A Glorious Fourth!

The City of El Cerrito and worldOne invite you to attend the 2013 July 4th Festival in Cerrito Vista Park on Thursday, July 4! This long-running event offers daytime family fun and global entertainment for all ages. Admission is free.

The 15th Annual worldOne Festival (a part of the City’s Fourth of July Festival presented by worldOne Radio KECG—88.1 FM) in Cerrito Vista Park begins the celebration on Wednesday night, July 3rd, from 5 to 7 p.m.

There is limited street parking in the area. Free bike valet parking will be available on Moeser Lane. Dogs are not allowed at the event.

On July 4th, Main Stage performers include: Tara Linda, Del Mars, Musical Art Quintet, Ed Reed Quartet, Rusty Zinn and His Band, Suhaila International Dance Company, Fely Tchaco and Debora Iyall Group.

Kids will enjoy carnival games, face painting, a rock-climbing wall, bounce houses, and carnival rides for young children. Circus Imagination presents their popular audience-participation animal-free circus shows at 11 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 3 p.m. under the Big Top.

The El Cerrito Art Association’s seventh annual 4th of July Art Show and Sale will highlight numerous local artists.

Food stalls will feature food from around the world and delicious carnival treats. You’ll find vendors of colorful arts and crafts, toys, clothing, books, jewelry, and accessories, and informational booths presented by local organizations and clubs.

The City of El Cerrito and worldOne would like to thank the following sponsors: Honda of El Cerrito, East Bay Sanitary, Mechanics Bank, Prospect Sierra, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., The Natural Grocery Company, Sunlight and Power, Maria-Tina Vision, Aidells Sausage, Safeway Bottling Company, B&T Bookkeeping Inc., Pastime Hardware, Contra Costa Community College, WCCUSD, The Whole 9, Recyclenmore, J C Armstrong, Doherty’s Truck & Auto Rental, El Cerrito Heating and Sheet Metal, Olivero Plumbing, Super 8, C.V.S., O’Reilly Auto Parts, J&P Properties and other local businesses and individuals.

More information is available at http://www.el-cerrito.org/july4festival
New Community Center Office Hours
In order to better serve the public, the Recreation Department has new office hours. The Community Center Office is open:

Mondays, Wednesdays and every other Friday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays: 8 a.m.–6 p.m.

The El Cerrito Community Center Office is now closed every other Friday (same days as City Hall). This change only affects the administrative office. Recreation Programs and classes will continue to be held as scheduled. You can register and pay for classes anytime online at www.el-cerrito.org/recreation

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Through August 25th
Swim Center Summer Hours
The summertime recreational swim hours at the El Cerrito Swim Center are:

When: Monday-Friday: 1:15–3:15 p.m. Saturday and Sunday: 1–4 p.m.
Where: Community Center 7007 Moeser Lane

Go online or ask at the entrance for the details about lap swim, splash park hours and rentals, “Friday Family Fun Nights”, and special evening hours for Teen Recreation Swim!

For more information, please call 559-7008.

Saturdays: July 6, August 3 September 7, October 5
Baxter Creek Work Parties
Join El Cerrito’s Green Team volunteers on the first Saturday of each month and help to maintain a healthy creek. Gloves, rakes, shovels, grabbers, and other tools provided. Bring water if desired. Wear a hat and close-toed shoes! All ages are welcome with guardians. Meet at Ohlone Greenway and Conlon Avenue, just south of where BART crosses San Pablo Ave. Call 215-4350 for details.

When: 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Where: Baxter Creek/Gateway Park

Tuesday, July 9
Public Meeting about Single-Use Bags and Food Ware
Hear a presentation and discuss proposed changes regulating the distribution of single-use bags and expanded polystyrene (EPS foam) food ware in El Cerrito. This presentation is part of the regular monthly Environmental Quality Committee meeting. (Note: Public comments on these topics are due by 4 p.m. on July 15.)

When: 7 p.m.
Where: City Hall 10890 San Pablo Avenue

Wednesday, July 17
San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and Complete Streets Meeting
Hear about the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and Complete Streets (update to the Circulation Plan for Pedestrians and Bicyclists) at the Planning Commission study session. See article on page 6 for more details.

When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Ave.

July 20–July 21
Relay For Life–El Cerrito
Relay For Life raises funds for the American Cancer Society, honors local cancer survivors, and raises awareness about cancer. Call Laura Gonzalez at 697-0422 or visit www.relayforlife.org/ElCerritoCA.

When: Saturday, 10 a.m.–Sunday, 10 a.m.
Where: Cerrito Vista Park 950 Pomona Avenue

Tuesday, July 23, 2013
Urban Greening and Specific Plan Workshop
This community workshop will focus on citywide bicycle, pedestrian and urban greening improvements and the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. See page 6 for more details or call 559-7686.

When: 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
Where: Harding Elementary Multipurpose Room 7230 Fairmount Avenue

Tuesday, August 6
National Night Out
Host a block party to bring your neighborhood together on National Night Out, a unique opportunity for residents to connect with the Police Department and each other to learn about safety and crime prevention. Call the Police Department at 215-4400 for more information and to find out about the resources provided to hosts.

When: your choice
Where: your block

Tuesday, August 27
Disaster Preparedness Class
Are you ready? The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is designed to help residents become self-sufficient in the event of a disaster. This evening program meets weekly. It is designed to assist residents of El Cerrito and Kensington to be self-sufficient in the event of a disaster. The class is free but advance registration is required. To register or for information, call 215-4450 or e-mail fire@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

When: 6:30–9 p.m. weekly, August 27–October 15
Where: Arlington Community Church 52 Arlington Avenue Kensington

Read the City of El Cerrito’s 2013–2014 Budget Online
Each year in June, the City Council adopts the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Learn more about the recently adopted 2013–2014 budget at www.el-cerrito.org/budget.
Monday, September 2
Labor Day Holiday
City Hall, Community Center & Recycling Center Closed

Stockton Art Stroll
Friday September 13
The upper Stockton Avenue Business District presents the Stockton Avenue Art Stroll. Discover the local art scene and connect with the community. Enjoy free live music and children’s activities, meet local artists, and explore local shops. For more information, contact Jenny K., 6921 Stockton Avenue or Adorn & Flourish, 7027 Stockton Avenue.
When:  6 to 8 pm
Where:  Upper Stockton Avenue

Monday, September 9
Dynamo Golf Scramble
Play a round of golf at the newly renovated Mira Vista Country Club! Enjoy a delicious lunch and the chance to win great prizes donated by local businesses. The Scramble is a major fundraiser for the Recreation Department’s David Hunter Memorial Scholarship Fund and the Open House Senior Center. Scholarships assist families in need of safe, high quality recreation programs for children, while the Open House Senior Center Fund helps maintain many activities and services for El Cerrito’s seniors.
All levels of play are welcome. The tournament will be scored 2 ways (Blind Bogey & Low Gross) by the pro shop staff. $145 per person, or register as a foursome for $550.
The City seeks your support for this event. To donate a prize or become a sponsor, contact Recreation Department Director Chris Jones at 559-7005.
For information, visit the Community Center or see www.el-cerrito.org/recreation.
When:  Form & payment due at 4 p.m.
Where:  Mira Vista Country Club
7901 Cutting Blvd, El Cerrito

Tuesday, September 10
Police Academy
The Citizen Police Academy (CPA) is an opportunity for members of the community to learn about the ECPD. Classes will begin on September 11, 2013 and meet weekly through October 16, 2013. You must be at least 18 years old, reside in El Cerrito and pass a background check before being accepted into the Citizen Police Academy. (Note: Exceptions to the residency restriction will be considered on an individual basis.) Call Lt. De La Campa at 215-4448, or complete the interest form online at: http://www.el-cerrito.org/ CPA

Saturday, September 14
Saturday, October 12
CPR/First Aid Class
The El Cerrito/Kensington Fire Department offers CPR and Basic First Aid classes to the general public with priority registration for Kensington and El Cerrito residents. Other dates are also available. Advance registration required. To register, e-mail fire@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or call 215-4450.
When:  8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Where:  Arlington Community Church
52 Arlington Avenue
Kensington

Saturday, September 21
Tri-City Safety Day
See a display of emergency vehicles and meet police officers and firefighters from El Cerrito, Kensington, Albany, and Richmond. There will be demonstrations and activities for the whole family. This activity is free. Call the Fire Department at 215-4450 during business hours for more information.
When:  11 a.m.–3 p.m.
Where:  El Cerrito Plaza
(in front of Lucky supermarket), at San Pablo and Fairmount Avenues

Monday, September 23
Deadline to Register for the Fall Citywide Garage Sale
Register to take part in the Fall Citywide Garage Sale on October 12. Maps will be available to shoppers one week prior to the sale. Find a maps online, or go to the Recycling Center or the Community Center.
When:  Form & payment due at 4 p.m. on Monday, September 23
Where:  Mail or drop off at City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Ave.

Wednesday, September 11
Attend the ECPD Citizen Police Academy

Saturday and Sunday
September 20 and 21
E-Waste Recycling Collection
The City of El Cerrito is hosting a drive-through recycling drop-off event at the new Recycling + Environmental Resource Center. Drop-off unwanted TVs and computer monitors, computers and accessories, stereos and music equipment, VCR & DVD players, toner cartridges, printers, fax machines, copiers, phone equipment, cell phones, MP3 players, microwaves and more for free! UnWaste will unload your car for you—it’s fast, easy and the right thing to do. Visit www.unwaste.com or call UnWaste at (888) 832-9839.

When:  9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Where:  El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center
7501 Schmidt Lane
The City of El Cerrito Adopts a Strategic Plan

In April 2013, the City Council adopted a Strategic Plan for El Cerrito. The Plan was the result of a year-long effort to engage the community in creating a shared vision for our future. Thank you to all the community members who participated in the process.

The strategic plan provides the City with a roadmap for making service delivery decisions and allocating resources. It will also serve to guide the organization in fulfilling the City’s mission and vision.

The Strategic Plan document, and background information, are online at www.elcerrito.org/strategicplan. Going forward, staff will periodically provide the Council with progress reports regarding steps taken to achieve each of the goals. For more information, contact Assistant City Manager, Karen Pinkos at 215-4302.

The strategic plan articulates the direction the City is headed and identifies strategies to achieve specific goals. It includes the following elements:

**VISION STATEMENT**

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

**MISSION STATEMENT**

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

**ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES**

- Ethics and Integrity
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Inclusiveness
- Innovation and Creativity
- Professional Excellence
- Responsiveness
- Transparency and Open Communication

**GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS**

*(not in priority order)*

**DELIVER EXEMPLARY GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

- Increase productivity and efficiency by using data-driven analysis to ensure appropriate resource allocation.
- Promote employee development and professional growth.
- Recruit and retain a talented and effective workforce.
- Ensure City programs and services are inclusive of people with diverse backgrounds.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with public and private partners, residents, businesses, schools, and community groups.
- Maintain emphasis on providing excellent customer service.

**ACHIEVE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

- Maintain financial discipline by establishing decision-making guidelines to evaluate whether or when to pursue a new project or program.
- Ensure policies, procedures and systems represent best practices in financial management.
- Attract and maximize opportunities for new/expanding businesses.
- Explore opportunities for public/private partnerships.
- Continue to pursue opportunities for new funding, including outside grants.
- Develop a financial plan to address ongoing and deferred maintenance of facilities and infrastructure.
- Develop a plan to ensure that revenue meets the cost of providing the services identified in the Strategic Plan, including adequate reserves for unanticipated revenue shortfalls.
- Track and promote state and federal legislation that would create new funding opportunities.
DEEPEN A SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY.

- Promote strong neighborhoods.
- Celebrate the City’s diversity by welcoming residents of all ages and cultures and encouraging their civic involvement.
- Adopt a Revised General Plan that meets the needs of the community now and in the future.
- Re-imagine underdeveloped and underutilized properties through advanced planning efforts that encourage investment and/or new development.
- Develop an Economic Development action plan.
- Review and update current policies on preservation of historic and cultural resources.
- Encourage dense business nodes to minimize or eliminate automobile traffic.
- Identify, promote, and/or develop entertainment, recreational, and leisure activities for people of all ages and demographics.
- Promote arts and culture and community celebrations.
- Develop plans for the City’s 100th year anniversary (2017).
- Be a strong partner with the schools.

ENSURE THE PUBLIC’S HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- Provide transparent information on crime and address perceptions of safety through outreach and education.
- Use environmental design techniques to deter and prevent crimes
- Apply data-driven analysis to target law enforcement and fire resources and enhance safety.
- Maintain disaster preparedness programs and ensure emergency response plans are current.
- Continue multi-division/department teamwork to ensure and enhance the community’s safety through a thorough, efficient and comprehensive plan review, permitting and inspection process.
- Continue to work with local partners (i.e., BART, the School District, neighboring communities, East Bay Regional Park District) on a coordinated approach to public safety.
- Use community-oriented policing and problem solving.
- Use a diverse array of crime prevention techniques (for example, School Resource Officer [SRO] program, Traffic Unit, Bike Patrol, etc.).
- Explore innovative and best practices for promoting public health (for example, smoking ordinances, nutrition, and obesity prevention).

FOSTER ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CITYWIDE.

- Be a leader in setting policies and providing innovative programs that promote environmental sustainability.
- Promote environmental education to facilitate behavioral changes by working with the School District and other community groups
- Implement polices to promote waste diversion (such as a ban on single-use bags and Styrofoam food containers).
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation to the single occupancy vehicle.
- Implement the City’s Climate Action Plan to:
  - Reduce vehicle miles traveled
  - Facilitate energy and water efficiency and greater adoption of clean energy.
  - Reduce the amount of waste generated in El Cerrito
  - Make municipal operations more resource efficient and environmentally friendly.

DEVELOP AND REHABILITATE PUBLIC FACILITIES AS COMMUNITY FOCAL POINTS.

- Develop a plan to address ongoing and deferred maintenance of facilities and infrastructure.
- Continue the facilities assessment to prioritize and strategize investment (such as library, public safety facility, senior center, community center).
- Revisit and update the Structural Facilities Management Plan.
Plan a greener, more vibrant El Cerrito!

The City of El Cerrito is currently in the process of developing four planning documents to help create a more walkable, economically vibrant, and greener El Cerrito for residents and businesses:

- the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan
- the Complete Streets Plan
- an update to the 2007 Circulation Plan for Bicyclists and Pedestrians
- and a citywide Urban Greening Plan

The four plans will be completed over the next 12 to 14 months.

Over the last several years, City Council and staff have repeatedly heard from residents that they would like more active, pedestrian-friendly commercial districts; better options to walk or bike to their destinations; and development projects that better reflect environmental sustainability and community vitality as key community values. A number of upcoming opportunities for participation have been scheduled to solicit input from all El Cerrito stakeholders.

Participants will help shape the future vision of the city on a number of key issues such as physical improvements and ways of increasing mobility for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles; new build-out scenarios along San Pablo Avenue that allow for increased densities and building heights near BART stations; and more flexibility in minimum parking requirements.

Your participation and input into these plans is key to the success of these planning efforts. Please plan to attend the upcoming community workshops (see the list in box at right) and complete an Urban Greening Plan survey online at www.ElCerritoUrbanGreening.org.

For further information and details about these planning efforts, please call Melanie Mintz, Community Development Director, at 215-4339 or email mmintz@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Disclosure Now Required for Commercial Accessibility Standards

The State of California now requires owners of commercial properties to disclose on a lease or rental agreement whether the property being leased or rented has undergone inspection by a Certified Access Specialist (or “CASp”) and, if so, whether the property meets all applicable construction-related accessibility standards under California Civil Code Section 1938. The lease/agreement should also clearly designate which party is responsible for compliance with disability access laws.

The intent is to ensure that commercial properties comply with construction-related access requirements for individuals with disabilities.

New or expanding business owners who rent a commercial space should check lease or rental agreements, and request this information if it is not included.

Section 1938 does not provide for any specific penalties if the lease does not include the required language. However, failure to include it could result in claims or cross-complaints by a tenant against its landlord if the tenant is sued for failing to comply with disability access laws. Such failure may allow the tenant to terminate the lease.

More detailed information can be found on the California Commission on Disability Access web page www.ccda.ca.gov.

If you have questions or require information regarding compliance with accessibility in existing buildings, please contact the Building Division at 215-4360.

Come to Tri-City Safety Day on September 21 to watch demonstrations by police and fire agencies, and learn safety and preparedness tips. More details on page 3.
City Adopts Plan to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In May 2013, the City Council adopted the El Cerrito Climate Action Plan (“CAP”) to reduce our community’s share of the pollution that causes global warming, known as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Specifically, the Climate Action Plan identified goals and strategies to reduce GHG emissions in El Cerrito to 15% below 2005 levels by the year 2020 and to 30% below 2005 levels by the year 2035. The CAP provides reduction strategies for both community and municipal GHG emission sources.

In 2005, the City’s baseline year, 147,000 tons of CO₂ equivalent were emitted in El Cerrito. The major source of GHG emissions in El Cerrito was vehicle use, followed by energy use in both residential and commercial sectors.

The CAP identified the greatest opportunities for reducing emissions in El Cerrito as:

- Create a transportation infrastructure that invites people to walk, bike and take transit
- Achieve greater energy and water efficiency and increase access to renewable energy in existing and new buildings through education, incentives, and ordinances
- Decrease waste going to the landfill by increasing participation in existing waste reduction and recycling programs and creating new programs where necessary
- Establish more compact, higher density, mixed-use, infill development along major transportation corridors in order to create more economic diversity, better serve daily needs of residents and employees, and decrease daily vehicle miles travelled

For example, to address GHG emissions from vehicle use, a number of strategies were developed to reduce vehicle miles travelled, such as:

- Encouraging more compact, higher density, transit-oriented infill development
- Growing the local economy to create more pedestrian-friendly economic activity
- Investing in pedestrian and transit-friendly infrastructure
- Increasing and enhancing urban green and open space
- Developing alternative transportation outreach and incentive programs specific to El Cerrito

The CAP was developed with input from the community, and both the City Council and staff are grateful to everyone who participated. The Plan is available for public review at City Hall, the Recycling and Environmental Resource Center and can also be found online by visiting www.el-cerrito.org/climateactionplan.

You can get more information at the City’s Environmental Services booth at the July 4th Festival. You will find answers to your questions about the Climate Action Plan as well as a list of practical things that you can do to reduce your carbon footprint, while also saving money and resources.

Become a Writing Coach

Imagine walking into a classroom and seeing each student working one-to-one with a trained adult who is teaching that student precisely what he or she needs to know. As improbable as it may seem, this is a reality for a number of El Cerrito middle and high school students, thanks to the WriterCoach Connection (WCC) Program.

Founded 13 years ago, WriterCoach Connection has over 600 trained volunteers serving more than 2,200 students in four East Bay school districts. Partnering with English teachers at Portola Middle School and El Cerrito High since 2010, WCC helps with writing and critical thinking skills by working individually with students on writing assignments.

Do you want to help teens to become competent and confident writers?

WriterCoach Connection is currently seeking new volunteer coaches. WCC welcomes parents, college students, working people from diverse backgrounds including retired people. Volunteers must be proficient in English and make a commitment of 1–2 hours, 2–3 times a month during the school year. WCC will provide free training and the on-going support you will need to be an effective writing coach. Trainings for the fall semester will begin in late August.

For information and to register, visit www.writercoachconnection.org and click “volunteer training.” For questions, email volunteer.ecwcc@gmail.com
Join in El Cerrito’s “Night Out Against Crime”

THE ANNUAL NATIONAL Night Out event is designed to strengthen communities by encouraging neighborhoods to engage in stronger relationships with each other and with local law enforcement. The goal is to heighten crime-prevention awareness, build support and participation in local anti-crime programs, and most importantly, send a message that our neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. It’s also the perfect opportunity to get to know your neighbors even better.

On Tuesday, August 6, Police Officers and other City Staff will visit registered block parties to talk with residents and share safety information. To register to host a block party on your street, fill out the online form at www.el-cerrito.org/nightout, pick up a form at the Police Station, or call 215-4400.

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.