



AGENDA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING JUNE 9, 2020 – 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Via Teleconference (for City Council and Staff Only)

Members:

Mayor Gregory B. Lyman

Mayor Pro Tem Paul Fadelli · Councilmember Janet Abelson
Councilmember Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto · Councilmember Gabriel Quinto

Pursuant to Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-39-20, Teleconference Restrictions of the Brown Act Have been Suspended, as Well as the Requirement to Provide a Physical Location for Members of the Public to Participate in the meeting.

Members of the Public will **not** be able to participate directly through the teleconference platform but can watch or listen to the meeting as follows:

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28
2. Radio Broadcast on FM 88.1 or 97.7
3. Livestream online at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Public Comments for items **on the special meeting agenda only** may be submitted one of two ways:

Via email to cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us. Email must contain in the subject line **Public Comments - Not on the Agenda OR Public Comments - Agenda Item #**.

Via Voicemail at [510-306-2558](tel:510-306-2558). The caller must start the message by stating **Public Comments - Not on the Agenda OR Public Comments - Agenda Item #** followed by their name and city of residence, followed by their comments.

The city cannot guarantee that its network and/or the site will be uninterrupted. To ensure that the city council receives your comments prior to taking action, **you are strongly encouraged to submit your comments in writing in advance of the meeting.**

Comments received up until **4:00 p.m. Monday, June 8th** will be provided in advance to the City Council, including transcribed voicemails, and posted online with meeting materials.

Comments received **during the meeting and up until the public comment period is closed**, will be read into the record and will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes. Comments that do not conform to the city council's rules of decorum may be summarized rather than read verbatim. As allowed by the Brown Act, the Mayor may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda.

All comments received by the close of the public comment period will be available after the meeting as supplemental materials and will become part of the official meeting record.

Please note that all information provided in public comments including phone number called with, email addresses and any other personal information written or stated is subject to disclosure on the broadcast of the teleconferenced meeting. Comments posted online will not include personal information.

1:00 P.M. ROLL CALL - CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

1. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person and to items on the special meeting agenda only.

2. CITY COUNCIL BUDGET STUDY SESSION

Action Proposed: Conduct a study session to discuss a Fiscal Response Plan that considers potential strategies for addressing the City's budget.

Contact: Karen Pinkos, City Manager, City Management

3. 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.

- Copies of the agenda bills and other written documentation relating to items of business referred to on the agenda are on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the City Clerk, at the El Cerrito Library and posted on the City's website at www.el-cerrito.org prior to the meeting.
- 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).
- **The Deadline for agenda items and communications** is eight days prior to the next meeting by 12 noon, City Clerk's Office, 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA. Tel: 510-215-4305, email cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
- IF YOU CHALLENGE A DECISION OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN COURT, YOU MAY BE LIMITED TO RAISING ONLY THOSE ISSUES YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE RAISED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. ACTIONS CHALLENGING CITY COUNCIL DECISIONS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE TIME LIMITATIONS CONTAINED IN CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE SECTION 1094.6.
- The City Council believes that late night meetings deter public participation, can affect the Council's decision-making ability, and can be a burden to staff. City Council Meetings shall be adjourned by 10:30 p.m., unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 2.

Date: June 9, 2020
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Karen Pinkos, City Manager, City Management
Subject: City Council Budget Study Session

ACTION PROPOSED

Conduct a study session to discuss a Fiscal Response Plan that considers potential strategies for addressing the City's budget.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The City is facing budget challenges that have been made worse by the current COVID-19 public health crisis. The City Council has been monitoring the City's financial position for the past several months. Staff has already identified approximately \$4 million in reductions, including cuts in expenses, a freeze on hiring, all employees deferring cost-of-living increases, implementing furloughs, and other actions to decrease costs. However, because the City's budget issues have been structural in nature, this means that the proposed reductions will not be enough to build back the City's General Fund Reserve, especially if there is a recession due to the COVID-19 crisis. To that end, the City Council and the Department Directors have been working with Management Partners, our Strategic Plan consultants, to consider additional actions that will impact City services in order to further reduce expenses.

At the City Council meeting of May 19, 2020, the Council discussed a framework and criteria for various services that the City provides, in order to implement a priority-based budgeting model. During this study session, the Council will discuss Management Partners' recommendations for programs and services that could be reduced based on strategic priorities. Management Partners will provide an array of options for reducing programs and services. The City Council will review this information so that they have a complete understanding of the City's financial position and the options for ensuring that the City remains financially sustainable going forward.

No action is being requested at this time. Once the City Council concludes this initial discussion, Management Partners will analyze and refine the recommendations based on their input and feedback, which will be brought back for further discussion and dialogue at an upcoming public meeting (date and time still to be determined).

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

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 "Alexandra Orologas".

Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager

Attachments:

1. Presentation



Council Workshop

June 9, 2020

Nancy Hetrick
Steve Toler

City of El Cerrito

Fiscal Projections and Budget Strategies

Presentation Overview

Review the City's Fiscal Status

Review the City's forecast to understand El Cerrito's fiscal status and discuss the impact of the pandemic

Establish Guiding Principles

Review budget strategy criteria and get agreement on guiding principles

Discuss Fiscal Sustainability Strategies

Discuss fiscal sustainability strategies to address short and mid-term budget shortfalls that will enable long-term sustainability

Next Steps

Discuss next steps for the City to remain solvent in the short term

Fiscal Solvency versus Fiscal Sustainability

Fiscal Solvency

- **Definition:** The ability of an organization to pay its debts and have cash to pay budgeted expenditures
- **Timeframe:** Short term (60 days to 18 months)
- **Primary consideration:** Cash flow projected to be sufficient to meet obligations (employees, vendors, creditors)
- **AB 506:** The ability for a local government to meet its financial obligations for a 60-day period

Cash and liquid assets

Fiscal Sustainability

- **Definition:** The state in which a city's future budgetary resources are expected to be sufficient to sustain public services and meet obligations as they come due
- **Timeframe:** Mid- to long term (2 to 10 years)
- **Components**
 - Current and projected reserves
 - Projected receipts and spending
 - Projected debt
 - Projected fiscal gaps (deficits) or surpluses
 - Projected trends based on different scenarios

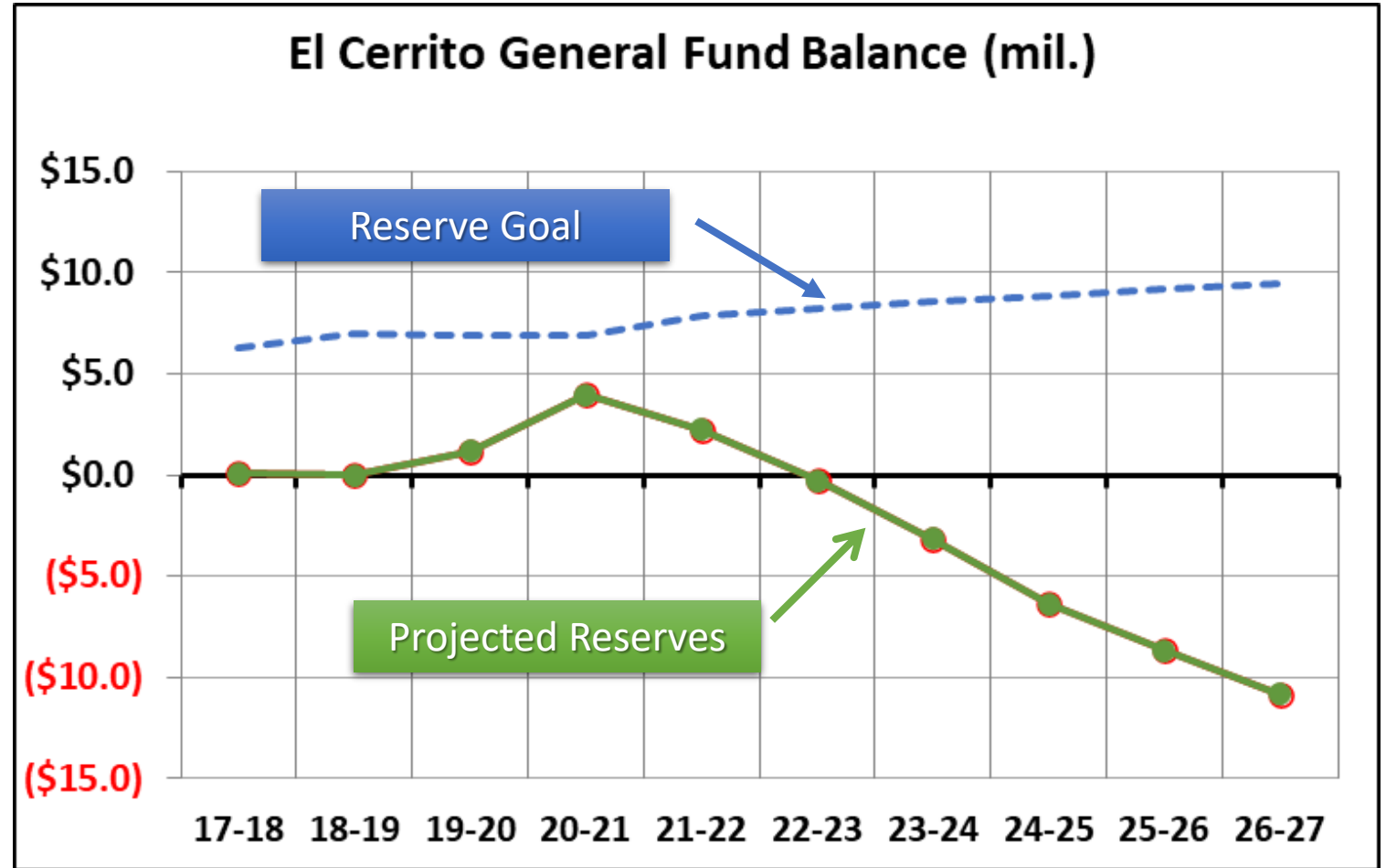
Reserves

El Cerrito's Status Pre-Pandemic



El Cerrito's Fiscal Situation Before COVID-19

- Declining General Fund reserves fell below zero in FY 2018-19
- Long-term forecast expected higher revenues than expenditures, which the City has been working to address



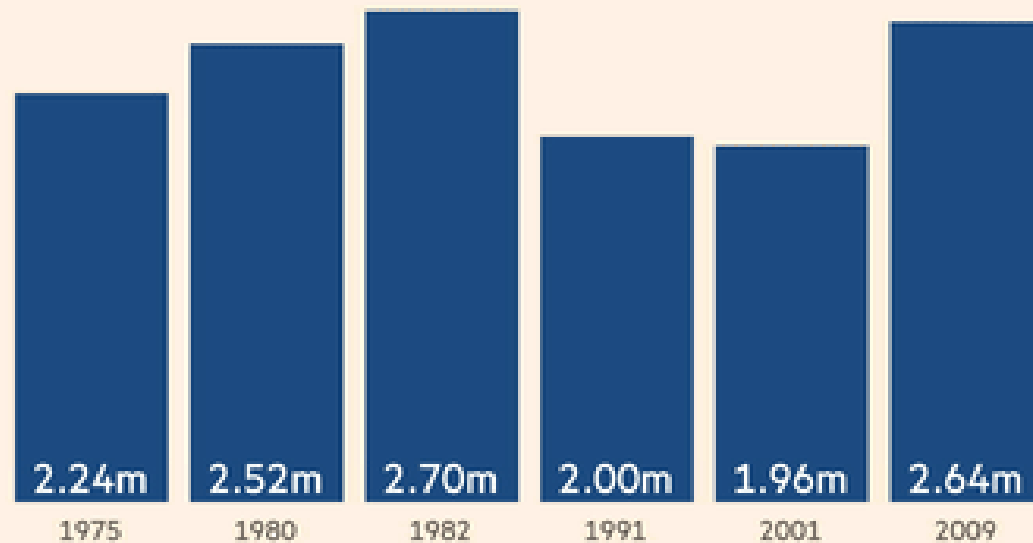
Fiscal Impacts to El Cerrito from the COVID-19 Pandemic



The COVID-19 Recession: Unemployment Spike, Retail Collapse

Covid-19 impact is unprecedented

US Initial jobless claims over four week period



These are the worst four-week periods in previous US recessions

Graphic: Alan Smith, Keith Fray
Source: Refinitiv, FT calculations
© FT

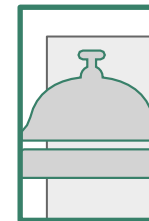
- Nearly 38 million unemployment claims were filed from March 16 to May 16
- Prior six recessions pale in comparison to record-breaking job losses in this Pandemic
- Retail sales plunged a record-breaking 8.7% in four weeks

Key Forecast Assumptions

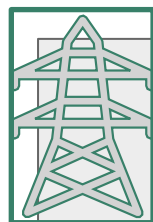
- **Shelter-in-place indefinite;** some restrictions easing
- **Gradual economic reopening** over time
- Severity of the shutdown will have a **prolonged impact into the next fiscal year**
- Potential for a **resurgence in the virus** that could lead to a second shelter-in-place in the winter



Decline in sales tax (up to 10)%



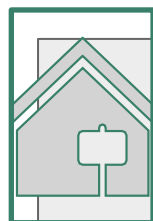
Decline in transient occupancy tax (up to 20)%, returning slowly over the next four years



Franchise Fee revenues expected to remain stable



Decline in development fees (up to 20)%, returning slowly over the next four years



Decline in property values and taxes (up to 3%) in FY 2021-22, returning over a three-year period



Decline in recreation fees (up to 25%), returning slowly over next two years



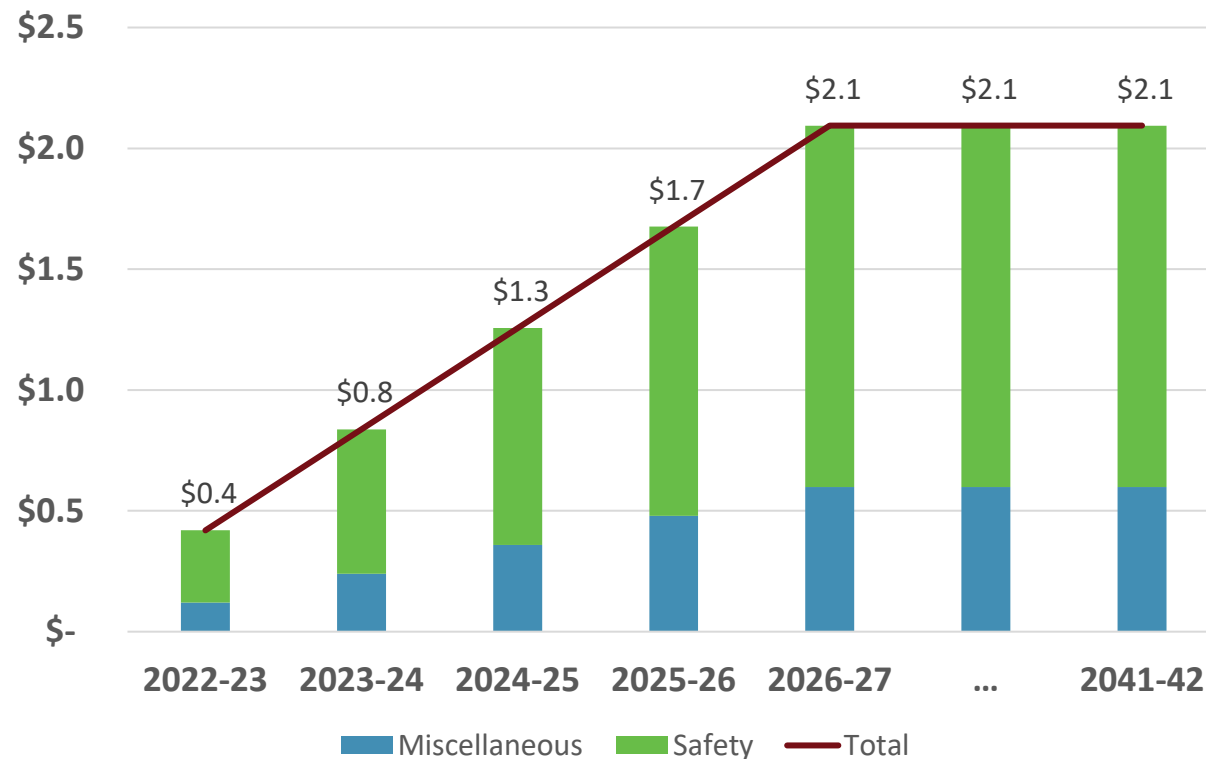
Former RDA bond maturity and dissolution in FY 2025-26 will provide additional property tax revenues of \$1.1 million annually



No assumption for development activity not already under construction in San Pablo Avenue Corridor

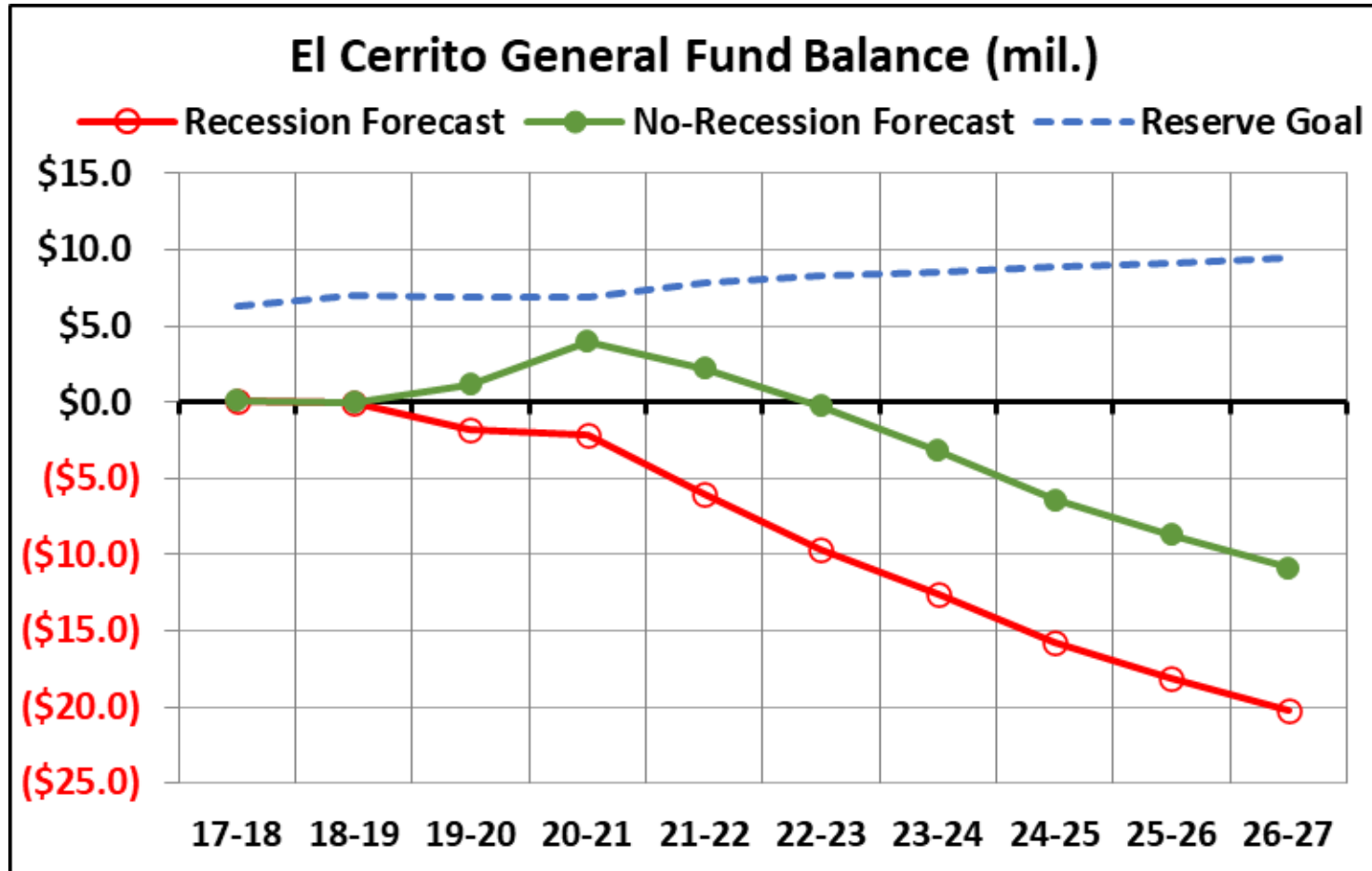
Impact on CalPERS Rates

CalPERS Annual Increased Employer Contributions – 5% Investment Loss
(Millions)



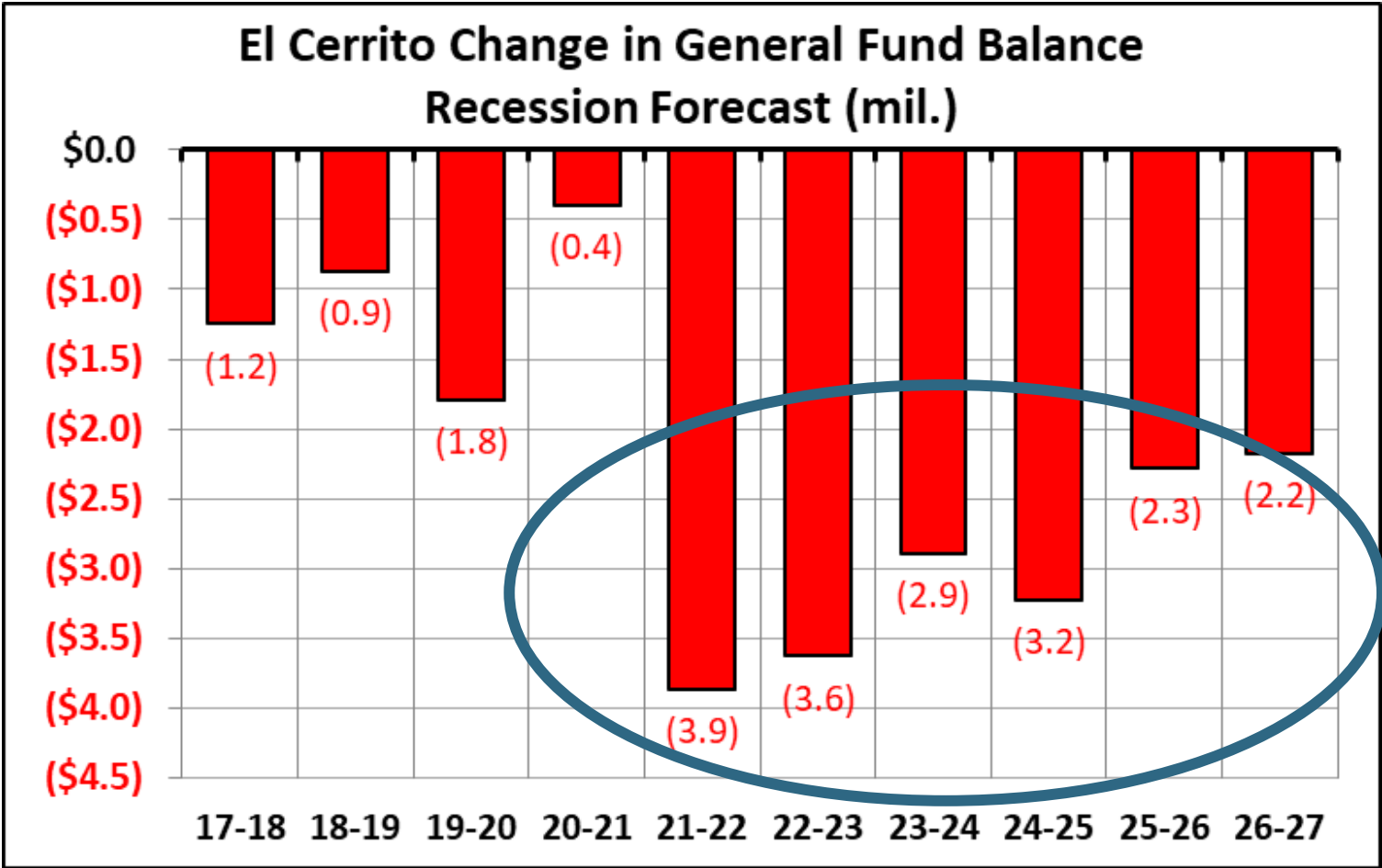
- Current investment losses of **(4%)** for FY 2019-20 (3/31/20)
- A **(5%)** investment loss at 6/30/20 would increase El Cerrito's overall employer costs by up to **\$2.1 million per year through FY 2041-42** based on current staffing levels
- Likely to put pressure on further reductions to the discount rate from 7% to as low as 6%

Dashboard Shows Impact of Revenue Loss



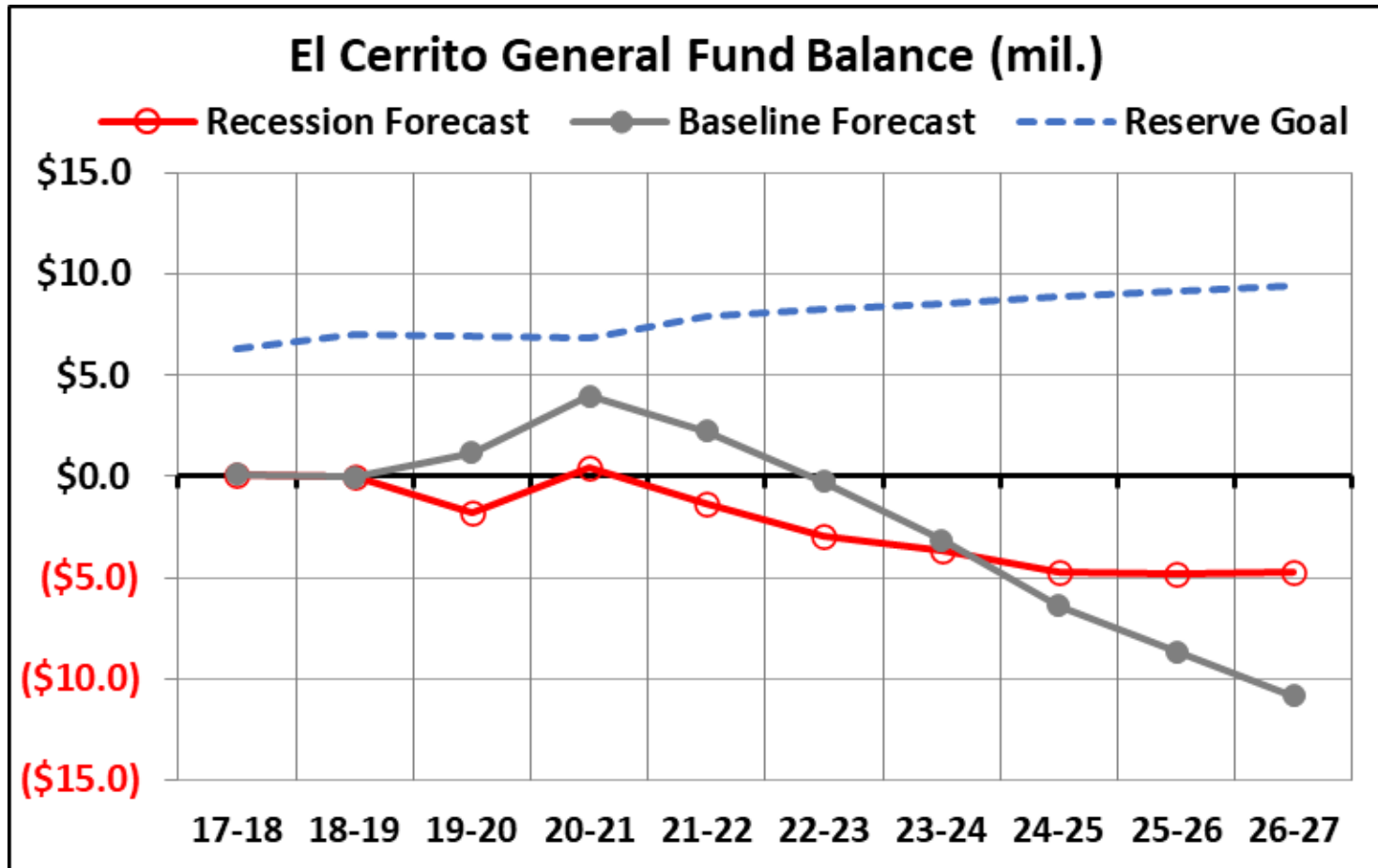
- Recession will significantly worsen the City's fiscal situation
- Reserves are already depleted and must be rebuilt
- Immediate expenditure reductions are necessary
- Federal aid would provide one-time assistance; not included because of uncertainties about availability

Dashboard Shows Impact of Revenue Loss Scenario



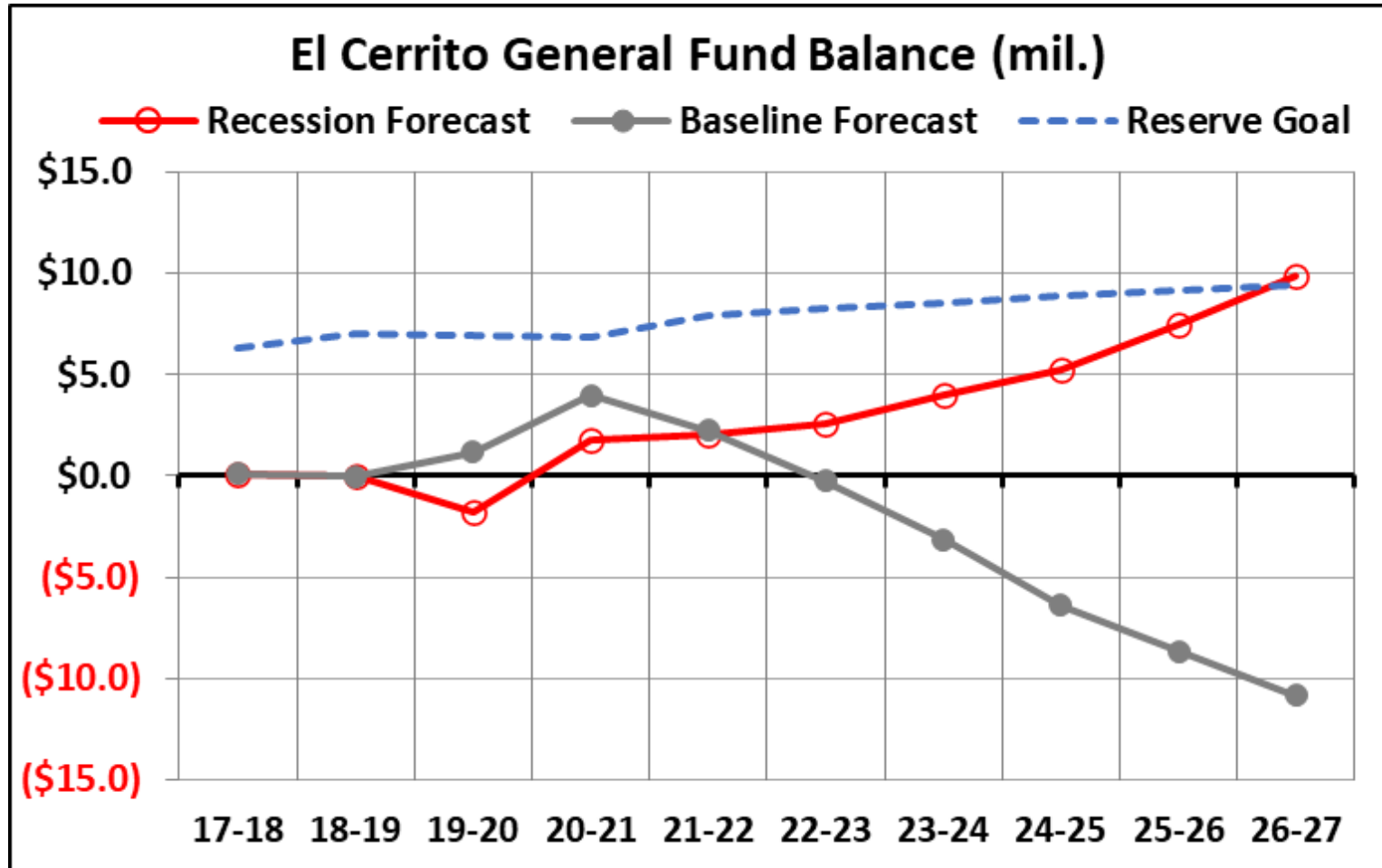
- Recession forecast indicates an ongoing structural gap in the General Fund of nearly \$4 million in FY 2021-22 that reduces to \$2.2 million by FY 2026-27
- City must identify budget reduction strategies of over \$4 million per year to regain solvency

Proposed \$2 million Budget Reductions Are Not Enough



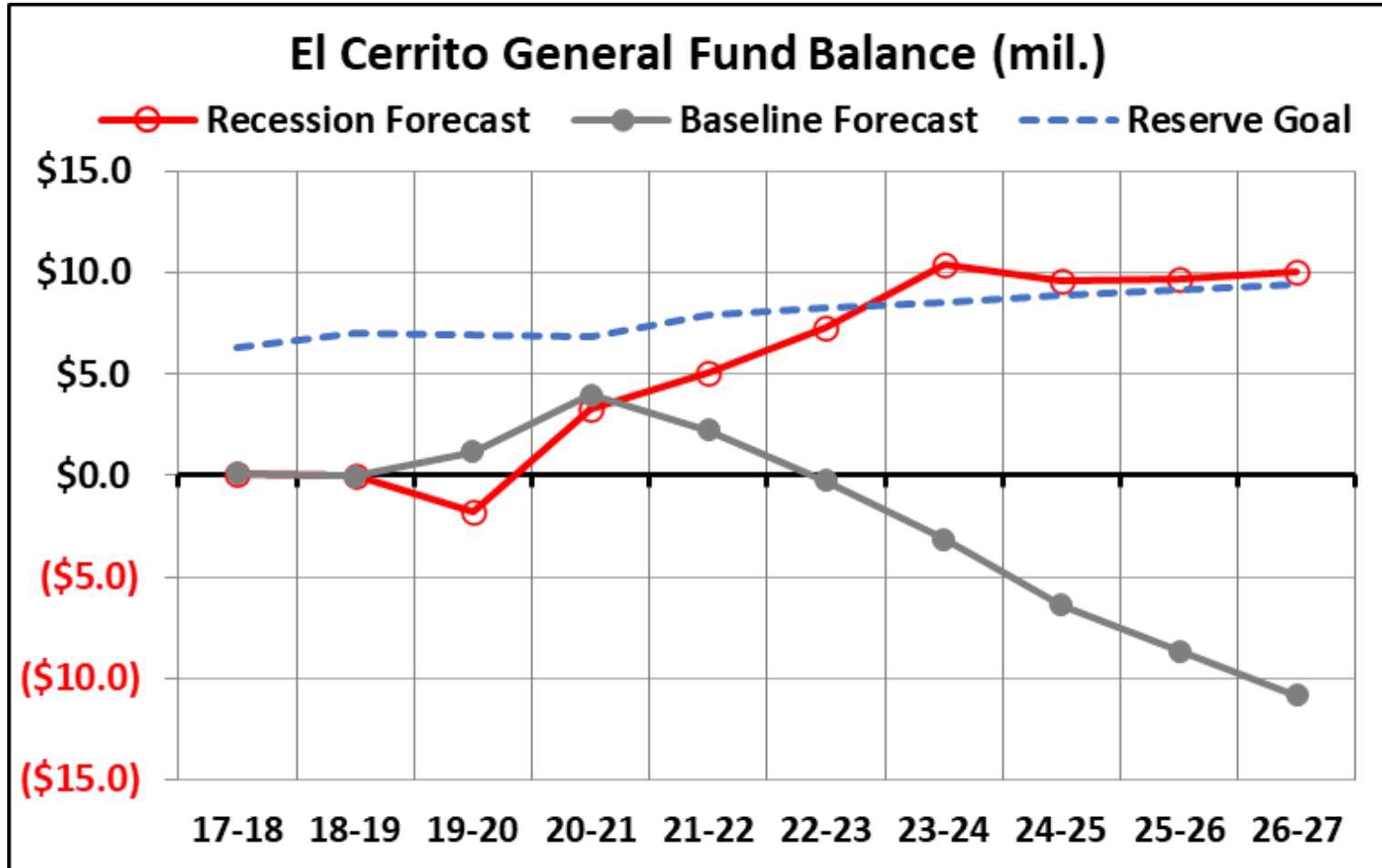
- Reductions of \$2 million already presented by staff and built into proposed FY 2020-21 budget
- Insufficient to close the gap caused by low reserves and COVID-19 pandemic recession

Budget Reductions of \$4 million Only Regains Solvency



- An additional \$2 million in budget reduction strategies is required to regain solvency
- Barely sufficient to restore the General Fund to a minimum reserve goal of 17% by FY 2026-27
- City will still be reliant on TRAN financing
- No assumptions were made with respect to federal aid

Budget Reductions of \$5.5 million Required to Achieve Sustainability



- A total of at least \$5.5 million in budget reductions beginning in FY 2020-21 are necessary to return the General Fund reserves to a sustainable level
- Model includes service delivery restoration of up to \$3.75 million per year beginning in FY 2024-25
- No assumptions were made with respect to federal aid

Summary Fiscal Impacts from COVID-19 Pandemic

El Cerrito was in a fiscal emergency before the COVID-19 pandemic

COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating these challenges and causing revenue losses of \$9.3 million and CalPERS increases of up to \$2.1 million per year

Elasticity of revenue sources will continue to impact the City in future recessions

El Cerrito must immediately address the fiscal gap and adopt sustainability measures

Adding new revenues is infeasible in the next 12 to 18 months

Reduction of \$5.5 million (~11.3%) in expenditures is required starting in FY 2020-21 to recover reserves to minimum level by FY 2023-24

Expenditures totaling \$3.75 million (~6.8%) could be restored beginning in FY 2024-25

Fiscal Sustainability Strategies



Actions Taken by El Cerrito to Date

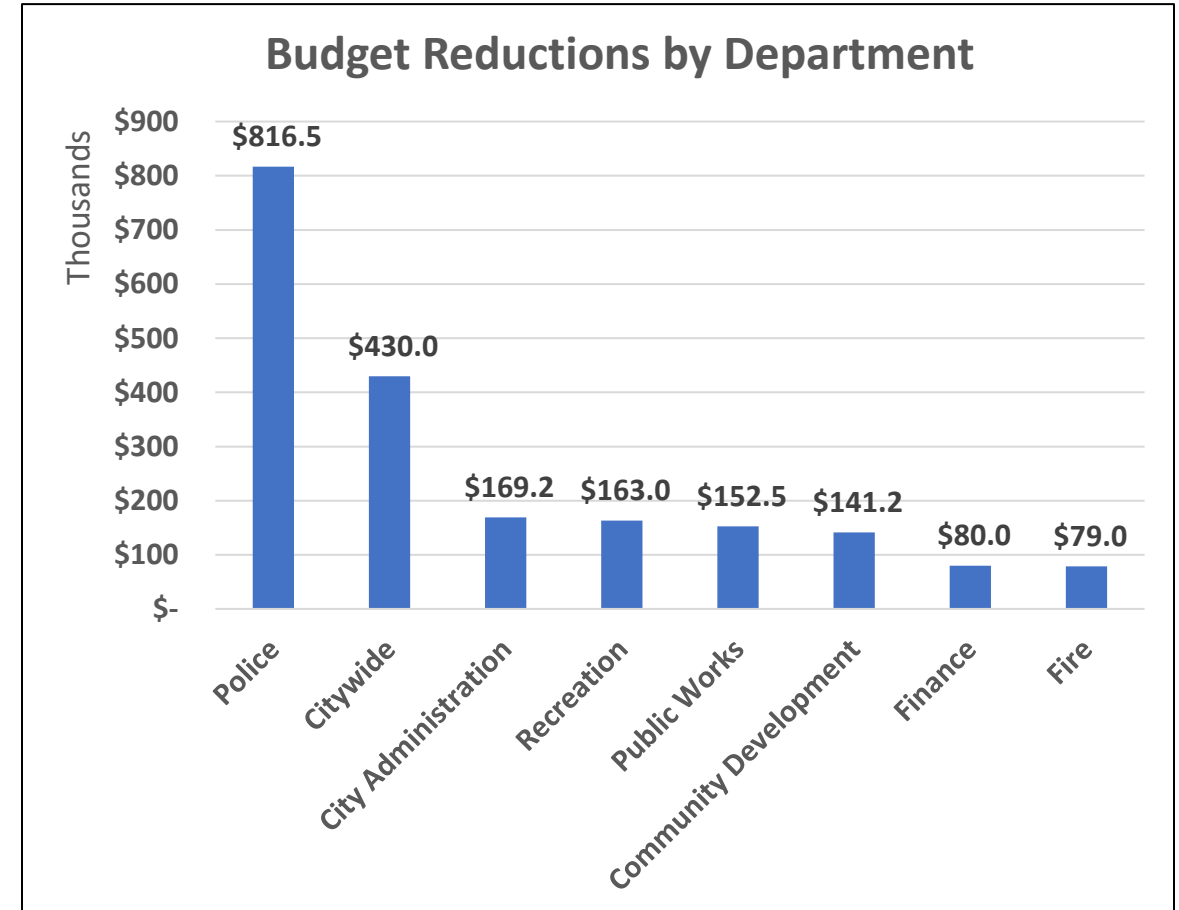
Net Fiscal Impact: Over \$2 million per year starting FY 2020-21

- Renegotiating labor contracts with bargaining groups
- Holding open vacant positions
- Instituting hiring freezes
- Eliminating one school resource officer
- Transferring some parks maintenance, landscaping, and vegetation management expenditures to Measure H funding

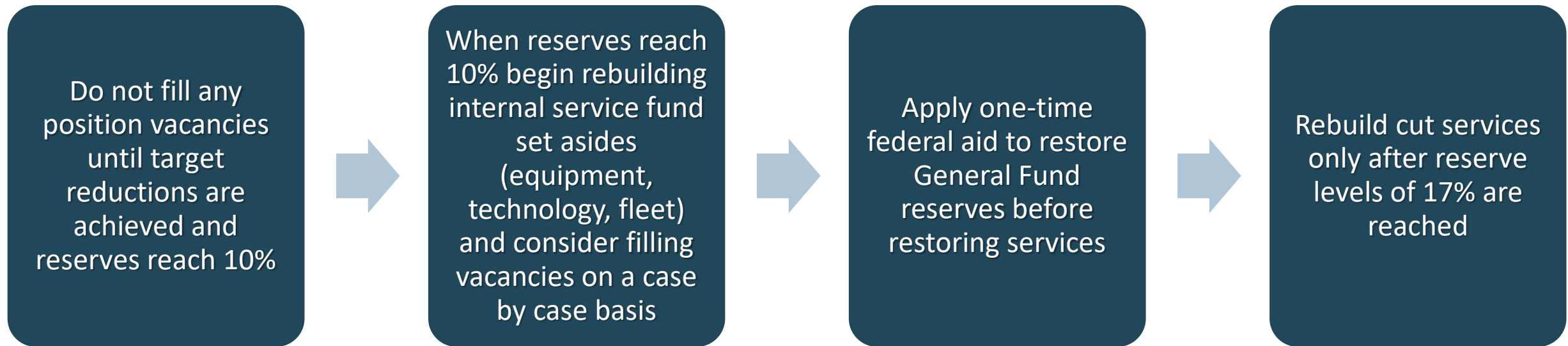
Actions Taken by El Cerrito to Date

Net Fiscal Impact: Over \$2 million per year starting FY 2020-21

- Suspending or reducing programs (e.g., neighborhood traffic management, streetlight program, street banner program, etc.)
- Reducing expenditure categories
 - Professional services
 - Travel and training
 - Events and field trips
 - Public information printed materials
 - Supplies, equipment and vehicles in various departments

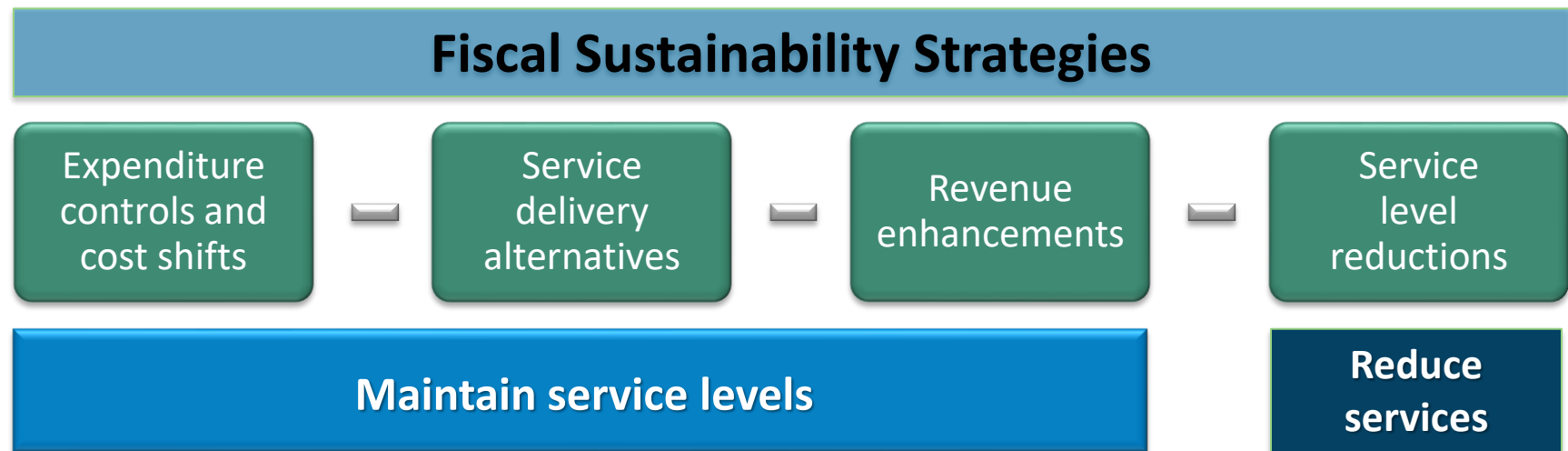


Principles to Consider in Restoring General Fund Reserves



What is a Fiscal Sustainability Plan?

- Comprehensive set of fiscal policies and action steps to provide services in the long term without threat of solvency or default of promised expenditures or liabilities
- In-depth analysis of fiscal strategies
 - Fiscal impact
 - Feasibility
- Implementation Action Plan



Evaluating Fiscal Sustainability Budget Strategies

Criteria 1 – Citywide Priorities

- Top service priorities identified through the strategic planning engagement process

Criteria 2 – Program Service Attributes

- Key factors for evaluating the necessity and importance of specific programs or services

Criteria 1 – Citywide Priorities

Strategic Goals	Applicability		
	Short term (6 months)	Mid term (18 months)	Long term (5 years)
1. Secure the financial health and long-term sustainability of the City	High	High	High
2. Ensure public safety	High	High	High
3. Maintain public facilities and infrastructure	Mid	Mid	High
4. Sustain quality of life and sense of place	Low	Mid	High
5. Foster environmental sustainability citywide	Low	Mid	High

Criteria 2 – Basic Program Attributes

Basic Program Attributes	Description
A. Mandated to provide the program	The City is required to provide this program under 1) federal, state or county law; 2) contractual obligation without the ability to terminate; or 3) by City ordinance that would require a vote of the people to change.
B. Community reliance on the City to provide the program	Programs for which residents, businesses and visitors can look only to the City to obtain the service vs. programs that may be similarly obtained from another government agency or a private business.
C. Cost recovery of the program	Programs that demonstrate the ability to “pay for themselves” through user fees, intergovernmental grants or other specifically dedicated revenues vs. programs that generate limited or no funding to cover their cost.
D. Demand for the program	Programs demonstrating high levels of current or anticipated demand or usage vs. programs that show little demand or usage.
E. Portion of the community served	Programs that benefit or serve a large segment of the City’s residents, businesses and/or visitors vs. programs that benefit or serve only a small segment of these populations.

Applying the Framework

Each proposed budget reduction strategy is **evaluated** and **scored** using the criteria.



The resulting composite score helps to inform **Council deliberations and decision-making.**



The strategies that receive a **lower overall score** should be included in the fiscal response plan.



The total savings generated through proposed budget reduction strategies will need to achieve the **fiscal target** to ensure short and mid term fiscal solvency to the City.

Reduce service
delivery to industry
standard
minimums

Reduce program
service levels

Reduce/implement
contract services

Eliminate Subsidies
and Less Critical
Programs

Strategic Service Reductions and Eliminations

Initial General Fund Budget Strategies

Reduce Service Delivery to Industry Standard Minimums

Budget Strategy	Recommended to Achieve Targeted Reductions
Library Services – Eliminate funding additional library hours above baseline hours provided by County	☒
Fire Apparatus Staffing – Maintain current engine staffing standards and eliminate vacant budgeted positions	☒
Fire Response – Partial reduction of Station 72 services	☒
Police Administration – Replace administrative oversight from sworn to non-sworn personnel	☒

Initial General Fund Budget Strategies

Reduce Program Service Levels

Budget Strategy	Recommended to Achieve Targeted Reductions
Fire Staff and Citizen Training – Eliminate dedicated resources to training and administration; staff CERT program with volunteers or assign to other non-sworn staff	✓
City Administration – Reduce public information and special projects support; reallocate only critical support services to appropriate staff	✓
Recreation Business Services – Reduce business services support	✓
Recreation Childcare Programs – Reduce programmatic support in childcare programs	✓
Police Services – Reduce special law enforcement services	✓
Police Services – Reduce dedicated traffic unit	✗

Initial General Fund Budget Strategies

Reduce/Implement Contract Services

Budget Strategy	Recommended to Achieve Targeted Reductions
Custodial Services – Outsource custodial services to vendor	☒
Parks Landscape Maintenance – Reduce contract landscape maintenance service levels	☒
Public Works Engineering – Reduce engineering consulting services	☒
Financial Services – Outsource payroll processing and reporting	☒
Integrated Waste Program – Outsource recycling program to solid waste provider under franchise agreement when renewed and assess franchise fee of at least 15%	☐

Initial General Fund Budget Strategies

Eliminate Subsidies and Less Critical Programs

Budget Strategy	Recommended to Achieve Targeted Reductions
Recreation Aquatics Program – Eliminate the General Fund subsidy (e.g., close during low demand months, shifting eligible expenses to Measure H, or eliminate program)	✓
Recreation Senior Center Programs – Eliminate the General Fund subsidy (e.g., contract services, lower-cost service delivery approaches, grant funding, implement fees, or eliminate programs)	✓
City Administration – Passport Acceptance Services	✓
City Administration – All published materials such as newsletters and brochures (publish online only)	✓
City Administration – Reduce staff support and eliminate appropriations for non-mandated commissions	✓
Fourth of July and other City Events (unless funded 100% through donations)	✓

Summary of Recommended Budget Reduction Strategies

Category	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23 and Thereafter
Reduce service delivery to industry minimum standards	\$428,250	\$711,000	\$711,000
Reduce program service levels	\$851,000	\$1,602,000	\$1,602,000
Reduce/implement contract services	\$263,750	\$435,000	\$435,000
Eliminate less critical programs	\$417,250	\$722,000	\$722,000
Subtotal – Identified strategies	\$1,960,250	\$3,470,000	\$3,470,000
City recommended budget strategies	\$2,031,000	\$2,031,000	\$2,031,000
Total Budget Reduction Strategies	\$3,991,250	\$5,501,000	\$5,501,000

Time is of the Essence

- Implementation must occur within the next three to six months to meet fiscal target
- Select budget strategies will require elimination of some filled positions
- Absent these strategic changes, the City will be forced to implement layoffs based on seniority until the fiscal requirements are achieved

Next Steps

This is the first step in the difficult conversation about achieving sustainable service delivery

Based on Council feedback further analysis will be conducted to ensure the fiscal target is met

Revised strategies will be presented to Council and implementation of the City's Fiscal Response Plan will occur

Thank you

Steve Toler, Partner
Nancy Hetrick, Vice President

Management
Partners





**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
June 9, 2020 (Revised June 10, 2020)**

The following Public Comments were **received by 4:00 p.m. 6/8/2020**, were provided directly to City Councilmembers in advance of the meeting, and were posted online as supplemental materials at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials.

Agenda Item 2 – City Council Budget Study Session:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 350 Bay Area | 28. Neil Tsutsui |
| 2. Natalie Slama | 29. Amy Rogers |
| 3. Melanie Proctor | 30. Barbara Eckert and Andreas Martin |
| 4. Marlene Keller | 31. Tess Taylor |
| 5. Phil MacEachron | 32. Carrie Schulman |
| 6. Michael Fischer | 33. Denice Dennis |
| 7. Charlie Soldavini | 34. Susan Brown |
| 8. Ronald Forsstrom | 35. Sue Hansen |
| 9. Alissa Hauser | 36. Emily and Nick Kam |
| 10. James Porter | 37. Gail Wentler |
| 11. Roy | 38. Lea Kane |
| 12. Charles Taylor | 39. Zabe Agha |
| 13. Pearson Miller | 40. Christina Gargiullo-Silva |
| 14. Brianna Contaxis-Tucker | 41. Cory Mast |
| 15. Ann Hotta | 42. Megan Wenger |
| 16. Alton Chinn | 43. Gail Riley |
| 17. Rebecca Anaya | 44. Janaki Silva |
| 18. Karl Wiebe | 45. Molly James |
| 19. Mary Milton | 46. Summer Rogers Mathur |
| 20. Marlana Chu | 47. Peter Smith |
| 21. Daniel Schulman | 48. Sue Duncan |
| 22. Sage Howard | 49. Marlene George |
| 23. Scott Corley | 50. Doris Campbell |
| 24. Lauren Schiffman | 51. Catherine Griffin |
| 25. Charlie Soldavini | 52. James Anderson |
| 26. Laurence Diaco | |
| 27. Vanessa Walden | |

Holly Charléty

From: 350 Bay Area <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, June 5, 2020 3:25 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Comment on Budget Meeting Agenda

of El Cerrito City Council,

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

Planning and budget actions should include:

- staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG.
- a report from the Council Sub-committee on the Climate Emergency, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City's CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

We can't wait two years for the City's revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

350 Bay Area

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Berkeley, California 94619

Holly Charléty

From: Natalie Slama <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, June 5, 2020 7:30 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #2

Hello all,

As a concerned El Cerrito resident, I noticed that the potential budget cuts do not contain any mention of reducing staff compensation. In an analysis of 2018 data, El Cerrito has more employees paid at a higher rate compared to other cities in the Bay Area, such as Albany or San Pablo. El Cerrito pays more per capita than Albany or San Pablo. In order to reduce our expenses, we must address overspending in staff compensation and benefit packages. This includes the overtime issue for the Fire Department.

I also strongly disagree with the proposed cuts to the El Cerrito Public Library,

I urge a transparent display of El Cerrito Staff compensation and of the impact that reducing staff compensation has on our city budget.

Thank you,
Natalie Slama

Holly Charl  ty

From: Melanie Proctor [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 6, 2020 6:27 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment not on agenda

I am deeply disappointed to learn that library hours are once again on the table for budget cuts. When the hours expanded, our family was able to visit the library more often than we had in our prior ten years of living in El Cerrito. Particularly with El Cerrito school campuses unlikely to be open next year, the library is an invaluable resource. It should be treated as such.

Please take the library off the table.

Melanie Proctor
El Cerrito resident

From: [MARLENE KELLER](#)
To: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 10:13:12 AM
Attachments: [City of El Cerrito Fiscal Projections & Budget Strategies for June 9 2020 Council Workshop.pdf](#)

Mayor Lyman and Council members,

I am very distressed after reading the Management Partners consulting report "Fiscal Projections and Budget Strategies" prepared for the June 9, 2020 Council Workshop (see attached) because I see that on page 26 they call for eliminating funding library hours above the baseline provided by the county.

I am so distressed at what city management is doing that I resigned from the Financial Advisory Board this morning so that I could speak more freely about the city's budget crisis.

Library hours:

Last month Council spoke eloquently to keep library hours (except for Sunday closure) and voted unanimously to retain library hours above the 35 hours funded by the county. So, I do not understand why city management would want to bring the matter back to Council. Any consultant and city management that describes cutting library hours as being justified under the heading "Reduce service delivery to industry minimum standards" is not dealing in truth and justice, but about obfuscation.

Adequate library hours means poor kids and their families have fundamental access to learning and personal growth. If we shut the door on that, we are saying that we do not value their future.

Keeping library hours above the county baseline represents only \$100,000 of the city budget. Yet the return on investment is enormous: kids in their first five years getting access to education; school age children having access to books and programs that supplement their in-school learning; teens participate in STEM programs; and adults have access to the internet, books, CDs, and other media that they cannot otherwise afford.

Cutting library hours would be unjust. It would mean that you have changed your mind and are willing to sacrifice the welfare of ordinary people. I am hoping that is not true.

The budget crisis:

Cutting the library hours will not prevent the layoffs that will have to be made in order to put the city on a better financial path. What I see is that the city has delayed recommending necessary layoffs far longer than they should have. The city is continuing to borrow short term funds to manage its cash flow. And the city continues to overestimate incoming revenue.

But what I am most shocked by happened when I ran into a senior member of the

city's public safety staff at a grocery store recently. He's someone I had respected. He spent about twenty minutes complaining about how he had been unfairly compensated and mentioned that the city was continuing to fund added library hours as if those funds were coming out of his own pocket. Here was someone who earns a hefty six-figure salary, who will have a lavish pension compared to the average American who will retire with no pension--and he was angry enough that he wanted our community (that he doesn't live in) to pay the price with reduced library hours to fund him and his colleagues.

For me, this means that at the heart of our city budget crisis is an unaffordable problem. We pay out a huge amount of money as salary, benefits and pensions that is vastly disproportionate to what any city can afford. And even a good man no longer sees that he is in service to the public, but has focused for too long on what he can gain for himself with each budget. That entitlement mentality has helped to get us to the brink of insolvency. And it needs to stop.

Also at the heart of our budget crisis is another problem, but one that you can fix now. We got to near insolvency because previous city management was not honest with Council about the state of its finances. Numerous accounting and budget deceptions were used to conceal the enormity of the problem. And worse, Council's role and decisions were not respected.

Please say to city management that you have received input from the public and that the library funds will not be cut. The city needs to move on to larger dollar cost cutting measures.

Marlene Keller



El Cerrito, CA 94530

From: [Phil MacEachron](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Not on the
Agenda
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 10:25:49 AM

Regarding budget cuts I would like to see at least an equal \$ amount cut from administrative budgets including reducing redundant or overpaid positions, as from direct services to the community.

From: [Michael Fischer](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 2:36:16 PM

Dear Councilmembers —

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

As your Library Commissioner, I am writing as your indicated spokesperson for the library and its patrons. This email is in response to the proposal in the report of the city staff's budget consultant that the city cut library hours to the inadequate bare minimum of 35 hours a week provided by the county.

Once again I find myself writing to you urging you not to cut library hours in the face of the city's very real budget crisis. I want to emphasize that the city's budget crisis is real not because anyone doubts that it is so, but to emphasize that we need solutions to the budget crisis that are also real.

We have already spent hours of council time discussing this one item, which constitutes less than two-tenths of one percent of the city's budget. As the council well knows, and after an impassioned plea by the city manager to cut the item, the council voted 5-0 not to do so at its meeting on April 25, a little over six weeks ago. So the city is already committed to continuation of library hours.

Yet city staff (and the consultants who take their direction from staff) seem to be fixated on cutting library hours that are of incalculable value to our community and especially the neediest among us. City staff cannot show any meaningful assistance on the budget crisis from cutting an item that is less than the pay of any city department head, and less than one-half the pay of some.

I have provided information to you several times showing how increased hours have increased library usage, including an astounding 50% increase in computer logins — a critical fact showing how the more library hours help the community overcome the digital divide.

This cut in the city budget would inflict the harshest wounds on our poorest community members:

- A closed library denies people internet access to get online for government help, a vital resource during this pandemic
- A closed library denies people internet access to utilize the many resources providing information to those seeking jobs or other assistance
- A closed library denies people access to the help of a librarian for any reason
- A closed library denies young children from poor families access to books that are vital to the acquisition of literacy skills
- A closed library denies people experiencing homelessness a place they can go for respite from life on the street.

These are only a very few of many examples of how a closed library falls heaviest on the neediest, while the more fortunate among us would suffer little loss from reduced hours.

It is time for the council to let city staff know once and for all that real solutions to the budget crisis lie elsewhere. After all, library hours have already been cut 8% due to the county's regrettable decision to eliminate Sunday hours. Our library is a highly valuable multi-faceted resource: the building, the printed collection, internet access, shelter, and helpful and dedicated library staff that serve us all. Every hour that resource is closed is a waste of this most-beloved, most-needed, and most-used of all community resources.

Michael A. Fischer (he him his)

[REDACTED]

El Cerrito City Designated Library Commissioner
Vice Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

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

From: [Charlie Soldavini](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Budget
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 4:32:56 PM

It seems as if the city has too many administrators at the top. With too many you tend - with good intentions - to offer more services and programs. Without figuring out how to finance the programs you tend to go into debt. It's the American way, but you have a responsibility to the taxpayers and citizens of El Cerrito. My question is how did you get El Cerrito into so much debt?? Who is responsible? The next election will be interesting.
Charlie Soldavini

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ronald Forsstrom](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Library
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 5:16:03 PM

As much as I would love to have the library open many many hours , at this time I believe the cities finances are in such trouble, the city should not support the library.

Barbara Forsstrom

Sent from my iPad

From: [Alissa Hauser](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #7
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2020 10:50:56 PM

People all over the United States are marching in the streets demanding that communities begin to look at police department budgets. It has been shown repeatedly that investing in education, recreation and mental health services creates healthier communities with less need for policing. Yet the plan being considered seems to look at how to harm our community while ensuring city employees receive more taxpayer revenue per employee than any other municipality in our region. I have been sickened to learn about the financial mismanagement of our City and do not understand how the City council allows it to continue. To be considering cutting care for children and seniors, and to cut the gatherings that bring our community together- while not looking at cutting police, fire department benefits, or cutting overinflated city employee budgets- seems like our city management is looking out for themselves first and the residents of el cerrito last, doesn't it? As a long time homeowner in this community, I hope the city council pushes our city management to balance the budget not on the backs of our seniors and our kids, but to revisit the huge benefits and salaries our city seems to pay out to its employees. And to ask the question: What do we need to invest in to create less need for police in our community?

From: [James Porter](#)
To: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); gquinto@el-cerrito.ca.us; [Janet Abelson](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: E.C. Public Library Cuts
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 8:47:28 AM

Dear Council members,

I fully endorse Michael Fischer's message pleading against library cuts. I wrote earlier asking you to extend the open hours; I now hear that this decision, voted on positively by you, is under threat again.

Please assure me that you will resist the pressures to eliminate this essential public service.

Sincerely,

James Porter



El Cerrito, CA 94530-2526

From: rharkow@comcast.net
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Library Hours
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 11:21:37 AM

Michael Fischer, the library commissioner, asked Nextdoor members to write about library hours. He gave some really substantial reasons why the library should be open for full hours.

I remain unconvinced. The library only recently expanded its hours, and we got by OK for a long time before then. If people prepare, we can accomplish our library-related tasks within more confined hours.

I would rather use town funds for more pressing concerns. For example, are you aware that gophers are ravaging our neighborhood? All our lawns are getting destroyed. Eradication probably has to be a city-wide effort, since removal from one property would just cause them to head to another. But, I suppose that's too expensive for us to take on now.

A less expensive but needed task is to replace some street signs. Some are so worn out you can't even read them anymore.

Anyway, I miss the library but am happy to arrange my schedule to use the facilities at whatever times it's open.

Thanks,
Roy

From: [Charles Taylor](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: Save El Cerrito Library Hours funded by El Cerrito!
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 12:29:48 PM

Dear Councilmembers —

I am writing to you, again, to strongly urge you to preserve the funding for the El Cerrito Library hours that come from the El Cerrito City Budget. In this day of economic, social and racial strife, preserving the hours so that the people who need access to computers, the internet, newspapers, books and even relief from the heat, can have that access as much as possible. The recommendation of the consultant and of the city manager is short sighted and morally wrong. Please confirm your earlier vote to continue the city's contribution to keeping the library open.

I endorse the email Michael Fischer sent to you yesterday and include it below.

Sincerely,

Charles Taylor

[REDACTED]
El Cerrito, CA
[REDACTED]

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

As your Library Commissioner, I am writing as your indicated spokesperson for the library and its patrons. This email is in response to the proposal in the report of the city staff's budget consultant that the city cut library hours to the inadequate bare minimum of 35 hours a week provided by the county.

Once again I find myself writing to you urging you not to cut library hours in the face of the city's very real budget crisis. I want to emphasize that the city's budget crisis is real not because anyone doubts that it is so, but to emphasize that we need solutions to the budget crisis that are also real.

We have already spent hours of council time discussing this one item, which constitutes less than two-tenths of one percent of the city's budget. As the council well knows, and after an impassioned plea by the city manager to cut the item, the council voted 5-0 not to do so at its meeting on April 25, a little over six weeks ago. So the city is already committed to continuation of library hours.

Yet city staff (and the consultants who take their direction from staff) seem to be fixated on cutting library hours that are of incalculable value to our community and especially the neediest among us. City staff cannot show any meaningful assistance on the budget crisis from cutting an item that is less than the pay of any city

department head, and less than one-half the pay of some.

I have provided information to you several times showing how increased hours have increased library usage, including an astounding 50% increase in computer logins — a critical fact showing how the more library hours help the community overcome the digital divide.

This cut in the city budget would inflict the harshest wounds on our poorest community members:

- A closed library denies people internet access to get online for government help, a vital resource during this pandemic
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- A closed library denies people experiencing homelessness a place they can go for respite from life on the street.

These are only a very few of many examples of how a closed library falls heaviest on the neediest, while the more fortunate among us would suffer little loss from reduced hours.

It is time for the council to let city staff know once and for all that real solutions to the budget crisis lie elsewhere. After all, library hours have already been cut 8% due to the county's regrettable decision to eliminate Sunday hours. Our library is a highly valuable multi-faceted resource: the building, the printed collection, internet access, shelter, and helpful and dedicated library staff that serve us all. Every hour that resource is closed is a waste of this most-beloved, most-needed, and most-used of all community resources.

From: [Pearson Miller](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments. June 9th 2020 Study Session. Agenda Item #2
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 12:43:54 PM

Dear City Council:

The independent consultant's presentation today is sobering. El Cerrito's financial condition is dire. I believe the response of staff or council so far has been slow, timid and too optimistic. I understand how incredibly difficult your decisions today and in the days to come will be. But putting off hard decisions now will make the future worse for all of us and will lead to bankruptcy. Our credit rating has dropped due to the lack of planning, foresight and management by the city. We are faced with borrowing 25% of our budget at high rates and little prospect to get out of debt soon, just rolling the loan over year to year at higher rates. We must make drastic cuts now to save our city. 1.) The council has spent enormous amounts of time debating library cuts and decided against it. The decision must stand without wasting more time debating a \$100k cut when we need to cut \$8 Million. Library hours support the poorest and most vulnerable among us. 2.) Not filling vacant positions does not save money if they are merely backfilled with overtime. Last year we spent over \$500k of brand new revenue on overtime for the fire department due to not filling vacant positions. 14 of the 18 highest paid positions are in the fire department. We must reduce fire department management and captain positions and overtime must be stopped to help save us from bankruptcy. I support public safety but compared to other cities we are overspending. Period. We cannot afford the best, that has driven us to where we are today. 3.) I appreciate the 10% cut to staff pay based on furlough days. That is not enough. You must demand layoffs and overall pay cuts. We have many more employees per resident and a much higher per cost per resident than any surrounding city. Again, we can no longer afford the best if we want to avoid bankruptcy. The time to debate optimistically about minimizing the damage to our city over. The damage has been done. Every independent voice (FAB, State auditor, our own auditors, our current consultants) have been sounding the alarm for at least several years. That was the time for preventing draconian cuts. That time is past and the staff and council must admit to themselves this is a crisis far greater than previously acknowledged and act accordingly.

Pearson Miller
[REDACTED] El Cerrito

--

[Pearson Miller](#)
[REDACTED]

From: [Brigrace](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment on cutting library hours
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 12:44:13 PM

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

Please do not cut library hours or funding! Libraries are important resources for youth after school, for local citizens, and particularly for homeless to access- computers for job search and health resources, a place of safety, homework and resume writing assistance, and knowledge in all subject areas. Cutting the hours and funding of this institution would hurt the entire community. Please support our library.

- El Cerrito resident and university student, Brianna Contaxis-Tucker

Brianna

From: [Ann Hotta](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – 6/9/2020 Special City Council Meeting agenda item #2
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 4:11:42 PM

Budget cuts are unpleasant, and some of them will directly affect my family; of course nearly all of them will have some sort of affect. Nevertheless, I feel them to be necessary. Please don't kick the problem forward for someone else to deal with; make the hard, and possibly unpopular choices.

Regarding the Integrated Waste Program – "Outsource recycling program to solid waste provider under franchise agreement when renewed and assess franchise fee of at least 15%" Does this refer only to the recycling portion of waste management or the whole thing? How would that affect the local business currently providing this service? I would like to see the service continue to be provided locally if possible.

Ann Hotta
El Cerrito resident

From: [Alton Chinn](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Budget Strategies and City Council Workshop
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 6:11:49 PM

Dear Council Members,

I have reviewed the strategies recommended by Management Partners, and generally agree with the two sets of criteria enumerated by the council.

I am unclear about what each budget strategy entails. I also wish to know how much money will be saved with each strategy.

1. What hours would be eliminated from the El Cerrito library and what would be the resulting savings?
2. How many firefighters do we have now, and how many vacant positions?
3. How will Station 72 services be reduced, and how will the risks of fire season in the hills be mitigated?
4. What business services does the city provide for recreation, and what will be the impact of this reduction?
5. What recreation childcare programs will be affected by this reduction?
6. Out of the total custodial budget, how much would be saved by outsourcing?
7. What would be the impact of reducing engineering consulting services? Would certain projects not proceed or be postponed? Which projects?
8. Out of the total cost of payroll processing and reporting, how much would be saved by outsourcing?

Finally, I still find it disturbing that El Cerrito's pre-COVID-19 structural problems crept up on us apparently undetected. That really compromises trust in our government.

Thank you.

Alton Chinn



From: [Rebecca Anaya](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – agenda item #2 (Special City Council Budget Meeting June 9, 2020)
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 6:13:13 PM

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

Bay Area Communities and the state of CA are to be commended for their rapid response to COVID-19. This health emergency has shown how rapidly governments can mobilize when urgent measures are required to sustain the health of the community. Climate change is also a global and local emergency which needs our constant attention. Our response to the climate crisis cannot be something we set aside whenever a new crisis strikes.

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

El Cerrito is a small city; however there are many cities in the Bay Area that have developed plans and begun implementation on the urgent action necessary to address the Climate Emergency. The City is not alone in this work and there is a large body of knowledge to draw upon.

Please consider the Climate Emergency in your budget. Planning and budget actions should include:

- - staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- - support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG.
 - The EQC’s approved 2020 work plan includes the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update and designates 2020 as the Year of Climate Emergency Mobilization.
 - The EQC members are very knowledgeable about climate change

issues including solutions to reduce emissions.

- If the EQC was permitted to produce those recommendations, the City could make significant progress on CO2 reduction solutions, with reduced burden on staff.
- a report from the Council ad-hoc committee on climate action, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City's CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

I know you are each concerned about climate change and the impact that it will have locally and across California. We can't wait two years for the City's revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Anaya

From: [Karl Wiebe](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2 (Special City Council Budget Meeting, June 9, 2020)
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 7:11:04 PM

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

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I know you are each concerned about climate change and the impact that it will have locally and across California. We can't wait two years for the City's revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

Sincerely,

Karl Wiebe

From: [Mary Milton](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: budget
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 7:16:55 PM

When West Contra Costa School District was in financial distress, salary cuts of 9 percent were imposed. Perhaps El Cerrito City should consider a similar measure to lessen its deficit.

From: [Marlena Chu](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Not on the Agenda OR Public Comments Agenda Item

Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 8:25:56 PM

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to contribute to this meeting. We appreciate the hard work and intense focus required of you, and acknowledge the difficult decisions you must make.

I write to emphasize the vital role the childcare offered by El Cerrito Parks and Rec department has in our family. We are continually amazed by the hard work and dedication of every Parks & Rec teacher (especially Eden, Lila, Luthera, Marco, Dominique, Kimberly, and the other Harding teachers), and consider ourselves fortunate our six year daughter is learning how to be a good person from them.

Without the summer camps and before/after school programs, I would not be able to continue working at my job. We would have to move out of El Cerrito, a family community we have loved and are proud to be a part of since 2004.

We ask that you please consider the long term affect cutting the childcare programs would have on our community, and know how much the working parents rely on them.

Kindly,
Marlena Chu

[REDACTED]

From: [Dan Schulman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 9:19:33 PM

Dear City Council,

I am concerned that city management and their consultants are not giving you (nor the public) the details required to make proper decisions regarding the city's budget. Many of you have asked for additional details surrounding budget options and have not received them. Others have asked about outsourcing areas like vegetation management and other services – to date no details have been offered by city management regarding outsourcing. Many have asked about compensation levels and how they compare to other cities – no response. Others have raised questions regarding public safety overtime and if staffing levels could be better optimized, or if it would be more appropriate to fill vacant positions rather than rely on large amounts of overtime. No answers have been forthcoming.

Now the city management is relying on consultants to bring forward bad news regarding cutting services for residents. The consultants have not touched the issue of top-heavy compensation levels.

If we must operate under the framework and list of recommendations the consultants have provided, I offer the following suggestions:

- Do NOT cut library services. The council and public already made their priorities clear yet it is still being proposed.
- Do NOT cut recreation childcare programs. They are critical for families, now more than ever given an unknown future with schools and parents needing to get back to work. These programs are consistently sold out and on waitlists – it is unacceptable to cut them, nor is it acceptable to lay off any of the outstanding front-line staff that takes care of our city's children.
- Do NOT cut the pool. It is an asset to the community. And DO NOT cut programs such as swimming lessons which consistently fill up.
- Do NOT cut the 4th of July festival. Instead the focus should be on increasing sponsorships and volunteers.
- DO look at public safety overtime. This is not a criticism of our police officers and firefighters, who I think are outstanding and make me proud to be an El Cerrito resident. I am however suggesting that we at least evaluate if we can be more optimally deployed.
- DO look at top management compensation, which has gone up considerably over the past several years.

I trust that you will keep asking questions until we all get satisfactory answers. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Daniel Schulman
El Cerrito, CA

From: [Sage Howard](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment- Agenda Item 2
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 9:47:30 PM

City Council Members-

I am writing today regarding one of the services that have been recommended for reduction as a result of the city's budgetary concerns. Reducing or eliminating the recreation childcare program would have significant repercussions for my family, and the family of so many of my children's friends.

The aftercare program that my kids attend at Harding makes it possible for both my husband and I to work full time, Without it, we would be forced to make some difficult decisions with regards to our employment, and even our living situation, as without our two salaries, we likely could no longer afford to live in El Cerrito.

The care that my children have received in this program over the last 4 years has been second to none and I shudder to think of what the next school year might look like without out.

I understand the difficult position that the city is in, as they work to make these budget cuts, however I urge you not to make cuts that will so negatively impact both children and working parents.

Thank you for your time.

Sage Howard

From: [Scott Corley](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments – Special City Council Budget Meeting, Tuesday June 9, 2020
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 10:14:54 PM

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for taking public comments for this meeting. We understand these are unprecedented times and that the current budget situation requires tough choices.

I understand that the budget of the El Cerrito Parks and Rec is at risk and many vital programs may be eliminated or reduced. I want to let you know that the before and after school programs offered by El Cerrito Parks and Rec department have been vital for our family. I know our child's education has been enriched by Eden, Lila, Luthera, Marco and several other members of the Parks and Rec staff whose name escapes me as I write this. Our child and us care about them deeply and want them to remain employed by the city because we feel they have given so much to it.

Without the services offered by the Park and Rec department, we don't know how we can both continue to work full-time, and may be at risk of losing our jobs. It is a vital program that I support, and would be willing to continue to support during the shutdown.

Best,

Scott Corley

From: [Lauren Schiffman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: 6/9 PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 2
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2020 11:02:45 PM

of El Cerrito City Council,

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

Planning and budget actions should include:

- staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG.
- a report from the Council Sub-committee on the Climate Emergency, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City’s CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

We can’t wait two years for the City’s revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

Lauren Schiffman

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

El Cerrito, California 94530

From: [Charlie Soldavini](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Budget
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 8:48:36 AM

How about cutting back on the wages of the salary's for upper city management. Say about 20%. This could temporary until the budget is under control.

Charlie Soldavini

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Laurence Diaco](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 9:10:42 AM

Dear Council Members,

I know these are difficult times, and difficult decisions must be made. But I would like you to consider not defunding the Recreational Aquatics Program and finding alternative source of revenue for this program. The El Cerrito swimming pool is a place of community for residents and non-residents of all ages. It is also a place where residents and non-residents maintain their mental and physical well being. There are very few facilities the likes of the El Cerrito pool around.

I know my family has spent countless hours in the summers there, and my husband and I have enjoyed swimming laps at the pool year round. My kids learned how to swim at the El Cerrito pool. They also met their friends for rec swim, playing and relaxing there during the hot summer month, and learned to conquer their fears by jumping off the high diving boards. My daughter is now part of the Gators program which is a wonderful, safe place for teenagers, which offers her a wonderful sense of community outside of school. She always has a smile on her face after her workouts there, the coaches are supportive, fun and great mentors for teens.

Every time I walk into the pool facilities, I feel a sense of calm and well being come over me. The staff is always friendly and helpful, and the pool offers wonderful work and leadership opportunities to the youth of our community. It is also a place where families can gather to celebrate birthdays and special milestones. And a place where the community can take countless classes from baby and toddlers to the elderly, where people make connections and friends. It would be a pity to close this amazing facility that is a special place for many residents here. Because it is a revenue generator, I am sure we can be creative and find ways to fund the Recreational Aquatics Program.

Thank you for listening,

Laurence Diaco
El Cerrito resident

From: [Vanessa Walden](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Susan Brown](#); [Matt Brown](#); [Kelly Walden](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 9:25:45 AM

Hello -

I am a community member with a child at Fairmont Elementary School. We are a household with two working parents, one working outside the home in an essential business and one newly working from home full-time since the beginning of the shelter-in-place orders. We depend on safe and engaging childcare both after school and during the summer, and to hear that these programs might be cut is worrying to say the least.

Keeping parents employed is a key factor in any economic recovery plan and the lack of available childcare puts that at serious risk. Without this basic service, parents will likely have to either reduce their hours or leave the workforce entirely, at least temporarily. We do not know what the future holds for the next school year, but we need after school childcare to be available for us, whatever it might be.

I urge the City Council to view childcare as a crucial part of its long-term economic recovery plan and an essential service to the community. Please do whatever is necessary to make it a net-zero budget item and keep the City's childcare programs intact and responsive. Money is tight for many families, but seeing the cost of childcare go up is preferable to cutting it entirely.

Thank You,
Vanessa Walden

From: [Neil Tsutsui](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#)
Subject: Public comments - Agenda Item #2. CITY COUNCIL BUDGET STUDY SESSION
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 9:31:36 AM

Dear Mayor Lyman and Councilmembers,

I hope you and your families have been staying healthy and safe.

El Cerrito has long been a leader in the Bay Area and beyond on environmental issues, and I am writing to urge you to continue to support these important activities. Two meaningful ways you can do this are by continuing to support the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) and recommitting the city to the objectives of the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted last year.

As a member and Vice Chair of the EQC I have seen how important these actions are to the residents of El Cerrito, and your support has been crucial to realizing their vision of building a greener, environmentally informed, and healthier city. During just the past few years, the city has passed a Climate Emergency Resolution, expanded our transition to clean, renewable energy through by promoting our SunShares, MCE "Deep Green", and Electric Vehicle Education programs. At the same time, you have supported hands-on activities sponsored by the EQC throughout the city, including "Broom Pulls" that reduced wildfire fuels, Green Team cleanups that remove enormous amounts of trash from our creeks and public spaces, and educational seminars that bring in expert speakers on topics requested by the community.

Although we all recognize that difficult budgetary decisions must be made, the consequences of the environmental decisions that we make, both positive and negative, will persist for much longer. I urge you to continue to build on the great progress we have made so far.

Please do take care, and stay healthy and safe.

Best wishes,

Neil Tsutsui

Neil Tsutsui, PhD
Professor and Michelbacher Chair, Dept. of Environmental Science, Policy & Management, UC Berkeley
Vice Chair, El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee
Vice President, Sierra Club - West Contra Costa County Chapter
Member, EBRPD Parks Advisory Committee

From: [Amy Rogers](#)
To: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [Michael Fischer](#)
Subject: My Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 9:46:57 AM

Dear Councilmembers,

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as a public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

I am writing because the latest budget report is recommending cutting funds for adequate library hours. I am dismayed that this issue we already defended and addressed many times with the City Council is back on the table even after the Council unanimously supported keeping the hours.

Michael Fisher, our Library Commissioner, had already argued in depth why this funding for adequate library hours must not be cut and why the library is vital to our community, especially, during this time of economic uncertainty and pandemic, when it would benefit the hardest-hit community residents the most.

Proportionately to other cuts the city is making, the 100K to keep adequate hours for our library may seem small, but it delivers a huge return over the course of a resident's lifetime.

I speak from a personal experience. My parents divorced when I was eight. My mother had to return to work. I spent a lot of time alone. There was a public library nearby (this was pre Prop 13) and I spent many days there, checking out books and reading about communities, places, people, and their lives. The time spent at the library and in books kept me out of trouble and off the streets.

There are library users like me in our community. Please do not make it more difficult for our economically challenged residents to access our library today.

While our community must wait to build a bigger library, the librarians at the El Cerrito Library rose wonderfully to the challenge to make our aging building more efficient to meet our needs. During the current pandemic, the librarians pivoted to continue excellent children's programming on social media. Soon the library will provide curbside services, manage re-opening the building, and keep everyone safe. Whatever challenges our community face in the future, the librarians would respond above and beyond the minimum. Please don't let our investment in their work evaporate.

Our library with current adequate open hours is a lifeboat that would carry us through these difficult times. 100K is a small price to pay for it.

Amy Rogers
El Cerrito, CA



Dear City Council Members,

We would like to express our strong concerns about possible plans to reduce the El Cerrito Recreation Childcare Programs, likely affecting the school-aged childcare and camps that we and many other parents rely on. Having our children cared for beyond the school hours is essential for working full time and making living in the Bay Area affordable.

We understand that budget cuts may be necessary to manage the currently difficult financial situation the City of El Cerrito is facing, but several items on the list of recommendations seem much better suited for that than the reduction of childcare programs. Certainly, the aquatics program, park landscape maintenance, or city events like the 4th of July celebration contribute to the quality of living in El Cerrito, but, in contrast to reducing the programmatic support in childcare, cuts in those area would have much lower or no impact on child education, parents' professional lives, and hence the financial situation of many families.

We therefore urge you to not consider cutting the budget for childcare programs or at least make this the lowest priority on your list of recommendations. As you know, school-aged childcare spots are already sparse, and finding alternatives will be extremely difficult or impossible. Eliminating highly valuable childcare spots and thereby forcing parents to work half time, maybe even jeopardizing their jobs, will likely not be a good strategy to cope with a possible recession and the current financial challenges that our community is facing.

Thank you for your support in that matter.

Best wishes,

Barbara Eckert and Andreas Martin

From: [Tess Taylor](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Greg Lyman](#); pfadelli@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us; jabelson@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us; [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](mailto:Rochelle.Pardue-Okimoto@gguinto@el-cerrito.ca.us); gguinto@el-cerrito.ca.us
Cc: [Al Miller](#)
Subject: please keep the library open
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 10:12:56 AM

Dear Councilmembers —

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

As a writer who came to reading in these libraries I can say— we need more not less.

This email is in response to the proposal in the report of the city staff's budget consultant that the city cut library hours to the inadequate bare minimum of 35 hours a week provided by the county.

Once again I find myself writing to you urging you not to cut library hours in the face of the city's very real budget crisis. I want to emphasize that the city's budget crisis is real not because anyone doubts that it is so, but to emphasize that we need solutions to the budget crisis that are also real.

We have already spent hours of council time discussing this one item, which constitutes less than two-tenths of one percent of the city's budget. As the council well knows, and after an impassioned plea by the city manager to cut the item, the council voted 5-0 not to do so at its meeting on April 25, a little over six weeks ago. So the city is already committed to continuation of library hours.

Yet city staff (and the consultants who take their direction from staff) seem to be fixated on cutting library hours that are of incalculable value to our community and especially the neediest among us. City staff cannot show any meaningful assistance on the budget crisis from cutting an item that is less than the pay of any city department head, and less than one-half the pay of some.

I have provided information to you several times showing how increased hours have increased library usage, including an astounding 50% increase in computer logins — a critical fact showing how the more library hours help the community overcome the digital divide.

This cut in the city budget would inflict the harshest wounds on our poorest community members:

- A closed library denies people internet access to get online for government help, a vital resource during this pandemic

- A closed library denies people internet access to utilize the many resources providing information to those seeking jobs or other assistance
- A closed library denies people access to the help of a librarian for any reason
- A closed library denies young children from poor families access to books that are vital to the acquisition of literacy skills
- A closed library denies people experiencing homelessness a place they can go for respite from life on the street.

These are only a very few of many examples of how a closed library falls heaviest on the neediest, while the more fortunate among us would suffer little loss from reduced hours.

It is time for the council to let city staff know once and for all that real solutions to the budget crisis lie elsewhere. After all, library hours have already been cut 8% due to the county's regrettable decision to eliminate Sunday hours. Our library is a highly valuable multi-faceted resource: the building, the printed collection, internet access, shelter, and helpful and dedicated library staff that serve us all. Every hour that resource is closed is a waste of this most-beloved, most-needed, and most-used of all community resources.

Thank you,

Tess

From: [Carrie Hobbs Schulman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments. June 9th 2020 Study Session. Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 10:58:37 AM

My name is Carrie Schulman and I live on Behrens St in El Cerrito. I was surprised and concerned that you are considering reducing or completely cutting the childcare and aquatics programs. My understanding was that those programs were fully self-funded. They are also extremely popular and almost always end up with a waitlist. If they are not fully self-funded, maybe you could just increase the prices and offer scholarships rather than cut them?

I was also surprised to see that the recommendation for outsourcing the integrated waste program and especially reducing the police traffic unit are not being selected. At this time when there are so many problems with OVER policing, it would be so much more beneficial to take a step back from having a dedicated team for minor traffic infringements. Also regarding the waste program, why is trash being prioritized over children?

Thank you for your time and all the hard work you do to make El Cerrito such a wonderful place to live.

From: [Denice A Dennis](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: 6/9 Public Comments Agenda #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 11:13:34 AM

June 8, 2020

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

I deeply appreciate your efforts to protect the residents of our city, especially our most vulnerable populations, during this unprecedented public health and economic crisis. I know that you face difficult choices every day, including managing a deep and unanticipated budget deficit.

I am writing to urge you to consider the growing risks that a destabilizing climate poses to our **health and safety** even as you consider critical budget decisions in these challenging economic times. It is necessary to fund and maintain a city-wide mobilization to reduce greenhouse gases at a pace and scale consistent with the latest scientific assessments; we only have a 10-year window to keep extreme and irreversible environmental changes from happening.

This pandemic has truly revealed vulnerabilities and inequities that are sure to be made worse by growing climate impacts. I urge you to consider how the city's climate investments and projects can be part of a green and just recovery. Preparing El Cerrito for the inevitable crises of the future – including new health emergencies and climate impacts like wildfire, extreme heat, drought and food security– will require the perspectives and input of all parts of our community. While challenging, this moment also provides new opportunities to dream bigger and bring people and organizations together to address social and environmental justice.

Addressing the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 emergency and the city's budget are a priority focus right now. This health emergency has shown how rapidly governments can mobilize when urgent measures are required to sustain the health of the community. Climate change is also a global and local emergency which needs our constant attention, and must be considered during Budget considerations. Our response to the climate crisis is not something we set aside whenever a newer crisis strikes.

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution

adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

El Cerrito is a small city; however there are many cities in the Bay Area that have developed plans and begun implementation on the urgent action necessary to address the Climate Emergency. The City is not alone in this work and there is a large body of knowledge to draw upon.

Please consider the Climate Emergency in your budget. Planning and budget actions should include:

- staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG. The EQC’s approved 2020 work plan includes the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update and designates 2020 as the Year of Climate Emergency Mobilization. If the EQC was permitted to produce those recommendations, the City could make significant progress on CO2 reduction solutions, with reduced burden on staff.
- a report from the Council ad-hoc committee on climate action, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City’s CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

I know you are each concerned about climate change and the impact that it will have locally and across California in our lifetime and for our children and grandchildren.. We can’t wait two years for the City’s revised Climate Action Plan to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions - the time to act is NOW.

Toward Climate Justice for All,

Denice A. Dennis, MPH, Volunteer, 350 East Bay and 1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations

From: [Susan Brown](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Matthew Ace Brown](#); [Vanessa Walden](#); [Kelly Walden](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 11:23:41 AM

RE: SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 9, 2020 – 1:00 p.m.

Dear City Councilmembers,

I write to urge you to avoid reducing support for childcare programs. Such programs are essential to the lives and livelihoods of El Cerrito residents.

Without reliable and safe childcare, any economic recovery will be hampered from the start. Parents unable to secure childcare will be forced to further reduce their work hours or even leave the workforce entirely, prompting yet more personal and collective economic pain as productivity and revenues drop.

The uncertainty of school schedules for Fall 2020 makes this issue even more urgent. Families must have a reliable source of quality care that they can count on. This need is even more urgent if schools move to hybrid distance learning models that will continue to stress families' resources and resilience.

It is doubtful that similar services will be available from other agencies or private businesses. Indeed, childcare providers across the Bay Area have cancelled their offerings this summer. The logistical challenges of securing similar care from other providers during the school year (transportation, cost, etc.) make that an untenable option for many families.

If necessary, I urge you to develop a plan for the program to become as budget neutral as possible (to “pay for itself”). Families who can afford to bear the full cost could do so, and families who cannot should receive the subsidies necessary to participate in this essential service.

Please consider the differential impact that reductions in programmatic support for childcare would have across members of our community who depend on inclusive, safe, engaging, and affordable care for our community's children.

Thank You,
Susan Brown
El Cerrito resident

From: [Sue Hansen](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Janet Abelson](#)
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 12:20:45 PM

I ask that this public comment be presented to the council as public comment at the June 9 workshop and also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

I am pleased that at its April 25 meeting the city council voted to maintain the city's funding for the public library. I urge the council to hold fast to that decision.

As I said in my earlier comment on this subject, the library is a significant resource for the whole community, from senior citizens to pre-schoolers. Although I recognize that library usage will change for some time due to pandemic precautions, the library can still be a quiet place to do homework, to sit in peace with the community, and to experience the joy of reading. In addition, the extra hours funded by the city can continue to help bridge the digital divide, by increasing online access to critical information and government programs.

Especially in these times, when we acknowledge that social services must be given a higher priority, libraries remain a necessity, not a luxury, for a well-functioning democracy. As an El Cerrito resident and voter for 24 years, I urge you to maintain funding for additional library hours. Thank you.

Sue Hansen

From: [Emily Kam](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); gquinto@el-cerrito.ca.us; [Nick Kam](#)
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 12:29:34 PM

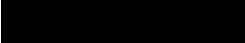
Dear Councilmembers —

I received information today from fellow concerned El Cerrito residents, Charles Taylor and Michael Fischer, that the city is considering a proposal to eliminate its already small contribution to the operating expenses of the EC Library in the new fiscal year starting on July 1, 2020. I'm told it is an extremely small portion of the city's budget.

The library is such an important resource for our community, a safe place and a location for free internet access for those in need. Also, as two full time parents, it is hard to utilize the library if the hours do not start before or end after standard work hours.

I am deeply opposed to this cut, and at the least there should be the opportunity for public comment.

Thank you,

Emily and Nick Kam
 El Cerrito

From: [Gail Wentler](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments-Not on the Agenda
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 12:36:38 PM

Dear City Council Members:

I am a long time resident of El Cerrito. My children benefited from many services offered by the community center when they were growing up, and now their children are benefiting from them.

Please do not defund the services that the El Cerrito Community Center offers our community, i.e., aquatics programs, childcare, senior center, Fourth of July celebration, custodial, and landscape maintenance, to name a few.

We are in a pandemic and we are suffering. Looking to the future, we must maintain the funding for these services to continue as we recover.

The Community Center is the heart of our community. It is vital that these services be sustained for our community in order To Function As A Community. Please do not defund these services.

Sincerely,

Gail Wentler
Home owner and of El Cerrito

From: [Lea Kane](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); gquinto@el-cerrito.ca.us
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 12:37:30 PM

Dear Councilmembers —

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

As your Library Commissioner, I am writing as your indicated spokesperson for the library and its patrons. This email is in response to the proposal in the report of the city staff's budget consultant that the city cut library hours to the inadequate bare minimum of 35 hours a week provided by the county.

Once again I find myself writing to you urging you not to cut library hours in the face of the city's very real budget crisis. I want to emphasize that the city's budget crisis is real not because anyone doubts that it is so, but to emphasize that we need solutions to the budget crisis that are also real.

We have already spent hours of council time discussing this one item, which constitutes less than two-tenths of one percent of the city's budget. As the council well knows, and after an impassioned plea by the city manager to cut the item, the council voted 5-0 not to do so at its meeting on April 25, a little over six weeks ago. So the city is already committed to continuation of library hours.

Yet city staff (and the consultants who take their direction from staff) seem to be fixated on cutting library hours that are of incalculable value to our community and especially the neediest among us. City staff cannot show any meaningful assistance on the budget crisis from cutting an item that is less than the pay of any city department head, and less than one-half the pay of some.

I have provided information to you several times showing how increased hours have increased library usage, including an astounding 50% increase in computer logins — a critical fact showing how the more library hours help the community overcome the digital divide.

This cut in the city budget would inflict the harshest wounds on our poorest community members:

- A closed library denies people internet access to get online for government help, a vital resource during this pandemic
- A closed library denies people internet access to utilize the many resources providing information to those seeking jobs or other assistance
- A closed library denies people access to the help of a librarian for any reason
- A closed library denies young children from poor families access to books that

- are vital to the acquisition of literacy skills
- A closed library denies people experiencing homelessness a place they can go for respite from life on the street.

These are only a very few of many examples of how a closed library falls heaviest on the neediest, while the more fortunate among us would suffer little loss from reduced hours.

It is time for the council to let city staff know once and for all that real solutions to the budget crisis lie elsewhere. After all, library hours have already been cut 8% due to the county's regrettable decision to eliminate Sunday hours. Our library is a highly valuable multi-faceted resource: the building, the printed collection, internet access, shelter, and helpful and dedicated library staff that serve us all. Every hour that resource is closed is a waste of this most-beloved, most-needed, and most-used of all community resources.

Thanks,

Lea Kane
El Cerrito Resident

From: [Aurangzeb Agha](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments. June 9th 2020 Study Session. Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 12:51:24 PM

Dear Council --

I find it ridiculous that hours to the library are being considered to be cut, but it's not at all clear if the extremely high salaries of members of our fire departments are being considered for curtailment!

WHY?!

We are in a major budget crisis and the ideas being bandied around are minor tweaks that have far-ranging impacts to kids and seniors that regularly use the libraries, but fire-people in El Cerrito are walking around with \$350k salaries?! How do you find that morally justifiable?

Please consider making changes that have a positive, lasting impact on our community, and not ones that hurt us.

Best,
Zabe Agha

 El Cerrito, CA 94530

From: [Christina Gargiullo-Silva](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments agenda item #2: time to examine best allocation of police funding
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 1:09:52 PM

To the City Clerk and City Council:

We stand at several crossroads today. Covid-19 has placed unprecedented strains and challenges on our community and our country. At the same time, the recent murder of George Floyd has touched off a massive movement toward lasting social change.

As El Cerrito examines our budget and decides what and where to cut, please consider: community safety has been designated as a consistently high priority. There is a nationwide conversation right now about redirecting funds from conventional policing methods into alternatives that are both more just and ultimately more cost-effective by better addressing the roots of the issues. Police are not social workers. They cannot address housing instability, mental health, addiction, or the many other systemic factors that contribute to cycles of poverty and criminal activity in our society. Without reform, our police system can only put a band-aid on a bullet wound.

We are not going to solve these deep systemic problems in the midst of a crisis. However, this is a good opportunity to really look at how we are spending our money--to be a part of the national conversation about positive change in policing and to integrate some of the reforms that will provide short and long term benefits to our community in the form of greater stability, less utilization of incarceration, and fewer 911 calls as needs are more adequately addressed.

[Here is what the ACLU has to say on the matter.](#)

Thank you for your consideration,

Christina Gargiullo-Silva



El Cerrito

From: [Buddy Whisler](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments - agenda item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 1:30:27 PM

In its considerations for how to cut expenses to rebuild the City's General Fund Reserve, it is imperative that the City Council listen to the conversation that is happening in the streets, facebook feeds, and media across the country and here in El Cerrito. As evidenced by the massive turnout for the End White Silence protest in El Cerrito last Thursday, it is clear that the people of El Cerrito want to see the systemic changes that are being enacted in other cities: cuts to the exorbitant amounts of money allocated to police departments and an increase in the funding provided to essential services such as mental health providers, social workers, community centers, schools, public transportation, and health care.

I, as a resident of El Cerrito, am worried that the General Fund Budget Strategies currently proposed are moving us in the opposite direction of where we need to go; I oppose the cuts to programming for the Senior Center, the reduction of programmatic support in childcare programs, and the reduction of hours at the library.

From my calculations, it appears that the police department made up approximately 25% of the 2019-2020 budget. We cannot afford to continue to allocate one quarter of our budget to the police while we slash funds for important services for our community and our fiscal emergency deepens in the wake of Covid19.

I am also concerned over the high cost of our city employees; why is it that the cost of city employees per resident is \$328 more than the next closest city, Albany, and why do we have 128 more city employees than San Pablo - which has 5,000 more residents? I request that El Cerrito provide more information and greater transparency about why our city requires so much more spending for city employees than towns of comparable size and demographics. I hope that I am not alone in voicing these concerns and that this moment in our nation's history marks the beginning in a heightened interest and involvement in the processes through which El Cerrito - and cities across the country - decide on their priorities and allocate their funds.

Thank you for your time,

Cory Mast



El Cerrito CA

From: [Megan Wenger](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 2:12:37 PM

Public Comments Agenda Item 2

Megan Wenger, resident of El Cerrito

The fiscal projections and budget strategies report summary includes a slide showing reductions by department in absolute thousands of dollars. This is used to show the fiscal impact, but when looking at the absolute numbers it is hard to fully understand the impact because I do not know what percent of the department's budget the reduction is. Comparing across the different departments is not possible either since it is not shown how the underlying funds are distributed. From this slide I cannot tell what kind of impact this budget reduction might have because I cannot see what the starting budget is. In terms of absolute dollars reduced, the police budget is being reduced by the most but this could be only a small fraction of their total budget while the reduction to the fire budget is 10 fold less but could be a very large fraction of their total budget. The opposite might also be true, but this slide (23 of 38) does not show this and thus doesn't really show the impact of the budget reductions by department.

I would also like to get a better understanding of how and why outsourcing work such as maintenance service and custodial work will save money. If this really is the case, why is it so and can systematic changes be made so make outsourcing not the best option?

Lastly and most importantly, what has been done to assess how these budget cuts will affect the most vulnerable and marginalized within our community? Much of the services that are on the chopping block are things these populations rely on. While needing to cut these services might be the harsh reality of the current budget situation, let us think of ways to make up the shortfall – grants, community supported initiatives, etc. - and the ways in which our city government can support the public in bringing these to fruition.

--

Megan Wenger, MPH
she/her

From: [Gail Riley](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Chris Jones](#)
Subject: Public Comments for June 9 Special Meeting - Agenda #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 2:22:11 PM

Mayor and Council Members:

As you begin the struggle with the difficult fiscal decisions ahead, I urge you not to simply consider the loudest voices, the most organized advocacy efforts or a consultant's fiscal recommendations.

I urge you to be guided by a principle to **retain those programs and services which make El Cerrito one of the East Bay's most unique and special communities.**

I believe the El Cerrito's Aquatics Program to be one such program.

I have lived in El Cerrito since 1982 and bought my home here in 1984 and have watched the program grow from an aged pool with cracked walls and pool lights literally hanging by wires into one of the finest facilities in the East Bay, the Emery Weed III Memorial Pool (God rest his soul). Please preserve the Aquatics Program.

My best wishes to each of you in the weeks ahead as you hammer out a budget.

Gail Riley

[REDACTED]

El Cerrito

To the City Clerk: Given the fact that I cannot attend the Special Meeting in person, I ask that you read my comments aloud. Thank you.

From: [Janaki Silva](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #1
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 2:35:14 PM

Dear City Councilmembers and my El Cerrito neighbors,

I am so proud to be an El Cerrito resident of over a decade. Our city has consistently stood on the right side of history, proudly moving further and further toward a truly just and equitable society for all El Cerrito residents. At this crossroads in history, we have an opportunity to take yet another step in that journey.

As El Cerrito considers our budget in light of the sudden recession, let us consider the ways that we can both save money and create a safer and more just community for all our people. Across the country, communities are examining ways to redirect some funding from police departments to citizen led alternatives that are more just, more successful, and more cost-effective by ensuring that root cause issues of crime are addressed by the people with the correct training to deal with them. Our police officers cannot be expected to be mental health professionals, social workers, and drug addiction specialists on top of being police officers. They cannot address mental health, housing instability, alcohol and drug addiction, or other root-cause factors that contribute to cycles of poverty and criminal activity in our society. Yet we continue to send officers to deal with situations that their training does not equip them to handle, risking officer safety, community safety, and public trust as well as spending public funds ineffectively.

Reduce funding to our Police Department and reinvest those funds into cost-effective alternatives like civilian-led crisis intervention teams composed of professionals with the necessary expertise like psychiatrists and social workers. Let us build economic stability for our city while enhancing public safety, community trust, and racial and economic justice. Let us be a beacon to the rest of the Bay Area and show the world what is possible.

Best,

Janaki Silva

From: [Molly James](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments -agenda item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 2:55:58 PM

Hello!

I know that right now El Cerrito needs to balance its budget. But I don't agree with the choice to cut programming for the Senior Center, the reduction of programmatic support in childcare programs, and the reduction of hours at the library. Right now we need to be supporting our community more than ever given the economic crisis of Covid 19.

Instead I propose that the City Council listen to the conversation that is happening in the streets, facebook feeds, and media across the country and here in El Cerrito. As evidenced by the massive turnout for the End White Silence protest in El Cerrito last Thursday, it is clear that the people of El Cerrito want to see the systemic changes that are being enacted in other cities: cuts to the exorbitant amounts of money allocated to police departments and an increase in the funding provided to essential services such as mental health providers, social workers, community centers, schools, public transportation, and health care.

We cannot afford to continue to allocate one quarter of our budget to the police while we slash funds for important services for our community and our fiscal emergency deepens in the wake of Covid19. Please recoup necessary funds from the police budget.

Thank you for your time,

Molly James, El Cerrito Resident



From: [Summer Rogers](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Summer Rogers](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Not on The Agenda
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:04:44 PM

Dear City Council Members:

I have been a homeowner in El Cerrito for over 20 years. I can truly say El Cerrito's community services are a large part of what makes our community strong and unites us.

I have a 10-year-old son attending public school and we have consistently enrolled him in swimming lessons, after school care and summer camps, etc. through the EC Recreation Department. I also grew up in this area, and for as long as I can remember (at least 35 years), El Cerrito Community Center has had its swim center and summer camps. It would be an immeasurable loss if we were to take steps back and defund these services now.

We are in a pandemic and we are suffering, but these services should not be the first to be cut. They are essential to this community - especially to working parents, school children and the elderly. We will need these services intact if we are truly going to begin to recover from this recession as an intact community.

Please do not defund the services that the El Cerrito Community Center offers our community, i.e., the aquatics programs, childcare, senior center, custodial, and landscape maintenance, to name a few. The El Cerrito Community Center is at the heart of our community. It is absolutely vital that these services be sustained for our community for the years to come. These programs should be seen as absolutely essential to our community. Please reconsider defunding these programs and services.

Sincerely,

Summer Rogers Mathur
El Cerrito Resident & Parent

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Peter Smith](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:11:30 PM

I ask that this public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.

I previously sent an e-mail to the Council in support of retaining the library's hours, and the Council voted 5-0 on April 25 to do so. However, in light of the recommendation of the staff's budget consultant that the Council cut the library's hours to the bare minimum of 35 per week, I am repeating the points made in my earlier e-mail:

The current city-funded hours were passed by the council following the defeat of the library bonds in 2016. At some point, I hope that the City is in a position to again fund a new library, but to have a credible position for that, I do not see how the council can return to the minimum 35 hours per week. I have read that the city's funding an extra 15 hours per week have resulted in greater value of the library for all of us — 48,000 additional patron visits year-to-year, 50% increase in library programs, 9,000 additional attendees at library programs (an increase of over 120%), increased funding to the library from the Friends of the El Cerrito Library of \$6,800 (170%), and increased donations to the Permanent Endowment Fund of the El Cerrito Library Foundation of nearly \$25,000.

I understand that the council is seeking a 5 to 10% budget reduction citywide, but the elimination of the city-funded library hours would represent a 100% reduction. A ten percent reduction would reduce hours by 1.5 per week.

Also, this reduction in hours would impact our poorest community members the hardest:

- A closed library denies people internet access to get online for government help, a vital resource during this pandemic
- A closed library denies people internet access to utilize the many resources providing information to those seeking jobs or other assistance
- A closed library denies people access to the help of a librarian for any reason

A closed library denies young children from poor families access to books that are vital to the acquisition of literacy skills

- A closed library denies people experiencing homelessness a place they can go for respite from life on the street.

Our library is a good community investment and a valuable community resource. Please do what you must to deal with the city's financial crisis, but don't go back to the days of 35 hours a week for our beloved library.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter H. Smith



El Cerrito, CA 94530

From: [Sue Duncan](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:19:54 PM

June 8, 2020
City Council members,

From Sue Duncan, El Cerrito

I am very concerned about the following 2 recommendations that Management Partners has made.

“Fire Apparatus Staffing-Maintain current engine staffing standards and eliminate vacant budgeted positions” and

“Fire Response-Partial reduction of Station 72 services.

Currently, there are 3 firefighters stationed at Station 72 which is the minimum required per engine so any reduction would close the station. FYI, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends 4 firefighters per engine. Any reduction in staffing Station 72 would close the station as a firefighting unit so it wouldn't be a “partial reduction” it would be a full reduction meaning one less active engine to respond to emergencies throughout El Cerrito.

I ask:

Have the consultants bothered to research this and understand that following their recommendations would basically close the station?

Do they understand the significance of the fact that almost half of El Cerrito and all of Kensington are designated as VHFHSZ?

Have they calculated how closing this station will affect response time city-wide?

Have they considered what Kensington's reaction to this significant reduction will be?

Will it violate the 10-year contract that the city has with Kensington? Will Kensington sue and demand that the contract be rewritten so that they pay less due to less backup which would be less income for the city?

Do they know that this area has had barely half of its annual rainfall, making this a very dry season?

Do they realize that Climate Change exists and that it has made wildfires more frequent and more intense and deadly?

How does this reflect the second goal priority of Ensure Public Safety?

These 2 recommendations do not seem to be well thought out.

These consultants do not live in El Cerrito, do not experience the tension of hearing a siren on Red Flag days, wondering if we will get a message within minutes to evacuate due to a wildfire coming this way.

Before committing to any of these recommended cuts in service, I strongly urge you as a council to meet with each department head of each of the city's departments this coming week before the meeting on June 16. To do this and be in compliance with the Brown Act, I assume you would have to quickly call a special council meeting to hear and ask questions about each department head's ideas for savings in their respective departments. This should have been done weeks ago instead of at the last minute and instead of relying solely on an outside consultant company who does not know each department intimately as do the heads of the departments. Right now it seems that the only ideas being heard and considered, at least publicly, are coming from the consultants without much detail or thought to consequences. Why only listen to them? Why aren't you listening to and having discussions with the people who know these departments inside and out, who are experts in the area of their departments? Use the intelligent, experienced people that

you have and listen to them, to their ideas before you make any decisions about cuts in any department that will affect El Cerrito citizens for a very long time.

Thank you,

Sue Duncan

Make El Cerrito Fire Safe

From: [Marlene George](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment for June 9, 2020 Budget Information Session
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:43:35 PM

In my professional career, I worked in the county executive office of a large metropolitan county preparing large, complex budgets and, in this capacity, I worked collaboratively with the city where there was a joint powers agreement.. Never in my professional career did I experience outsourcing of budget responsibilities including any form of decision making to consultants. The skills required to analyze and assemble the power-point presentation before the council were the sole responsibility of staff; department heads working jointly with finance directors and staff from the county executive's office not outside consultants. At the budget workshop held by the city some months ago, we were told the city pays higher than median employee salaries to hire "the best and brightest." If this is indeed the case, the public, sitting at the top of the power pyramid, and the city council should have every expectation that department heads, the finance director and the city manager's office have the skills and experience to effectively facilitate the budget process even under these very difficult economic times. If they do have the skills, why are they not conducting the study session? The council needs to question the overuse of consultants not just for budget decisions but throughout city government.

Management Partners, the outside consultant group, took the community through a strategic planning process several months ago and the public was told the identified priorities would shape the budget priorities. Management Partners last March during one of their initial budget presentations announced the budget priorities as: schools/education, public safety, financial solvency and emergency preparedness. In the power point presentation for the June 9th meeting, these priorities are now different. As a member of the community, I do not accept any changes to the priorities and do not trust why they are now different except to justify desired cuts by management and the consultants.

Based on the priorities announced by Management Partners in March, the city council relied on the education priority and the outcry from the community to maintain the library hours at 46 and not cut to 35. Now it seems the priorities have changed and schools/education is no longer a priority and the public should tolerate another 11 hours of service reduction. This issue was already decided.

Public Safety is listed as a top priority but one of the first reductions listed in the power-point presentation is reduction to the fire station located on the Arlington. This fire station is located in the high fire hazard severity zone and will be on the immediate front line of a wildfire or fire related to a catastrophic earthquake. Experts know that a wildfire will most likely come from the east winds in the canyon and gain steam as it moves through the high fire hazard severity zone. The public, at the top of the power pyramid, has spoken and wants public safety and emergency preparedness to be maintained and not reduced.

The council needs to look at reducing or eliminating the contract with Management Partners. Is there really a need to outsource these functions?. The city manager's office increased one million (\$1,000,000)dollars in four years. The council needs to assess whether the city the size of El Cerrito really needs two assistant city managers and the impact of eliminating one of these positions. The council needs to maintain services identified as priorities through the extensive community input process over funding functions of the bureaucracy that may have

negligible impact if eliminated. The public wants services over bureaucracy. Save the library and the fire station and cut bureaucracy.

Marlene George
El Cerrito resident

From: [DORIS CAMPBELL](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item
#2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:48:15 PM

It appears that the police have more money than they need.

I recently witnessed an arrest of one man, he was in hand cuffs. there were 7 officers and 7 cars at the scene. The man was not armed, was not wearing a jacket or any clothing that might potentially hide a weapon. The officer who approached me asking me to leave the scene could not even take a moment to speak with me, just yelled at me. (I was parked, 30 feet from the scene (a park bench near BART and Waldo, sunday 5/7/20 around noon)).

The officers seem dressed for armed combat rather than dealing with a suburban population. All the cars were very large and none were gas efficient.

I think both a reduction in force size, car size, necessary body equipment, etc is needed. How can it be that we spend so much on policing and yet, the police are so rude to the citizens who support their jobs?

Since there budget is 50% of the total city budget reducing their budget by half seems reasonable.

thank you for this opportunity to share my opinion.

doris campbell
[REDACTED]
El Cerrito CA 94530
[REDACTED]

From: [Google Voice](#)
To: [EC PCV](#)
Subject: New voicemail from (510) 932-7002
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:56:53 PM



Public comments not on the agenda. My name is Catherine Griffin. I live in Richmond Annex. I am calling about the possibility that budget cuts may end up closing El Cerritos swimming pool or severely curtailing is ours. I use the pool several times a week year round. The facility is a gem represents a significant investment of City funds and it's an important part of this community serving both El Cerrito residents and others who value outdoor exercise. There is no comparable facility nearby to take up the slack of curtailed services at the El Cerrito pool rather than closing the pool during winter months or eliminating the aquatics program. I suggest you consider raising entry fees. I would be happy to pay more to continue to access this wonderful resource. Thanks for your consideration Catherine Griffin Haji.

PLAY MESSAGE

[YOUR ACCOUNT](#) [HELP CENTER](#) [HELP FORUM](#)

This email was sent to you because you indicated that you'd like to receive email notifications for voicemail. If you don't want to receive such emails in the future, please update your [email notification settings](#).



Google LLC
1600 Amphitheatre Pkwy
Mountain View CA 94043 USA

From: [James Anderson](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item 1
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:02:30 PM

Please consider diverting police funds into staffing more tasks by non-police professionals.



PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
June 9, 2020

The following Public Comments were received and read into the record during the meeting.

Agenda Item 2 – City Council Budget Study Session:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Lauren Schiffman | 31. Barbara Chan |
| 2. Sheila Gara | 32. Paola Sensi Isolani |
| 3. Nick Zamorano | 33. Eleanor Maoz |
| 4. Ronald Bogin | 34. Allison Cooper |
| 5. Leslie D. Adams | 35. Charlotte Diamant |
| 6. Thomas Rogers | 36. Sean Kline |
| 7. Angela Gawlikowski | 37. Cathy Hanville |
| 8. Ira Sharenow | 38. Joyce Hedges |
| 9. Dianne Brenner | 39. Pilar Dellano |
| 10. Sonya Robbins | 40. Shayla Jacobsen |
| 11. Alejandra Robins | 41. Donald Simon |
| 12. Valerie Snider | 42. Melissa Eizenberg |
| 13. Aylin Beyce | 43. Diana Lyons |
| 14. Alva Leung | 44. Patricia Terranova |
| 15. Gabe De Smidt | 45. Sherry Drobner |
| 16. Jen Choe | 46. Judith Frank |
| 17. Lauren Schiffman | 47. Paul Duncan |
| 18. Gretchen Parr | 48. Jose Martinez |
| 19. Lisa Tsering | 49. Kay P. Starkweather |
| 20. Karin Rosman | 50. Robin Mitchell |
| 21. Steven Pon | 51. Sheila Singleton (received
after the meeting) |
| 22. David Streitfeld | . |
| 23. Claudia Kruse | |
| 24. Corinne Gustafson | |
| 25. Ann Legg | |
| 26. Paul Kuhn | |
| 27. Gary Prost | |
| 28. Lucy Rodriguez | |
| 29. Barbara Chan | |
| 30. Monica S. | |

From: [Lauren Schiffman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: 6/9 PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:16:20 PM

of El Cerrito City Council,

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

Planning and budget actions should include:

- staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG.
- a report from the Council Sub-committee on the Climate Emergency, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City’s CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

We can’t wait two years for the City’s revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

Lauren Schiffman

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

El Cerrito, California 94530

From: [SHEILA O GARA](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Budget meeting
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:16:44 PM

The city has bloated salaries at all upper management levels. Learning that the subject of actually getting rid of the aquatics programs caused me to look at that program's management Salaries and I was indeed shocked. Trimming fat at the upper levels is the only reasonable solution To keep funds for community use available. Do not close the pool.

A second major problem was the gross misuse of manpower and overtime for a failed abatement effort by the ECFD. They invidiously applied their own policies about abatement and failed to require real offenders to abate. Out of town slum lords with rentals were given a pass when the residents were hectorred with letters, visits and calls. If you complied and your neighbor did not, you wasted your money. This was a complete failure and as Fire season approaches abatement needs to be done by an agency that will enforce its own rules. Waste of taxpayer money to give it to the ECFD.

Sent from my iPad

From: [nick zamorano](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:22:40 PM

I am submitting my public comment based on the limited information contained in the packet material. I was hoping for a more detailed report from the City Manager and the Managing Partners regarding budget cuts to programs and services. I was surprised to see that the reduction of library hours has been recommended as a budget cut. This issue was debated at a previous city council meeting and the community unanimously supported increasing the number of hours from 35 to 46. This was unanimously approved by city council members so I am confused as to why it is being forwarded now as a budget cut to study and consider. The people of El Cerrito have spoken very loudly about the significance of having 46 hours of library hours so why is it being recommended?

I was also surprised to see the reduction of services for fire station 72 especially when "public safety" was voted by the people of El Cerrito as the # 2 strategic plan priority. The recommendation does not provide detailed specifics of the reduction in services nor does it explain how this would impact the response times for emergency services and fire safety. Fire station 72 is located in the very high fire hazard severity zone and any reduction in services would certainly have a negative impact on the residents who reside in this neighborhood.

I urge council members to again listen to the community that you represent and not approve the reduction in hours for the library or the reduction in services at fire station 72.

Nick Zamorano
El Cerrito Resident
Make El Cerrito Fire Safe

From: [Ronald Bogin](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: 6/9 PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:27:50 PM

of El Cerrito City Council,

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

It is imperative that the City stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The Resolution states that “a climate emergency threatens our City, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world” and that “the City of El Cerrito supports an increase in our Citywide GHG emissions reduction rate and will strive for zero GHG emissions Citywide as quickly as possible”.

Planning and budget actions should include:

- staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030.
- support for the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to meet remotely as soon as possible to begin to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to quickly reduce GHG.
- a report from the Council Sub-committee on the Climate Emergency, with recommendations on priority actions that can be taken over the next year, before the formal revision of the City’s CAP is completed, that will significantly reduce GHGs.

We can’t wait two years for the City’s revised CAP to be completed before we start working on real emissions reductions -- the time to act is NOW.

Ronald Bogin

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

El Cerrito, California 94530

From: [leslie](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item #1 - 6/9/20 Special City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 4:30:56 PM

Greetings City Manager and Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to hear me out. I am an El Cerrito resident who has lived in this city for 14 years along with my son and husband, cat and dog. We are engaged members of the community, volunteers, participants in events and are out walking the neighborhoods and in the parks - this is where we call home.

We know our city is in a budget crisis and needs to make some hard funding decisions, but this situation can, and should be viewed, as a opportunity for making meaningful, structural change in our city. We do not have to replicate our budget layout, but instead overhaul it, re-envision it. Given the climate, and the loud calls for changes in how we take care of our community, each other, in this country, it is imperative to look at how much we spend on policing our community and what else we can do to promote public safety. This city would be tone deaf if it did not. We currently spend 50% of our budget on public safety per the 2019 financial report. Can we re-imagine our police department? Do officers in full gear need to respond to a larceny/theft, the biggest (by far) type of crime in our city? (**Please read PS below)

Budgets are limited, so can we do better by our residents? How is "critical program" defined? (It is not in the sideshow) Can this be reviewed? What is "mandated"? Can this be reviewed? From my perspective, critical programs promote the well-being of people, nurture their growth and support their basic needs. Programs such as childcare, after school programs and engaging local activities and outdoor space, along with affordable housing and good jobs is where we should focus our dollars. We should emphasizes prevention over policing.

I appreciate many things about our city, such as it's dedication to the environment; for example the Specific Plans that guides our city in lowering it's carbon footprint. And, the recycling center. (And the hillside, among many other things.) These are examples of prioritizing something that has a positive impact for everyone.

Thank you so much for your time and upcoming response.

Leslie D Adams

PS: Yesterday early afternoon, near the Ohlone Green, my neighbor witnessed a handcuffed black man being yelled at up close by a police officer who was not wearing a mask. Also, several police cars and officers were on the scene. The police officer came over to my neighbor and intimidated her into leaving. This is unacceptable all around on so many levels.

From: [Thomas Rogers](#)
To: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); eclibrarycommissioner@gmail.com
Subject: My Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 6:12:44 PM

Dear Council Members,

On June 5, 2020, Governor Newsom spoke about educational disparities that were highlighted in the recent report on school closures as a result of the Covid19 pandemic. Poor families didn't have the resources to help their kids maintain the classroom learning prior to the pandemic. The report said the average learning loss was seven months, but for low income families the loss was over a year. Newsom added in reference to the report, "we know people aren't left behind in society, they start behind".

In response he pledged to maintain the funding targeted at education, especially areas of poverty. If there were to be cuts he said they would have to come from other sources. He quoted former Governor Brown about making uniform cuts to educational institutions, "There is no equal application in unequal systems". Low income communities are already under stress, cutting resources there only serve to deepen the stress.

The public services of our library are most in need for people of low income. I don't think I need to offer up a list as they are well known. What I do urge you to do is to follow Governor Newsom's resolve in respect to library cuts. The people most impacted by cuts to library hours are the people who have little or no good alternatives to the services offered. Maintain the resolve to fund the hours. It is not only vital for those in need of the services, it is also a deep expression of community in its finest sense. As we move through this tough time, there should be small examples of where we as a community were willing to extend ourselves for those most in need.

Thomas Rogers
El Cerrito, CA


From: [Angela Gawlikowski](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Library
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 6:18:46 PM

Dear Sir/Madam,

Libraries are vital. They are true egalitarianism in action, as they are available to all and help all. Please do what is necessary to keep our libraries open and funded. We need them.

Sincerely,
Angela Gawlikowski

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #
2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 6:38:31 PM

I am assuming the consulting firm was hired to represent the city manager's interests. I decided to do research which I think reflects the interests of the taxpayers.

According to the 2015 CAFR, general fund expenditures were \$29,144,613.

According to the 2019 CAFR, general fund expenditures skyrocketed to \$40,202,753.

That is an increase of \$11,058,140 or 38%.

In 2015 expenditures for general government were \$3,728,457. In 2019 that number increased to \$ 5,949,944, an increase of \$2,221,487 or 60%.

According to Transparent California 2015 data, the people with "city manager" in their titles were paid \$599,054. In 2019, the people with "city manager" in their titles were paid \$862,026, a 44% increase.

In 2015, there was just one employee, a firefighter, making over \$300,000.

There are now 21 employees over \$300,000 and the top five firefighters are all over \$400,000 in total compensation.

The fire department appears to be doing a great job fighting the rare El Cerrito fire. I think we need to hire non-uniformed people to do inspections and education and maybe hire paramedics to do the paramedic work.

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [DIANNE BRENNER](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 7:35:45 PM

At the last City Council meeting on May 19, you voted unanimously in support of seeking a \$9 million TRAN (bridge loan) this year, with repeated assertions that you had “no choice” but to do so. At that moment two weeks ago, you had already painted yourselves into a corner, so there seemed to be no alternative, but the path to this point was paved with decisions you made and did not make throughout the fiscal year and previous years. The choices you made throughout this time have landed us in this precarious financial position.

A \$9 million TRAN is about 18% of this year’s \$53 million budget. For a city with limited sources of revenue like El Cerrito, the recommended size of emergency reserves is about 18%. If we had reserves as recommended, and still needed a bridge loan, we could self-finance it and save several hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees this year. But instead, due to a failure of management, we have zero in our reserves fund. Instead, we will be paying those hundreds of thousands in fees and interest, while you remain unable to commit \$100,000 to fund library hours.

In October 2019, the state released its list of Top Cities Facing Fiscal Challenges, and El Cerrito was ranked 7 on that list of 471 cities. At the time of this announcement, there were still three quarters of the fiscal year remaining. In the months since then, City Council members have repeatedly stated that they knew they needed to make deep budget cuts. You repeatedly have said will be difficult, it will be painful, but we have to do it. However, you only asked for \$2 million in cuts to this year’s \$53 million budget. Not even 4%. That’s all you asked for and the City manager tells us she has made those cuts. However, given that the City manager now needs a TRAN loan of \$9 million to meet the city’s financial obligations in coming months, \$2 million in cuts was clearly too little.

Furthermore, among those \$2 million in cuts are the “deferred,” COLA for this year, and the “suspended,” auto allowance for this year. Those carefully chosen terms indicate a temporary condition, not a permanent, structural change or savings, which is what is required now.

Time after time I see evidence of an attitude that the City Government of El Cerrito seems to see itself first and foremost as a jobs program, that it will seek to hire more people, preserve those jobs and increase salaries at every opportunity, regardless of financial constraints. There is ample, public data available which shows that El Cerrito has significantly more employees (both full-time and part-time) than neighboring towns of similar size. Also, our cost-per-resident for this staff is significantly higher than in those towns. Given that your new, primary goal is to “Secure the financial health and long-term sustainability of the city,” staff and salaries are a key place for you to look for budget cuts. Before cutting services.

Given that you could cut Fire Dept. overtime without impacting service delivery, that

should be done. The proposal to cut unspecified Fire Dept. services at Station 72, the only station in the hills, in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, should be nowhere on the list of possibilities, not when we have just had yet another dry winter, and a summer season that is already unseasonably warm.

If memory serves, El Cerrito voters have approved just about every tax and fee you have asked us for in recent years, but still your spending has outpaced our open wallets and put us in an unprecedented financial crisis, which predates the economic consequences of the pandemic.

Now it is June 9, three weeks from the start of the next fiscal year, and still you seem to have no plan for reducing the budget for next year. Your consultants are once again holding yet another session to develop strategies to secure the financial health and long-term sustainability of the city. This sounds a lot like what we already did in January and February. Why are we still only talking about how to develop strategies at this point?

Dianne Brenner
El Cerrito

From: [Sonya Robbins](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Save the library
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 8:10:01 PM

To whom it may concern-

I'm writing to express my support for the CCC library system, in particular the main branch in Stockton.

My two daughters age 5 and 8 have been patronizing that branch several times a week since we moved to the area in 2016. We engage with the librarians, enjoy the tech resources and have spent many an hour browsing books and magazines. Libraries are essential community hubs and we would be bereft to lose this resource.

I understand that city budgets are in dire straits right now due to fiscal revenue loss. I'm urging the city of El Cerrito to please consider the role libraries play in providing a safe and enriching site for our kids!

Save our libraries!

Thank you,
Sonya Robbins

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ale Robins](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item
#2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 8:12:40 PM

Dear City Council Members,

As a ten year member of the gators swim team and lifeguard/swim instructor at the el Cerrito pool for the past 3 years I am very concerned with the proposed budget cuts to the Aquatics Division. I know from first hand experience how important swimming is to many members of the community and it would be a shame to lose these patrons as a result of budget cuts. Swimming not only provides exercise, but also a way to meet new people and for me has helped me get into college.

If the pool were to be shut during the winter or off period months, the city would lose many of the regular patrons who center their exercise routine around the pool. These patrons rely on the fact that the pool is open year round because it allows them to have a community and a routine they can consistently rely on. If the pool were to be shut for many months of the year, the city would lose the patrons it relies on for continued support as these patrons would be forced to swim elsewhere and it would be unlikely that they would return for the select months the pool did open. Please take this into consideration as you discuss how to allocate the budget in the future.

Thank you,
Alejandra Robins

From: [Valerie Snider](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: June 9, 20210 meeting, Agenda Item 2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 8:41:30 PM

Do not cut the library hours. I recommend that you cut managers' salaries instead.

Valerie Snider
El Cerrito, California

From: [Aylin Beyce](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Not on the Agenda OR Public Comments Agenda Item #.
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 9:36:52 PM

Dear Council Members,

I have been engaging with the Council for over 8 months now regarding concerns about El Ceritto's financial crisis. At this point, I am more alarmed by the lack of communication and lack of transparency than the actual debt.

When will we have a public forum where citizens can weigh in on what is being planned for our tax dollars?

Why is it so hard to have this process function democratically?

Why are well paid senior staff salaries being left alone while entry level workers are being cut? This does not align with our cities values.

You have received valuable research and analysis from our citizens showing comparisons between how we spend and how other cities spend that is consistently dismissed.

Please listen to your constituents.

Sincerely,

Aylin Beyce

From: [Alva Leung](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – not on the agenda or public comments-agenda #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 10:44:16 PM

Hello,

I am writing to oppose any budget cuts to the El Cerrito library. As a mother of a young child, I rely on library books to educate my child as well as my own reading. The library is a safe place for school age children to do homework and read after school. The community free events put up by library staff are great addition to the culture of our town. Please do not cut any library staff or Budget. In fact the city should boost the budget of our library.

Thank you,
Alva Leung

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gabe Desmidt](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – not on the agenda or public comments-agenda #2
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 11:01:46 PM

Hello,

I am writing to oppose any budget cuts to the El Cerrito library. As a father of a young child, I rely on library books to educate my child as well as my own reading. The library is a safe place for school age children to do homework and read after school. The community free events put up by library staff are great addition to the culture of our town. Please do not cut any library staff or Budget. In fact the city should boost the budget of our library. For the educational health of the El Cerrito community a healthy library is essential. If budget cuts are to occur perhaps the board could consider cutting items like the travel expenses for board members since I imagine all of the meetings taking place are online through Zoom or FaceTime during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you,

Gabe De Smidt

From: [Jen Choe](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Please don't cut the library budget!
Date: Monday, June 8, 2020 11:44:10 PM

Hello El Cerrito administrators,

My name is Jennifer and I'm a 40 year-old El Cerrito Library patron. I am currently back at Contra Costa College as part of a career transition (from media to healthcare). I live nearby and patronize the El Cerrito library multiple times a week for a quiet place to study.

Additionally, I have a 21-month old little boy named Otis. He loves books more than anything—he has been missing the library as much as I during this shelter in place! We are looking forward to returning to the library for its wonderfully musical story times as soon as they're back.

This space is critical to me, my son, and many like us. I urge you please, do not cut the budget of this precious community resource.

Jen

From: [lauren.schiffman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:37:19 AM

Please preserve funding for library staffing. The library is a valuable service that my family and I depend on.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best,
Lauren Schiffman
Richmond, CA

From: [Gretchen Parr](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment on Cutting Library Hours (re. June 9 Council Workshop document)
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 5:15:53 AM

I ask that the public comment not only be presented to the council as public comment at the workshop, but also at any subsequent meetings of the council involving consideration of the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget.
PLEASE, PLEASE keep the El Cerrito Library open 46 hours a week!!! These hours re of incalculable value to the community.

Gretchen Parr
(Retired public school teacher)

From: [Lisa Tsering](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments agenda item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 6:28:39 AM

Please don't reduce funding for the EC library! We depend on it. And we voted on it.
Can you cut the salaries of local city management instead?

Lisa Tsering



el Cerrito

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Marie Rosman](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 8:28:02 AM

Good Morning,

I am a 17+ year home owner and resident of El Cerrito. I am raising my two children here. I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining all library (and other similar) services and my strong dismay at the prospect of cutting library hours. The library is an invaluable community resource for El Cerrito.

I understand that the city is in dire financial straits. I urge you to look elsewhere for needed funds.

1. Look to New Zealand where Prime Minister Ardern and her ministers recently took **voluntary 20% pay cuts**. I urge you to show true leadership and do the same, because: 1) we are in extraordinary times of terrible economic stress; 2) our city is in this trouble in large part because of inflated personnel and administrative costs relative to our small size; and 3) if you are asking for sacrifices from the people you should lead by example and establish your credibility by beginning with yourselves!
2. Think creatively and ask what *we* as citizens can do. I would be happy to join a volunteer brigade to sweep streets, maintain parks, etc. as just one example.
3. Take a hard look at police department funding. This is occurring nationally even in communities not facing financial shortfalls right now.
4. I understand the city is working with consultants and that the idea for library cuts come from them. I suggest we save whatever money we are paying these consultants and crowdsource the solutions to the people of El Cerrito instead. It frankly doesn't speak well for the consultants if cutting the library is the best they can come up with. How unimaginative and also wholly insufficient! We can do better on our own and you can begin to repair the broken trust with your constituents by engaging together in a truly creative, mutually-beneficial process of community repair and flourishing.

Thank you,

Karin Rosman


--

Karin Rosman

From: [Steven Pon](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item 2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 8:46:58 AM

[Steven Pon, resident of El Cerrito]

Dear El Cerrito City Council,

I will be watching with interest your deliberations regarding the necessary budget cuts to meet our financial obligations. I have two major concerns with the process so far:

1) looking at the presentation from Management Partners, there are many city services to be *cut or reduced* to meet the budget shortfall; however, when it comes to city staffing, the major steps laid out are to *not increase* staffing expenses (hiring freeze, cost of living increase deferral, etc.). I believe staffing expenses are around 60% of the city's budget. It seems obvious that the largest city expense should be looked at for the most savings. Rather than picking around the edges with small expenses (20k here, 75k there), I'm curious that there doesn't seem to have been any real consideration of cutting or reducing staffing levels.

2) In relation to the above -- cutting city services will typically hurt the most vulnerable city populations. With such a spotlight on economic and racial inequalities, it bears keeping in mind how any proposed cuts could exacerbate existing inequality.

I suggest the City study (or make publicly available results of such a study if it has already been done) relative staffing at comparable cities to El Cerrito. There is an impression in the community that our city staff are quite well-paid in relation to their peers in the area, and that we have more upper management positions than in other comparable cities. The limited data I have seen seems to support this assertion. If this is indeed the case, then there will be obvious opportunities to cut expenses just by bringing personnel expenses in line with the local average.

I do want to add -- cutting positions or salaries would not be a punishment or reflection of poor job performance, but an obvious measure to retain fiscal solvency.

Best,
Steve Pon

From: [David Streitfeld](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments -- Agenda item No. 2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 8:49:57 AM

to the City Manager and City Council --

Please DO NOT cut the library. I realize these are tough times but the library is essential to the longterm health of this community. I would rather the cuts come from anywhere else. The library is already beleaguered.

I am a longtime resident and tax-payer in El Cerrito.

David Streitfeld


From: [claudia kruse](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: public comments – El Cerrito Library - may not be on the agenda
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:05:15 AM

City Council

I want to register a citizen's vote on the matter of the City budget and need for budget cuts.

Please do not defund the library in El Cerrito.

It provides a valuable resource to our community.

Thank you,

Claudia Kruse

[REDACTED]

El Cerrito, CA 94530

[REDACTED]

From: [Corinne Gustafson](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments - agenda number 2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:30:48 AM

Given that the cities-risk-index (www.auditor.ca.gov/bsa/cities_risk_index) shows El Cerrito in the high risk category in 7 areas, including pension obligations, pension funding, pension costs and future pension costs, I was shocked that such big wage increases were recently given. 12%, 15%, 17%, 19%, 21%, 56% ! This should not have happened when the city is in such financial difficulty.

What is being done to change the fact that El Cerrito is ranked as “the worst in California for future pension costs?”
Lessen the number of staff and rates of pay to make them more in balance with other cities of corresponding size?

Respectfully submitted,
Corinne Gustafson

From: [Derek Legg](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: El Cerrito Library
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:35:21 AM

Please don't cut the ElCerrito Library. My husband and I are in our late 80' and early 90s and can only drive in the neighborhood and depend on the library for our reading. We are so looking forward to the library opening up soon to pick up our books on hold until Covid-19 is over and we can go back and enjoy newspapers, journals etc. in a lovely space. Thank you.

Ann Legg
Richmond Annex

From: [Paul Kuhn](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments: Agenda Item #2: Public Library funding cuts
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:48:33 AM

Hello -

I live on Yuba Avenue off of Barrett and I believe the El Cerrito Public Library is a valuable community resource and should be funded to the greatest degree possible.

Please do not cut the budget to the extent that it is endangered.

-Paul Kuhn

From: [Gary Prost](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments, Special City Council Meeting June 9 - Agenda Item 2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:54:15 AM

El Cerrito Special City Council Meeting, June 9, 2020

Public Comments – Agenda Item 2, Fiscal Response Plan

Topic: El Cerrito Budget and Management Partners Fiscal Strategies Presentation

Honorable Mayor Lyman and Council:

I have read the online version of the Management Partners Fiscal Strategies Presentation that will be submitted to Council at this meeting. I want you to know that I agree with their recommended budget reduction strategies to achieve a sustainable budget by reducing the El Cerrito budget \$4 million in fiscal 2020-21 and going to \$5.5 million in fiscal 2022-23. I urge you to follow their recommendations.

Tough times call for tough action. These are tough-times, no-nonsense recommendations. Stick to our community priorities of fiscal responsibility and public safety. If you follow these recommendations, then when times get better (and they will), there will be money to bring back programs and services.

Thank you,

Gary Prost

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Lucy Rodriguez](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: El Cerrito Library
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:29:58 AM

Dear City clerk,

I am writing to express opposition to the closing of El Cerrito library. Though, I live in Kensington, I often go to El Cerrito library because it has a good selection of books in Spanish that the Kensington library does not have. The selection of films is also very good.

The library is a great place for the elderly. Books and films are great source of entertainment as one gets less mobile with age.

Please consider keeping the El Cerrito Library open.

Thank you,

Lucy Rodriguez

From: [Barbara Chan CMC](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Paul Fadelli](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: Public Comments: Agenda Item 2/June 9 special meeting
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:33:41 AM

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for continuing the hard work of moving our small city out of financial disaster.

1) The proposal by the City Manager to put our library on the chopping block again is penny wise and pound foolish. You all voted to keep the library budget at your May meeting. It is imperative that we continue funding the only community learning center we have that serves people of all ages, socioeconomic levels, and abilities. The library's physical footprint may be small, but the staff work hard to provide excellent, educational, informational, inclusive, accessible programs and services that include maker workshops, literacy programs, reading and writing programs, computers, computer tutors, homework help, the State and local poet laureates, read alongs with a dog, knitting groups, FixIt Clinics, preschool reading, and much more.

The library was filled with users every one of the 7 days it used to be open. People love and benefit from the library.

The staff is knowledge, professional, courteous and helpful. They help patrons access materials from across the county and beyond, both in print, audio, and visual.

Keep the library staffing budget as approved in May 2020.

2) Re Climate Emergency--The reduction in air pollution, trash, plastic foodware, and VOC emissions during covid-19 pandemic supports better health in our community. People have proven that they can change behaviors when faced with unsafe environments. They say they breathe better since mid-March.

I call upon you to read my esteemed fellow resident Denice Dennis' submitted comments about embedding climate emergency actions into your planning and budgeting.

Digging our city out of a financial hole is worth nothing if we do not also act on climate change for all our health!

Starting with FY 2020-21 let's embed GHG reduction practices into every city job description, and public health communications, and get El Cerrito to or over the 50% GHG reduction goal for 2030.

3) I respectfully request that the Council's subcommittee on Climate Action, i.e., Greg Lyman and Janet Abelson, publicly release their Climate Action report at the start of FY 2020-21 about the work they have been doing around climate change.

4) To avoid the appearance of discouraging democratic practices, I urge you to

a) use the available technology that permits residents to speak at the virtual council meetings.

b) Restart these vital City Committees and make them available via participatory visual conferencing

Environmental Quality Committee

Financial Advisory Board

Planning Commissions

Human Relations

Urban Forestry

5) El Cerritans were enticed to believe in and paying for services; we are not a community of the 1%. Many cannot afford to pay more taxes. This crisis is an opportunity to think and act differently. Together Council and residents can look at what tasks residents can do instead of paid staff. Together I believe that we can build a grassroots community with more residents participating in the care of our town.

Respectfully,

Barbara Chan

Alta Vista La Honda Neighborhood Steward

CERT Area 9 Block Captain

Call Sign WRFW566

[REDACTED]

From: [Monica S](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Not on the Agenda
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:41:59 AM

Why is the City fo El Cerrito still hiring police officers during a financial crisis? One officer's base salary starts at just over \$90,000 yet the city wants to cut services and jobs from recreation business services, recreation childcare programs, custodial services, recreation aquatics programs, and recreation senior center programs! This will mean job cuts to part-time employees who receive no benefits and are not even protected under the union!

Why is the city prioritizing MORE OFFICERS during this financial crisis while nearly 60 of the City of El Cerrito's employees still remain furloughed from the pandemic?

Are residents in favor of adding more police officers while cutting from services that directly impact the community?

--

Thank you,
Monica S.

From: [Barbara Chan CMC](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Paul Fadelli](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: Public Comments: Agenda Item 2/June 9 special meeting
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:44:13 AM

Dear Council Members,

Please **permanently** remove the car allowances for all staff. I understand that will save over \$100K.

Respectfully,

Barbara Chan
Alta Vista La Honda Neighborhood Steward
CERT Area 9 Block Captain
Call Sign WRFW566


From: [Paola Alessandra Sensi-Isolani](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments not on the agenda
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:53:01 AM

From: Paola Sensi Isolani, [REDACTED], El Cerrito

Re: Proposed cut to library

Our library provides essential services to many residents whether seniors, students or children. It is already an embarrassment in terms of its small size and building when compared to other libraries in Contra Costa. Please don't deprive so many of us of such an essential resource. Students especially who are already not meeting in schools need access to the library and its resources!

From: [Eleanor Maoz](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments -- not on the agenda
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:53:01 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to STRONGLY urge you to maintain funding for the El Cerrito Library. The library is a hugely important public service, connecting locals to essential resources and opportunities. It also serves as an incredible equalizer; anyone, no matter their background or ability to pay, can come to access knowledge, tutoring, computers, programming, a warm safe place, and more. This is going to be even more essential in the coming years, as COVID-19 disproportionately affects people of color and low-income communities and further exacerbates existing inequities in access to such resources.

El Cerrito must invest in the library, and by doing so, invest in the future of our community.

Thank you for your time.

In community,
Eleanor

From: [Allison Cooper](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments - agenda item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:08:15 AM

For the 6/9/2020 City Council meeting, from Allison Cooper, of El Cerrito:

Growing up in a law enforcement family, I learned that policing is one of the hardest jobs in the world. Now all Americans are being confronted with the realities of police brutality through the news, while being asked by generations of Black activists to reimagine what community safety means: What if police had more support through non-police community programs to keep communities safe, instead of taking on the impossible responsibility for solving all of the problems that come up in society?

Instead of assuming that the model we have today is the only right answer, if we take a step back to analyze the needs of El Cerrito residents - safety, expertise, support, community - would the system we design look different than our current one?

With this budget crisis, El Cerrito is now in a position to use the tough decisions in front of us to be a leader in this movement to reallocate funds away from policing as the one-size-fits-all solution for ensuring the safety of our community.

As a lifelong resident of this area, and as a young person who intends to be part of this community for a long time, I urge you to use this moment to set the standard for how we envision safety in our community - and better support those who have been tasked with solving our community's toughest problems - by reducing funding for police in order to prioritize funding for non-police community programs in this budget.

Thank you for your time and work on this.

From: [Charlotte Diamant](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments — not on the agenda or public comments — Agenda Item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:10:14 AM

Dear El Cerrito City Council,

I am writing today to strongly urge you **not to defund the El Cerrito public library.**

I was born and raised in El Cerrito, and graduated from El Cerrito High School two years ago. For as long as I have known it, the El Cerrito library has been a pillar of our community, offering invaluable services to a diverse audience and providing a space for community connection and growth.

Libraries are essential for our personal and communal growth. They level the playing field by providing equal access to technologies, educational programs, books, and movies that are not otherwise available to much of our city's population. This allows for continued academic growth and life-long learning, in addition to providing necessary support for school-aged children and college students, who may not have the personal resources (e.g. a quiet workspace, access to the internet and research materials) to support their scholastic endeavors.

The El Cerrito library provides these essential services, while also serving as an important space of connection for our community by hosting educational and social events. For these reasons and many more, **I implore the city council to NOT defund the El Cerrito public library.** Doing so will reduce the availability of the El Cerrito library to continue offering its wide-range of essential public services, and reduce the utility of library resources for El Cerrito residents, **the impacts of which are highly likely to be felt in inequitable ways.**

I understand the difficult situation you are in, but strongly urge you to carefully consider the ramifications of this choice before defunding one of our most important public services. Thank you for your consideration, and for the work you do for our city.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Diamant
El Cerrito resident, ECHS c/o 2018

From: [Sean Kline](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: June 9, 2020 mtg: public comment on agenda item #1 — El Cerrito's Budget
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:27:03 AM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

This is an important moment to address our City's budget. I was dismayed to learn that the police budget consumes 25% of our General Funds. I urge you to make necessary budget cuts to balance the budget by reducing funding for police to sustain other critical needs.

The cities of LA and San Francisco are just two municipalities acting on their words in this important moment: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-03/protests-demanding-racial-justice-gain-momentum-across-l-a> and <https://missionlocal.org/2020/06/san-francisco-police-chief-bill-scott-open-to-defunding-police-department/>.

You have spoken eloquently about the death of George Floyd and the need for our city to uphold its values. Now is the time to act on those values. I join many neighbors, many citizens across the country, The Black Lives Matter movement, Color of Change and other organizations calling to shift funding from police to priorities that help reduce the need for police in the first place.

Sincerely,
Sean Kline

From: [Cathy Hanville](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Comments on the Agenda #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:34:21 AM

While I was thrilled to see the consultants' layout in no uncertain terms that the city was on the financial edge before COVID and be very truthful about the level of cuts needed it is obvious that they are being guided by staff as far as their recommendations.

Case in point-the library cuts returned. You spent hours on this and voted to save the library hours just a few weeks ago. The community came out big time last time (and by the supplemental materials this time too) against these cuts. Because of the county, there were some cuts. That is enough. Move on.

Once again no cuts to management staff compensation or positions were recommended. No cuts to staff compensation have been made other than the furlough and car allowances that should not have been given in the first place. Instead, the recommendation is to cut child-care and other recreation services that many people depend on to go to work. During a pandemic, serious civil unrest, and the worst recession in our lifetimes you are going to keep hurting the people that need services the most.

There has been much research done and sent to you and also available at <https://elcerritocommitteeforresponsiblegovernment.com/> on how the city staff patterns and compensation have raised dramatically in the last 5 years and how our management staffing is high for a city of our size and resources. You are recommending recreation service cuts when you gave the director of the Recreation Department almost a 20k raise between 2018-2019. A raise given after we had already been told the city was at risk of not remaining a going concern (and not the only big raise given). How many kids could received childcare a year for that amount of money?

You have repeatedly refused to look at the recommendations suggested in regards to the fire department which is top-heavy and pays overtime at an outrageous rate. We still have not heard about

Charging for ambulance services

Why we have so many Battalion Chiefs

What we got reimbursed for fighting CA fires last year

Whether or not- not filling positions is actually saving money

Evaluating how many firefighters we need versus paramedics given most call are for medical assistance. (<https://www.vox.com/2014/10/30/7079547/fire-firefighter-decline-medical>)

Why we need to pay a top fire dept management employee overtime to do vegetation inspections. If you are going to outsource something maybe that needs to be it.

Finally, we need to take a look at the Police Department. How much of their work is really police work and how much of it is social work that they are not trained to do? Do we need that many police in this city with our crime levels? It is against everything the protestors are fighting for right now to continue to let the police department continue at current funding levels while making massive service cuts to our most vulnerable citizens. You all made big

statements at the last meeting about looking at policing issues in our community, well here is your chance to take some action.

No services should be cut until we see considerable cuts in management compensation and staffing patterns of management and we take a serious look at public safety which is half of our budget.

As I write this I saw over 50 residents write in including a former FAB member who resigned her post to do so. I want to thank everyone for writing the comments and I hope Council and Staff hear us because there were obvious themes to the comments that agree with what I have stated.

Cathy Hanville
El Cerrito

From: [scott hedges](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); gquinto@el-cerrito.ca.us
Subject: Public Comment on Cutting Library Hours
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:43:39 AM

Good Morning,

I know that El Cerrito is facing severe financial trouble, but believe that keeping the library open

at the current level is a necessity. It is truly a public service for the unhoused among us. It gives folks

access to the essential service of using the Internet to access services that they can't get in person right now.

I understand that an April vote was unanimous in supporting the library's budget. Please, don't make

the homeless suffer more from the pandemic than they already are.

In light of recent events, perhaps a review of the law enforcement budget in El Cerrito makes sense?

Sincerely,

Joyce Hedges



El Cerrito CA

94530

From: [Pilar Dellano](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – not on the agenda or public comments – agenda item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:45:24 AM

This library, though small, provides a wealth of resources for learning to people of all ages, means, and abilities, as well as enriching and educational programs.

Cutting this library and cutting funds will be a true loss for kids and this community. Please consider cutting funds elsewhere.

Thanks,
Pilar (Resident of El Cerrito)



From: [It Is From Shayla](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments- agenda item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:47:53 AM

Dear City Council, do not reduce the budget or take funds from our El Cerrito library. Please stop putting it on the chopping block! We need to keep our library. We need to have one in our city for our seniors, our youth, and our every day people to have access to and use. Shame on you for always trying to get rid of it! It should never be an option.

Please, save our El Cerrito library once again and always.

Shayla Jacobsen



El Cerrito, CA 94530

Subject: FW: public comments – agenda item 2.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:51 AM
To: City Clerk <cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>
Subject: public comments – agenda item 2.

public comments – agenda item 2.

I would like to point out to the Mayor and Council that a few basic assumptions regarding fiscal responsibility and fiscal sustainability are incorrect, in my view.

1). The assumption that the 2017-2018 fiscal year was in the black was incorrect. The independent auditor (in his CAFR) for 2017-2018 presented to the council in September or October 2018 determined that the loan to the Senior Center should have been marked as an expenditure, not an asset. Therefore, the fiscal year 2017-2018 according to standard accounting laws should have shown a deficit. Which makes three years in a row that El Cerrito has had deficits, i.e., 2017-2018, 2018- 2019, and 2019-2020. Instead of correcting this chronic problem, reductions in expenditures were not moved forward or undertaken.

2) The outside consultant also failed to mention the State Auditor's report regarding El Cerrito's financial crisis. That report was undertaken in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, it was published in October 2018 (more than six months ago), yet no reductions were undertaken until the Shelter in Place orders.

3) This reflects a systemic financial budget problem, independent of the added burdens generated by the pandemic; yet, the outside consultant fails to address that. In short, the negative reserves situation was already present staring us in the face before the roof caved in.

Please factor in the above corrections in your calculations. The overall question is why wait any longer? We know that upper management is the largest line item that needs to be cut. Please mandate staff reductions now before cutting services.

As we all should know the deficit occurs where expenditures exceed revenue. We have shown repeatedly that the expenditures are grossly dependent upon excessive upper management salaries, perks, and benefits. That fact has been submitted to the council by an overwhelming amount of citizen input; yet that line item is being chronically ignored and dismissed. Why is that?

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Simon, El Cerrito Resident.

From: Shakti Das [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:02 PM
To: City Clerk <cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>
Subject: public comments – agenda item 2.

public comments – agenda item 2.

Regarding the line item of the Consultant's Presentation under the heading of Initial General Fund Budget Strategies, and the subheading of "Reduce Program Service Levels"

I heartily agree and suggest that the Fire Staff and Citizen Training costs can be reduced by eliminating "dedicated resources [of sworn staff] to training and administration; staff CERT program with volunteers or assign to other non-sworn staff."

I believe that there are expert CERT qualified volunteers in the El Cerrito and Kensington neighborhoods that can run such a program. Would the council consider establishing a Commission to handle volunteer disaster services, or create an administrative position that would be charged to administer an Office of Volunteer Emergency Services?

Thank you,

Donald Simon,

El Cerrito Resident

From: [Melissa Eizenberg](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments-not on the agenda or public comments-agenda item#
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:55:11 AM

Dear City Council,

Please do not defund the library. I know this may be tempting during the pandemic while people are sheltering in place. However, we need books and education now and in the near future more than ever. I am a long time El Cerrito resident. One of the reasons I choose to live in El Cerrito is because of the wonderful City services. Please reconsider what I believe is a very short sighted decision to defund the library.

Melissa Eizenberg


From: [Diana Lyons](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:03:32 PM

My name is Diana Lyons and I am a resident of El Cerrito, again writing with strong opposition to the latest proposal to cut library hours.

Management salaries are significant costs that are not detailed in the budget study session materials. The contract the City Council has with the City Manager for December 2018 - December 2021 is nearly \$20,000 per month at a minimum in base salary dollars alone, nearing \$700,00 over these three years, for one person. On top of pension, benefits, and a COLA increase, the contract allows an extra 4% performance-based increase each year. Just as the library was funded during somewhat better financial times, so was the City Manager's contract. Why aren't these numbers part of the materials prepared for budget meetings? Is the City Council considering revisiting the City Manager's contract and other management-level compensation packages?

I do not understand why the City Manager and today's consultants would continue to put forth a recommendation to cut library hours, over ongoing public outcry, and after the City Council's firm rejection of that recommendation as recently as April 25, 2020. This is astonishing to me and frankly a bit insulting. At the April 25 meeting, Councilmember Pardue-Okimoto voiced regret that she had approved the high pay in the City Manager's contract. During the November 20, 2018 meeting at which this contract was approved, a public commenter noted that the City was in a "dismal" fiscal position and that the City Manager would now receive higher compensation than then-Governor Jerry Brown. Now is the time for the City Council to revisit the City Manager's contract along with other management-level compensation, before making more cuts to smaller items that directly and disproportionately serve our most vulnerable and oppressed residents and visitors.

Cutting \$100,000 in library costs will not rescue El Cerrito from its multi-million dollar shortfall, but it will damage public trust and the reputation of city management. In contrast, a handful of strategic cuts to the ballooning compensation packages at upper levels of management could have greater financial impact and send a clear message to the public that the downtrodden among us will not lose essential services in favor of preservation of management's financial cushions.

As Councilmember Quinto noted at the April 25 meeting the last time our library hours were on the chopping block: when times were hard in the Great Depression, cities prioritized maintaining libraries because they were rightly seen as essential to the public.

There were six goals in the City's strategic plan 2015-2020. The first goal: "Deliver exemplary public services." Only five of the six strategic goals are listed in the consultant presentation for today's meeting (agenda packet page 27). What is the one goal that is missing? That's right: "Deliver exemplary public services." I suppose when you conveniently edit out this goal from the City's priorities, it does make it seem more palatable to cut public services first and foremost.

Please don't balance the budget on the backs of those who rely on the public library for access to shelter, education, literature, socialization, and the Internet.

Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: EC Library
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:11:18 PM

I heard that the library is on the "chopping block"; I have used that library numerous times as did my daughter who went to Fairmont School there and was able to complete her homework and work on other projects for school. It is VERY convenient and an easy walk from my house. The staff are always there to offer a hand when necessary.

Please keep this library open, we as a community really need and rely on them.

I personally miss going there to check out books, or bring my grandson, who adores the dogs.

We live the library... keep it open!!

Regards,

Patricia Terranova
Sent from my MetroPCS 4G LTE Android device

From: [Sherry Drobner](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment- Agenda Item-BUDGET
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:40:55 PM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am so disappointed in the budget proposal being presented. I thought that our budget reflects our values- isn't that what the City Manager said? This budget does not reflect the public interest. I'm not sure whose values this budget represents. I argue that you have been given a flawed framework from which you are to discuss and make decisions.

- Rather than creatively present options to provide services in an alternative manner, you are being offered the typical option of outsourcing or privatizing. Where is the evidence of how much you will save?
- It is not in the public interest to ignore gross overpayment of salaries of the managers at the top. If the goal truly is financial sustainability then an honest review of the management structure and salaries should be on the table. It is not. Maybe the community should have a greater say.
- The report is tone deaf to the historic moment when every city can be reimagining public safety. This report slashes services yet makes minor adjustments to moving some police duties to non-sworn officers. The report is side stepping the costs of a bloated police department. The median number of sworn officers for a city of our size is 40. [g.com/gov-data/safety-justice/police-officers-per-capita-rates-employment-for-city-departments.html](https://www.g.com/gov-data/safety-justice/police-officers-per-capita-rates-employment-for-city-departments.html) We have 45 according to the last budget. Our neighboring city of Hercules (with the same population) expends half the amount of dollars on police personnel.

We have arrived at a moment when we can actually invest in our community by taking a serious look at policing and over policing. You all spoke so eloquently about the death of George Floyd and the need for our city to uphold its values. Now is the time to put action behind your words. The Black Lives Matter movement, Color of Change and so many other organizations are calling for defunding of the police. In our city it means we look at a police budget that takes up about 25% of our General FUNds and reallocate some of these resources to pay for libraries, senior and recreation programs. There is much to be learned. https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a32792624/george-floyd-protests-defund-the-police/?fbclid=IwAR1MaNEHrLukX1cn2404Fgalw239t7U8bC8JBFXwlfKDZt_w1fNnXERI-f8

Your residents are screaming for change. They are calling you to stop doing business as usual and engage in real conversation. Thank you community for all the letters that actually

do represent the values of our community.

Respectfully,

Sherry Drobner

El Cerrito

From: [Judith Marie](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: ECCfRG@groups.io; ChristinaE@auditor.ca.gov
Subject: Resident comment for today's Special City Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 1:01:05 PM

Date: June 9, 2020
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item # 2
From: Judith Frank, El Cerrito Resident
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council Members:

It's indefensible to cut library services and Senior Center Programs, for example, in the face of the following information that residents have raised for months:

With 8 consecutive years requiring a short-term loan to cover the gap between revenue and expenses, the City of El Cerrito's finances are in shambles.

We are where the City Council and City Manager have led us,

- despite multi-year warnings from the independent auditor,
- despite the State's Auditor's study showing El Cerrito the 7th most financially at-risk city in California,
- despite the city's bond rating sliding from AA- to BBB,
- despite today's combined sales, transfer, and utility taxes making El Cerrito the California city with the highest combined tax rate...

all accompanied by high management salary increases, compared with neighboring cities, including management raises within the 2018 \$4.7M increase in overall employee compensation.

I am asking you, pleading with you to rectify El Cerrito's bloated employee numbers and bloated management compensation, action long overdue.

This mystifying eight years of inaction is beyond enough. Please do the right thing now.

Respectfully,
Judith Frank

cc: ECCfRG
CA State Auditor

From: [Paul](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Budget agenda Item #2
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 1:06:38 PM

Public Comment on Agenda Item #2
From: Paul Duncan, El Cerrito resident

We all realize that El Cerrito needs to radically reduce spending.
If an organization is trying to reduce costs in the most efficient manner, the place to look for suggestions and ideas is from within.

I urge the city council to prioritize input from department heads over input from outside consultants who lack the background and day-to-day operating experience of the very capable managers already on the payroll.

On the surface, it's easy to be impressed with a consultant company's resume and fancy PowerPoint slides. But it seems to me that the department heads, the real life insiders managing their departments, probably already have it figured out where the needed economies might most reasonably come from and the consequences.

Consultants lack the knowledge gained by years of being embedded in the day to day realities of running a department, putting them at an inherent disadvantage. They might come in with new ideas, but with the risk of leading to unintended consequences. Department heads are more apt to see outcomes.

For one example, let's look at the Fire Department. If it takes 9 firefighters to staff 3 engines and there are no unfilled vacancies, there is no substitute available for firefighters who miss work due to vacation, illness, injuries or any other reason. So if there are only 8 firefighters on duty for a given day, one of the 3 engine companies is out for the day because the fire department has no authorized overtime anymore that used to compensate for the unfilled positions. This equates to a de facto CLOSURE of one of the fire stations. Probably Station 72 on the Arlington and one less engine to respond to emergencies within the entire city.

I know the time is almost up for finalizing the city budget, but how about scheduling a session with the various department heads to get their input directly?

Thank you,
Paul Duncan, El Cerrito resident

From: [Jose Martinez](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: from SEIU
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 1:08:14 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear members of El Cerrito City council,

Please consider if it is viable for the City to maintain its own police department as this is the glaring structural and unaffordable strain to our city's budget.

José Martínez (City resident)

Field Representative
SEIU Local 1021

“‘right-to-work.’ It provides no ‘rights’ and no ‘works.’ Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining.”

Dr. Martin L. King Jr.



From: [Kay Polivka STARKWEATHER](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item #2 June 9, 2020
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 2:15:05 PM

Dear City Manager, City Council and Consultants.

Emergency Services was rated #2 Priority in the Town Hall meeting conducted last February following fiscal responsibility. Please be mindful of this when making cuts.

Our fire preparedness situation is grave. Years of unfettered vegetative growth and lack of vegetative management have put a great swarth of El Cerrito in the VHFHSZ (Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone) of Cal Fire meaning that we are at the highest risk of an apocalyptic fire event. Climate change has increased the likelihood of a fire devastation event wiping out our homes, schools, childcare centers, libraries and livelihoods.

The huge amount of fuel created by years of overgrowth increases the chances of a catastrophic fire. This fire is likely to come down Wildcat, right along the path of Fire Station 72.

There are only 3 fire stations total: 2 stations El Cerrito and 1 in Kensington. it appears the consultant-proposed cuts to staffing will close the one fire station in El Cerrito that is in closest proximity to the huge groves of Eucalyptus that endanger the City. This will leave the City with only one fire station and endanger us further while increasing response time for fire and medical needs. If cut, will the Kensington contract then increase to pay for 50% of our fire budget?

Last year the City started on a course to inspect and issue violations for dangerous overgrowth. It was a good but small start. This inspection and enforcement program needs to be beefed up. A solution to the City's vegetative overgrowth problem and lack of financial resources to combat it would be to start a vigorous enforcement program citing all eucalyptus, Monterey pine and juniper in the area and requiring removal. Just strictly following the current vegetation code would be a big start. Hefty fines should be implemented and enforced for non-compliance. This would be a win-win for the city and could possibly generate much needed revenue.

Have Councilmembers met individually with each Department Head to seek their recommendations on cuts to their departments first hand? If not, could you do so?

Can the public hear more on fire fighter shifts (are we a 56-hour work week city?). Is there a current study on the use of overtime vs the elimination of vacant positions as to which is most cost effective and safety effective? Could there be a workshop for the public on firefighter assignments?

In any case, cutting out one of our 3 stations in El Cerrito/Kensington is not keeping public safety as a second Priority for the City.

Best,

Kay P. Starkweather
EC Resident

From: [Robin Mitchell](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Comment for Item 2, City Council Budget Study Session
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 3:33:56 PM

Mayor and council members

I am somewhat dismayed by the lack of transparency in the recommendations that are being presented by the consultant. There is not enough detail in the recommendations for the city council to make any meaningful decisions. This is painfully obvious by the level of detailed questions being asked by council members as well as the general confusion about the numbers. The City Council members are all smart and they can handle, and obvious want, a very high level of detail.

They need a line by line itemized list of reductions so that they can have meaningful discussions and make thoughtful, fact based decisions.

I am also wondering why we are paying a consultant to figure out these cost reductions, when we have paid staff that are definitely capable of doing this type of analysis.

The report by the consultant does not seem like it has served the city in a meaningful way. And I suspect we shouldn't be spending money to have them do this analysis when I believe we can do it inhouse.

Robin Mitchell
El Cerrito Resident

From: [Sheila Singleton](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 6:04:38 PM

Dear EC Supervisors and City Clerk,

I thought that cuts to our library were saved following a meeting a month ago. Now I hear more cuts are being urged by a hired outside consultancy organization. Their proposals would seriously impact the library budget. The library is already operating on a low budget yet still providing a wonderful service. Further cuts would severely impact our library. I am retired and I use the library often. Our library caters to many age groups and we would really suffer from reduced hours and services. Undoubtedly, local public libraries are great assets to communities. Please reject this proposal to reduce the library budget and keep our wonderful library functioning!

Sincerely,
S Singleton