pablo	\$870	\$899	\$1,247	\$1,908	\$1,751	\$1,335
Pleasant Hill	\$989	\$1,202	\$1,236	\$1,478	\$2,004	\$1,382
Concord	None	\$875	\$1,073	\$1,369	\$1,725	\$1,261
Martinez	\$723	\$1,137	\$1,204	\$1,512	\$1,860	\$1,287
Walnut Creek	\$1,122	\$1,075	\$1,090	\$1,578	\$2,725	\$1,518
El Sobrante	\$1,256	\$1,247	\$1,264	\$1,639	\$1,406	\$1,362

Additional Considerations

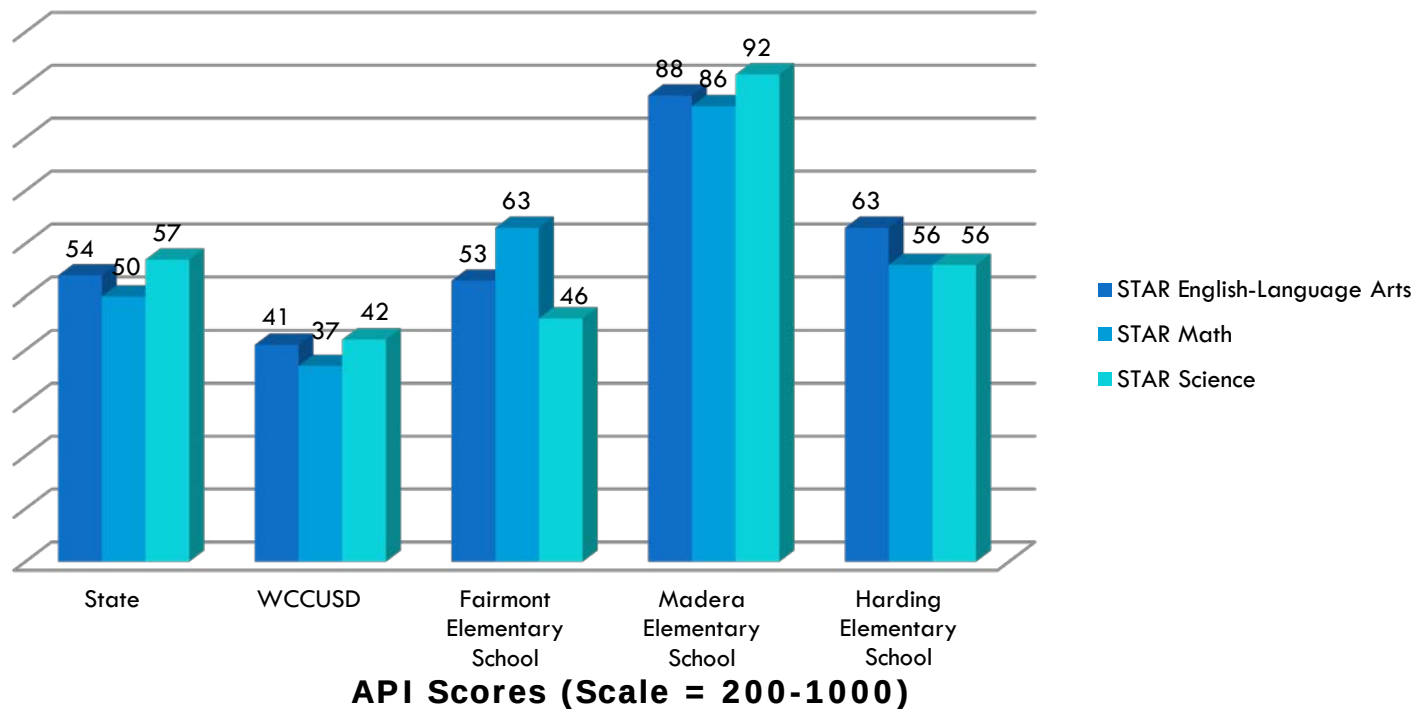
- ❑ Schools
- ❑ State Legislative Actions

Additional Considerations: Schools

- Within City limits, there are 6 public schools (3 elementary, 1 special education elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school) and 5 private K-8 schools
- El Cerrito is part of West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD)
- Partnerships with WCCUSD
 - ▣ Maintenance/programming in WCCUSD parks
 - ▣ After school programs
 - ▣ WCCUSD and City joint use of facilities/fields for school and community activities

WCCUSD Test Scores (2010-11 School Year)

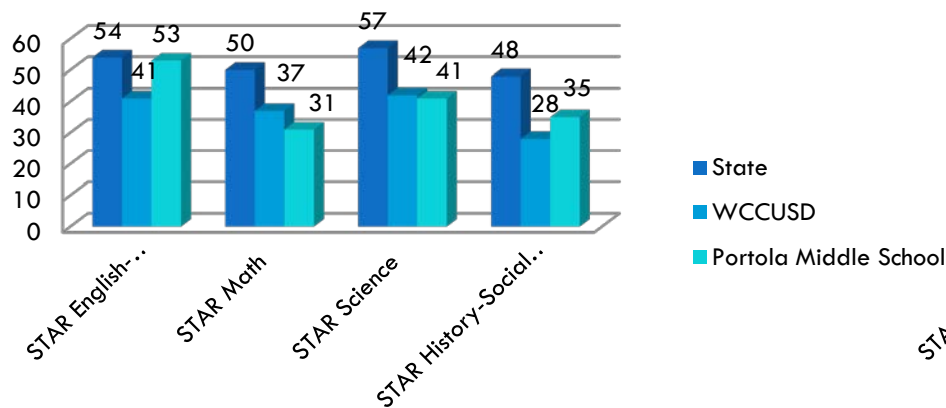
Elementary Schools Score = % Proficient



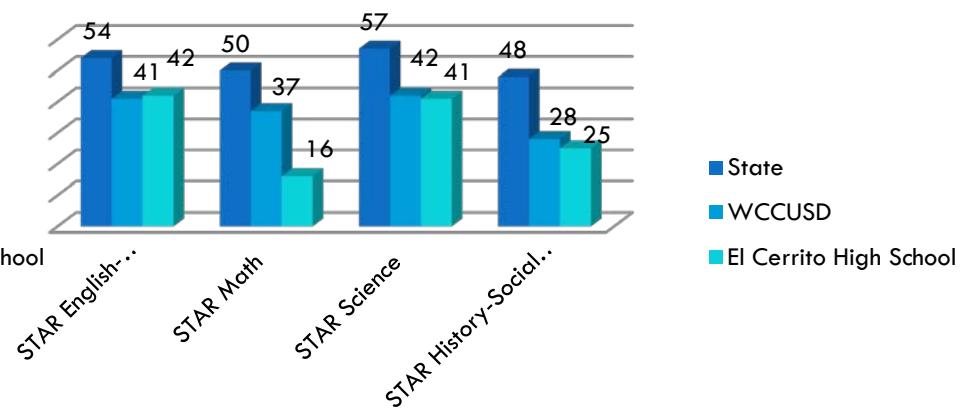
Fairmont Elementary	797
Madera Elementary	949
Harding Elementary	798

WCCUSD Test Scores (2010-11 School Year)

**Portola Middle School
Score = % Proficient**



**El Cerrito High School
Score = % Proficient**



API Scores (Scale = 200-1000)

Portola Middle	705
El Cerrito High	658

ECHS Performance

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Notes
API Rank in CA	Lowest 30%	Lowest 20%	Lowest 20%	Low
Graduation Rate	88.6%	90.4%	88.9%	Above District & State rates
Suspension Rate	37%	32%	36%	Above District average
Expulsion Rate	1.08%	0.32%	1.57%	Above District average
CAHSEE (Exit Exam)				
English-Lang. Arts	48	47	53	Below State; above District
Math	47	40	50	

Additional Considerations:

State Legislative Actions

The State Legislature has taken a number of actions over the past few years that have had a direct impact on El Cerrito and local governments statewide.

These include:

- ❑ Loss of Redevelopment
- ❑ Public Safety Realignment
- ❑ Pension Reform
- ❑ Environmental Regulations

Conclusions

External Factors Impacting El Cerrito:

1. Changing Demographics
2. Aging Infrastructure and Facilities
3. Economic Trends
4. Environmental Trends
5. Environmental Hazards
6. El Cerrito's Location within Bay Area and West Contra Costa County
7. State Legislative Actions
8. School District and other Outside Agencies

Internal Factors Impacting El Cerrito:

1. Funding Constraints
2. Workforce Challenges
3. Organizational Performance

CITY OF EL CERRITO STRATEGIC PLAN
Strengths, Limitations, Opportunities, Threats (SLOT) Analysis

Strengths

- Efficient, flexible, creative, responsive organization
- Stable, engaged, educated City Council
- Educated, supportive constituency
- Financial accountability and focus on fiscal sustainability
- High level of communication, outreach and engagement
- Staying abreast of trends; recognized regionally/nationally, despite small size
- Environmentally conscious
- Reflective of community needs
- Stable labor relationships
- Staff willingness to be leaders in various areas, including showcasing the City as a leadership organization, but also within our specialized professions
- Full service City, placing priority on providing a high level of services in innovative, creative, exemplary ways

Limitations

- Poor economy and loss of redevelopment has had financial impacts, including funding instability/volatility
- Staff needs/vacancies place focus on challenges of having a lean staff in addition to making sure that we have the right staff
- Ability to offer competitive compensation
- Need more focus on advanced/long-term planning: land use, transportation, environmental, economic development
- Tendency to fall back on “we’ve always done it this way”
- Deferred maintenance and facility needs: aging infrastructure, no funding dedicated to maintenance/replacement
- Many City functions are de-centralized and done individually by department, creating inconsistencies and potential for inefficiencies (i.e., purchasing, facilities management, fleet)
- Inefficiencies in customer service in some departments, i.e. forms, permits, information
- Need more focus on organizational development and human resources
- Entitlement process needs focus on improvement and streamlining
- Built-out City presents many challenges in dealing with residents and businesses, particularly with absent/private landowners that do not seem to share the City’s vision

Opportunities

- Using technology tools to increase efficiency, promote engagement, assist with staff needs, and improve customer service
- Citizen engagement in various plans, especially upcoming General Plan update, to provide more feedback and direction to set specific goals, particularly in land use, economic development, budgeting priorities and environmental efforts

- Goodwill created in community by fulfilling previous ballot measures could lead to additional support for future ballot measures
- Improving economy could have positive impact on funding and development
- Staff vacancies create opportunities to bring in new, talented staff as well as evaluate the organization as a whole
- Improved citizen engagement and interest (i.e. library group, boards, commissions and committees) will help shape policy and improve programs
- Changing demographics could have impact on citizen participation, interests (i.e. recreation programming) and demand for services
- Compensation trending toward stabilization, including pension reform, which could make us more competitive in the market for talented employees
- Completion of Specific Plan, participation in advanced planning, and focus on improving entitlement process should attract developers, especially to our BART station areas that are ready for transit oriented development
- Excellent location in Bay Area region with great access to transit lends itself to high development potential
- High numbers of residents and businesses working in creative industries, i.e. artists, musicians and other cultural institutions, could assist in making El Cerrito an arts and cultural destination
- High number of home-based businesses could present many opportunities for economic development and working with/expanding business community
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory moving nearby in the City of Richmond presents many opportunities for spinoff businesses, housing, jobs and transportation in El Cerrito
- Continued and improved work with outside agencies (School District, Stege, Caltrans) could lead to improved policies, programs, and property values

Threats

- Financing/funding still volatile: economy; property assessments from County
- State takeaways and mandates
- Natural disasters and environmental hazards
- Measure R expires in 2017, coincides with labor contracts
- Tough to attract quality employees with current salary/compensation challenges, unknowns from the state regarding pension reform, and perception of government/public employment
- School District impacts property values
- State realignment and our proximity to high crime areas impacts public safety and economic development

El Cerrito City Council Strategic Planning Workshop NOTES September 22, 2012

The following draft Vision, Mission (previously adopted) and draft Values are the result of El Cerrito City Council discussion. These elements will serve as a starting point for the current Council to discuss, refine, and ultimately adopt as part of a City Strategic Plan. Council discussion notes follow the draft strategic plan elements.

OUR VISION (draft)

Our vision states a desired future as a result of the organization's work.

(Draft from September Council session – for discussion and revision on 1/26/13)

El Cerrito is a beautiful, connected, and environmentally-focused Bay Area destination with vibrant neighborhoods, businesses, and public places and cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

OUR MISSION

Our mission represents what the organization stands for and the reason for its existence.

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety, and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

OUR VALUES (draft)

*Our values drive behavior and support
the effective implementation of vision, mission and goals.*

(Draft from September Council session – for discussion and revision on 1/26/13)

Ethics and Integrity

Fiscal Responsibility

Innovation and Creativity

Leadership

Professional Excellence

Responsiveness

Inclusiveness

Transparency and Open Communication

ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

- Keeps the public's interest always in mind
- Abides by professional codes of conduct
- Exercises good judgment
- Does the right thing even when no one is looking
- Knows and follows ethical rules
- Adheres to individual and organizational professional standards in the conduct of the organization's business
- Has the courage to say no
- Is accountable
- Open/honest communication

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Ensure responsible spending of the City revenues with services delivered in the most cost effective, efficient manner
- Maintains financial reserves consistent with City Financial Policy
- Adheres to best practice financial policies and practices
- Attracts outside funding and resources when appropriate
- Forecasts
- Maintains fiscal discipline
- Addresses unfunded liabilities

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY

- Solves problems creatively and is open to new ideas
- Creates new ways of moving the organization forward to achieve its mission
- Fosters new and creative thinking and solutions
- Identifies new ideas/methods/techniques and embrace those that lead to improvement
- Uses emerging technology with purpose
- Problem solves
- Takes risks (calculated)
- Encourages outside-the-box thinking
- Fosters empowerment
- Make it safe to make mistakes and to learn from them

LEADERSHIP

- Has and communicates a vision
- Stands for something
- Sets the example
- Has courage
- Inspires results and effective teamwork
- Communicates and listens effectively
- Makes the hard decisions
- Demonstrates compassion
- Mentors
- Remains steadfast
- Is willing to admit failures/faults
- Puts others first (emotional intelligence)
- Sets the example; mentors others to be successful

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Demonstrates respect
- Is dedicated
- Dependable/reliable
- Keeps skills and knowledge current
- Exhibits excellent interpersonal skills
- Provides stewardship
- Identifies/forecasts issues
- Solution-oriented
- Pays attention to detail
- Humility
- Sees the public and City employees as sources of creative ideas and effective

solutions

- Creates and sustains an atmosphere that fosters a culture of openness, inclusion, compassion and trust

RESPONSIVENESS

- Seeks and utilizes community input
- Listens/responds actively
- Is timely
- Keeps others informed and up to date
- Keeps commitments and does what is said will be done; is reliable
- Engages – two way interaction
- Fulfills commitments and keeps promises that are made

INCLUSIVENESS

- Treats others with dignity and respect
- Demonstrates a welcoming attitude at all times
- Demonstrates sensitivity to the needs, concerns and opinions of others
- Incorporates inclusiveness into programs and services
- Cultivates a broad and diverse network to exchange ideas and make decisions
- Models inclusive behavior when interacting with staff and the community
- Values and promotes full utilization of workforce diversity
- Successfully manages differences in primary language and culture
- Encourages and promotes a work environment in which all individual differences are valued, respected and welcomed
- Seeks or provides resources to promote and support inclusiveness
- Resolves complex issues by balancing needs of diverse groups

TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN COMMUNICATION

- Operates in such a way that others can easily see one's actions
- Champions public transparency laws to enhance accountability and builds trust in government
- Follows open meeting laws in conducting the public's business
- Facilitates public participation in open meetings; encourages candor and welcomes input
- Provides free and easy access to information regarding matters of public interest
- Provides timely, accurate information that is easy to access and to understand
- Seeks ways to increase community participation and inclusion in government
- Considers media, technology and other channels to reach the public
- Listens carefully and remains open to different perspectives
- Explains policies, issues, and changes
- Develops creative ways to get the public involved in a productive way
- Engages in open, honest communication

- Actively seeks citizen participation; strives to keep the public informed and educated about community issues
- Listens to other perspectives with an open mind and a sincere desire to understand

Council Discussion Notes

CONCEPTS TO CAPTURE in Values

Connection between city and community

Integrity

Diversity, equal access

Community focus

Achievement

Respect

Continuous improvement

Collaboration (regional)

Strategic (under innovative and creative; leadership)

Long-term view

CONCEPTS TO CAPTURE in Vision

Beautiful

Sustainable

(environmentally)

Connected

Safe

Destination

Engaged

Innovative

Local businesses

Respect

Strives to be

Forward thinking

Cultural accessible

Inclusive

Unique

Place-making

Walkability

Transit

People of all ages

Not just vanilla

Welcoming

Active; people on the street

Vibrant

What they liked about the examples:

- Using sentence format
- Showcasing what's special; You learn a bit about Albany
- Safety/work/live
- Should complement the mission statement
- Speak to EC uniqueness
- Express a sense of pride
- Keep it in the realm of what is possible to accomplish

Draft Goals for the City of El Cerrito

For Council Consideration and Input at the January 26, 2013 Study Session

Goal A: Deliver exemplary government services.

Strategies

- Increase productivity and efficiency by utilizing data driven analysis to ensure appropriate resource allocation.
- Promote employee development and professional growth.
- Recruit and retain a talented and effective workforce.
- Ensure city programs and services are inclusive of people of diverse backgrounds.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with community members and partners.
- Maintain emphasis on providing excellent customer service.
- *Don't let good be a barrier to great!*

Goal B: Plan for and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Strategies

- Maintain financial discipline by establishing decision-making guidelines to evaluate whether or when to pursue a new project or program.
- Ensure policies, procedures and systems represent best practices in financial management.
- Attract and maximize opportunities for new/expanding businesses.
- Explore opportunities for public/private partnerships.
- Continue to pursue opportunities for new funding, including outside grants.
- Develop a plan to address ongoing and deferred maintenance of facilities and infrastructure.
- Develop a plan to ensure that revenue meets the cost of providing the services including adequate reserves for unanticipated revenue shortfalls.

Goal C: Create a sense of place and community.

Strategies

- Re-imagine underdeveloped and under-utilized properties through advanced planning efforts that encourage investment and/or new development.
- Develop an Economic Development action plan.
- Encourage use of alternative modes of transportations to connect people and places.
- Continue the facilities assessment to prioritize and strategize investment (i.e., library, public safety facility, community center).
- Identify and promote entertainment, recreational, and leisure activities for people of all ages and demographics.
- Celebrate the City's diversity by welcoming residents of all ages and cultures and encouraging their civic involvement.
- Adopt a Revised General Plan that meets the needs of the community now and in the future.

Goal D: Ensure the Public's Safety

Strategies

- Provide transparent information on crime, and address perceptions of safety through outreach and education.
- Utilize environmental design techniques to deter/prevent crimes and enhance safety.
- Maintain disaster preparedness programs and ensure emergency response plans are current.
- Continue multi-division/department teamwork to ensure and enhance the community's safety through a thorough, efficient and comprehensive plan review, permitting and inspection process.

Goal E: Foster Sustainability Citywide

Strategies

- Be a leader in setting policies and providing innovative programs that promote environmental sustainability
- Promote transportation alternatives and land uses that reduce overall vehicle miles traveled
- Implement the City's Climate Action Plan.