



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Karen Pinkos, City Manager
DATE: March 21, 2019
SUBJECT: City Manager's Update

I'm very much looking forward to the April 2nd City Council Meeting where we will be presenting the *Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan* for the Council to consider for approval. The Master Plan is the culmination of several City planning efforts and initiatives documenting the needs of El Cerrito's aging Parks and Recreation facilities and extensive public engagement. As you know, the development of the Master Plan is in line with the City's Strategic Plan, that identified a primary goal to "develop and rehabilitate public facilities as community focal points" and a strategy to "develop a plan to address ongoing and deferred maintenance of facilities and infrastructure."

I am proud of the hard work put into this plan by Recreation Director Chris Jones, Public Works Director Yvetteh Ortiz, and their Recreation and Public Works teams. I'd like to thank the Park and Recreation Commission, community stakeholders, and members of the public and who contributed ideas and provided feedback. Check out the Master Plan at www.el-cerrito.org/ParksMP.

Next week, from March 27-29, I will be in Omaha, Nebraska for the ICMA Mountain Plains Regional Conference and after the City Council meeting on April 2, I will be taking the red eye to New Brunswick, New Jersey for the ICMA Northeast Regional Conference from April 3-5. At both conferences, I will be facilitating a conversation with ICMA membership on ways to increase diversity and inclusion in the local government management profession. These ideas will be valuable to share with our City team, as we continue to ensure the City's own commitment to the value of diversity and inclusion.

Have a great week!

Karen

CITY MANAGEMENT

New Year, New Look

The citywide newsletter, *News & Views*, has a new look for 2019. To mark the City's new leadership and 10 years since its debut, the newsletter features a new design, layout, and full-color photos representing the good work happening in the community by staff and residents alike. We hope you like it!



Housing and Home: An Art-based Inquiry

The Arts and Culture Commission and the Human Relations Commission are partnering on a joint event, on April 20th, to explore community issues around home. The event will include conversation, but will focus on art-making (drawing, collage, and writing) and on creating group pieces from participants' work. Dani Gabriel, El Cerrito's Poet Laureate will take part. Please see flyer attached.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Transfer Tax Rebate Information Webpage

As Council is aware, as of January 14, 2019, property sales in El Cerrito became subject to a 1.2% real property transfer tax (RPTT) equal to 1.2% of the sales price. Homeowners who paid the RPTT may be eligible for a rebate for seismic upgrades and energy and water conservation projects. To qualify, the property transfer, or sale, must have been in escrow on or after January 14, 2019.

Qualifying seismic upgrades or energy or water conservation projects must be completed either up to one year prior to the transfer of real property or within one year after the transfer. If the work qualifying for a rebate is completed prior to the transfer of the real property, the seller and buyer must decide who may apply for and receive the rebate.

To check application guidelines or to apply for the rebate, please visit: www.el-cerrito.org/transfertaxrebate.

New Business - COMING SOON!

NaNa Desserts on 10172 San Pablo Avenue (Peppermint Tree Plaza)

The café will serve organic juices and smoothies as well as dessert items such as ice cream and milkshakes. Other offerings include coffee, tea and Middle Eastern pastries. Please subscribe to our [Community Development E-News](#) to learn more about the official Grand Opening and other community events.

Design Review Board Recap

On March 6, 2019, the Design Review Board approved the project at **11965 San Pablo Avenue (Polaris Apartments)**, the site of the former Taco Bell. The project includes 144 new units of housing in an 8-story building with subterranean parking. This project qualifies for a density bonus, under State law, based on the inclusion of

affordable housing in the project. Based on previous input from the Design Review Board, including feedback at the February 6, 2019 meeting, the project has been substantially revised since its initial submittal. The project required Tier II Design Review, meaning the Design Review Board's approval is the final entitlement required for the project.

In addition, the Design Review Board conducted two study sessions. The first study session was for the **921 Kearney Street** project. The project proposes 69 units of new housing in a 5-story building. The project has been reviewed by the Design Review Board in the past and the Board gave further comments to the applicant to help refine the project.

The Board also conducted a study session for the Hampton Inn hotel project located at **11645 San Pablo Avenue**. The project proposes a new 124-room, 5-story hotel. The Design Review Board had reviewed the project previously, and significant revisions have been made to the project, as a result. The Board gave further comments to the applicant at the March 6 meeting. The project will return to the Board for consideration once the required environmental review is complete.

To view the current plans and other information for these projects, please visit elcerrito.org/MajorProjects or contact the Planning Division at planning@ci.elcerrito.ca.us.

State Tenant Protection Legislation

On March 14, 2019 State lawmakers introduced four housing bills in the State Assembly aimed to establish and amend state-wide rental housing policies.

1. AB 36, introduced by Richard Bloom, would reform the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act by allowing cities to apply rent stabilization to rental units older than 10 years old, including single family and condominiums.
2. AB 724, introduced by Buffy Wicks, would establish a state-wide rent data registry.
3. AB 1481, introduced by Rob Bonta, would place limits on property owner's ability to evict tenants.
4. AB 1482, introduced by David Chiu, would establish anti-gouging rent law that would cap annual rent increases.

To view the press release issued by Assembly Member Bonta, "California Lawmakers Announce Measures to Protect Renters and Combat Housing", visit <https://a18.asmdc.org/press-releases/20190314-california-lawmakers-announce-measures-protect-renters-and-combat-housing>.

FIRE

Hillside Natural Area Ongoing Fuel Reduction

Last week, the Delta Camp hand crews were once again in the HNA working on fuel reduction and removal. This has been the third week, since January, that we have been able to schedule them in for the assistance. During this past week the crews worked on brush removal and reduction off Regency Court,



working down the north side of Kent Court. They continued with this path working all the way around the homes and back up the south side of Kent Court back towards Contra Costa Drive. This area had not been touched for years and the brush was extremally thick, as you can see in the picture on the left, above. In the picture on the right, you can see the progress with the path that has been cut and the piles that are being formed. This brush must be allowed to dry for 60 days prior to being able to burn to remove the fuel load. The Fire Department is currently distributing burn notices in the area and will be conducting burns soon.

PUBLIC WORKS

El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center Daylight Savings Hours

The El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (RERC) has resumed its Spring/Summer hours. The drop-off area of the RERC is now open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:45 p.m. on weekdays and from 9:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. In addition, the St. Vincent de Paul Donation Station is now open every day. The donation station accepts reusable items including the following: small electronics, clothing and accessories, kitchen goods, housewares, linens, towels, curtains, typewriters, TVs, audio amplifiers, sewing machines, small sporting goods, small furniture in good condition, tools, and crafts. Email green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or call 215-4350 for more information.

Responding to Graffiti and Illegal Dumping

Our Maintenance section is experiencing a high number of complaints relating to graffiti and illegal dumping on public property. Maintenance staff respond to these requests for service as soon as possible, to reduce blight and the potential for public health and safety issues. City resources needed to respond can be significant in terms of time and expense. This is especially the case for illegal dumping, which has been on

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE (CONT'D)

the rise in the region. As a result, staff is participating in countywide discussions to increase efforts to reduce illegal dumping, by increasing enforcement and providing more options for the proper disposal of materials. If members of the public witness any dumping or vandalism taking place, please report it to Police Dispatch at 233-1214. To report illegally dumped materials or graffiti on public property, please contact our Maintenance section at maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or 215-4369.

Centennial Park Turtle was Vandalized

We are saddened to report that the iconic turtle at Centennial Park (formerly Fairmount Park) was vandalized. The turtle's head was destroyed and discarded on the newly refurbished grassy area. The turtle was saved during the park's recent renovation. We will attempt to restore the beloved turtle and we ask residents to help protect our green spaces as well as children's play areas.



Celebrating El Cerrito's Annual Arbor Week

California celebrates Arbor Week every year from March 7-14, promoting educational activities by cities, community groups, businesses and individuals on the value of trees for building successful and healthy cities and neighborhoods.

Once again, El Cerrito celebrated Arbor Week with residents of all ages. On March 13, 2019, children from the Madera Elementary After School Program planted a Coast Live Oak seedling with Operations & Environmental Services staff including the Environmental Programs Manager/City Arborist.

The Urban Forest Committee had planned to host a ceremonial tree planting with community members in Poinsett Park and a work day in the Hillside Natural Area to occur during Arbor Week. However, due to rain, the ceremonial tree planting will now take place on March 31. The work day will occur alongside Earth Day events, on April 13, to remove Eucalyptus duff, fuels, and invasive plants from the Quarry Hill eucalyptus grove.

For more information, please contact Stephen Prée, Environmental Programs Manager, at spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Alameda County Transportation Commission's San Pablo Avenue Corridor Study Update

In 2018, the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) began the San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project (Project), a multiagency effort to improve transit performance, implement the Complete Streets Plan, accommodate anticipated growth and address competing demands along this critical regional corridor. The Project will identify a set of improvements to increase the corridor's ability to move people and goods, improve access to businesses, and serve residents.

ACTC began targeted outreach to stakeholders and focus groups early February and

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE (CONT'D)

will begin hosting a series of public workshops in April. For more information, please contact Yvetteh Ortiz, Public Works Director/City Engineer at yortiz@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

RECREATION

After School Enrichment Program Spring Session

The third and final session of the After-School Enrichment Program (ASEP) at Harding, Madera and Fairmont elementary schools will begin this spring. Together with each school and parent representatives, the Recreation Department coordinates with professional instructors, coaches and organizations to host a variety of classes held conveniently after school on the school campuses. Students can try out activities focused on academics, visual arts, athletics, music, performing arts and more. Important dates for each school are below.

- **HASEP Session Three:** 3/18/19-5/10/18 - Registration Open Now
- **MASEP Session Three:** 4/8/19-5/24/19 - Online Registration: Friday, March 22, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. | In-office Registration: Monday, March 25, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.
- **FASEP Session Three:** 4/15/19-5/24/18 - Online Registration: Friday, March 29, 2019 at 8:00am | In-office Registration: Monday, April 1, 2019 at 8:00am

Spring Break Camp

Grades TK-6, Monday-Friday, April 1-5. Harding Clubhouse grades K-2, Fairmont Clubhouse grades 2-6. This camp features a fabulous array of activities, healthy physical endeavors, and lovely art projects. Registration is now open and available online.

Subscribe & Follow

For up to date information on all the happenings brought to you by the El Cerrito Recreation Department, please subscribe to our email newsletter **rECnews** at www.el-cerrito.org/recreation. Follow us: Instagram - @ecrecreation | Facebook - @ecrecreation | Twitter - @ElCerritoREC

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 21 (Thursday) - Community Meeting: Update to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, 7 p.m.

Location: City Hall Council Chambers

Contact: el-cerrito.org/SPASP

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, adopted in 2014, laid the groundwork for development and increased economic activity along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The City is currently working to update components of the plan and invites members of the community to participate and provide input.

March 27 (Friday) – Healthy Aging & Healthy Brain Presentation by UCSF, 1:15 p.m.

Location: Senior Center at Hana Gardens, 10870 San Pablo Ave

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE (CONT'D)

Contact: Mark Deleon, mdeleon@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, 559-7677

UCSF Researchers will be presenting senior-focused strategies for keeping one's brain strong and healthy, whether living alone or with others. Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions and gain knowledge of living a healthier cognitive life!

March 31 (Sunday) – Arbor Week Tree Planting & Dedication with the Urban Forest Committee, 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Location: Poinsett Park , 5611 Poinsett Avenue

Contact: Stephen Prée, spree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, 559-7685

The UFC will plant and dedicate an Arbor Day tree. The public is invited to this ceremonial event.

March 31 (Sunday) - El Cerrito Urban Forest: Past, Present, and Future, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Arlington Clubhouse at 1120 Arlington Blvd.

Contact: David Weinstein, 524-1737, davidsweinstein@yahoo.com,
elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/upcomingevents

Journey through time with us as we survey El Cerrito's urban forest and how the ever-changing values of El Cerrito's residents influence its structure and composition. This public event is free and light refreshments will be served.

April 13 (Saturday) – Earth Day Celebration, Work parties, 9 a.m. to noon; Lunch, noon to 1:30 p.m.

Location: Work parties at various locations; lunch at the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane

Contact: earthday@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, 559-7686, www.el-cerrito.org/earthday

The City celebrates Earth Day with a morning of volunteerism and work parties followed by our Volunteer Appreciation lunch. Register to host or participate in a work party!

April 19 (Friday) – Elder Financial Abuse Prevention Presentation by Attorney Summer Selleck, CPA and Fiduciary Mary Rose

Location: Midtown Activity Center, 10940 San Pablo Ave

Contact: Blanca Martinez-Campos, bmartinez-campos@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, 559-7677

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging strives to help seniors help themselves by educating and empowering them to be their own advocates as the best form of prevention. The importance for seniors to be educated on how to identify the warning signs of financial abuse and strategies they can use to protect themselves will be presented.

April 20 (Sunday) – Housing and Home: An Art-based Inquiry, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: El Cerrito Community Center (Garden Room), 7007 Moeser Lane

Contact: Maya Williams, 215-4318, mwilliams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

This two-hour community gathering will ask questions about what home means to each of us - individually and for all of us as El Cerritans. See flyer below

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE (CONT'D)

April 20 (Saturday) – Annual Egg Hunt, 10:00 am

Location: Arlington Park, 1120 Arlington Blvd.

Contact: Eden O'Brien-Brenner, edo@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, 559-7003

Spring is in the air, and the Egg Hunt is a great way to celebrate! Perfect for children ages 1-10. Be on time as the hunt for eggs and candy goes very quickly! A very special bunny will be there for photo opportunities. See flyer below

PERSONNEL UPDATES

New Hire – Jeremy Janes to Firefighter, effective March 10, 2019

Attachments: Housing and Home: An Art-based Inquiry and Annual Egg Hunt.

Sponsored by
El Cerrito's Arts & Culture
and Human Relations Commissions

Saturday April 20
10 am–noon

housing and home

a community art-based inquiry

We'll explore feelings and thoughts about home
through making art.

Community Center
Garden Room
7007 Moeser Lane



City of El Cerrito Recreation Department Presents Our...

Annual Spring Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 20, 2019

10:00 am sharp at Arlington Park
1120 Arlington Blvd., El Cerrito

Free Event for Ages 0-12 yr. olds
A Very Special Bunny Visit



**Don't forget to bring your basket. Rain or shine.
Come early as the event is over quickly.**