



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 7.A.

Date: May 5, 2020
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Karen Pinkos, City Manager, City Management
Subject: Budget and Financial Update

ACTION PROPOSED

Receive and file a report from the City Manager regarding actions taken to date and cost saving measures being implemented.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The City Council has been closely monitoring the City's budget and financial position over the past several months in light of the results of the FY 2018-19 financial audit and the review initiated by the California State Auditor. The City Council and City staff initiated a strategic planning process by engaging the consulting firm Management Partners to assist in informing the Council of the priorities of the community for the upcoming FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22 biennial budget process. At the January 21, 2020 City Council meeting, the City Council received an update on the City's financial position, overview of the upcoming strategic plan, and biennial budget process. The Council held a community town hall budget meeting on February 1 to review the City's financial position, answer questions, and hear feedback. At the February 4, 2020 City Council meeting, the City Council discussed the General Fund Forecast following several modifications that had significantly altered the forecast. Following this review, the Council directed staff to provide to the City Council a reduction of \$2 million, approximately 5% of the General Fund, as they develop the upcoming biennial budget.

On February 12, the City held a Strategic Plan open house, following a series of focus group meetings held in January and an online survey that collected feedback from residents, businesses, employees, and community groups. At the February 18, 2020 City Council meeting, the Council received an update on City revenues and expenditures for the first six months of the fiscal year through December 31, 2019 and adopted a resolution authorizing amendments to the FY 2019-20 budget, including \$600,000 in expense reductions, and approving new spending limits. The City Council also discussed whether or not to continue various City events.

Since that time the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a public health crisis that has impacted the City. On March 10, 2020 the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency within Contra Costa County through April 7, 2020. On March 12, 2020, the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) closed schools through April 6, 2020. On March 13, 2020 the City Council declared a local emergency in an emergency meeting. This resulted in the closure of all City facilities to the public and cancellation of all public meetings, events, programs, and

classes. On March 16, 2020, along with six other Bay Area jurisdictions, Contra Costa County issued an order requiring all individuals currently living within Contra Costa County to shelter at their place of residence. On March 18, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a statewide stay-at-home order. On March 25, 2020, the City extended the closure of City facilities through May 1, 2020, and cancelled events and non-essential meetings through May 31. On March 31, 2020, Contra Costa County extended its public health order to May 3, 2020. On April 29, 2020, Contra Costa County extended the public health order to May 31, 2020. City facilities remain closed, and all non-essential meetings, events, programs, and classes remain cancelled through May 31 as well.

Both the state and county public health orders not only require residents to shelter at home, it also requires non-essential businesses to be closed to the public. Businesses that are open are subject to strict social distancing guidelines. These are critical interventions to reduce harm from the spread of the Coronavirus in our community. However, as a result of these orders and guidelines the U.S. economy has been impacted significantly. This has prompted local governments all over the U.S. to consider the impacts of this public health crisis on their budgets. In El Cerrito, the immediate impacts are revenue losses due to decreased sales taxes, real property transfer tax, and from the cancellation of Recreation programs and classes. Staff estimates this loss could be in the area of \$4 million dollars in revenue. This means that the budget adjustments, projections, and proposed reductions must be continuously reviewed on an ongoing basis in light of this unprecedented economic downturn.

On April 7, 2020, the City Council held a study session including a presentation from Management Partners that discussed the financial position of the City and the potential impacts of the COVID-19 emergency on the City's budget. The City Council was presented with proposed reductions of \$2 million for the FY 2020-21 budget, as had been directed, with the understanding that due to the current crisis the budget will need further reductions. On April 21, 2020, the City Council further discussed the status of the General Fund and received an update on the third quarter of FY 2019-20, as well as updated information on projections due to the COVID-19 emergency. The City Council directed staff to amend the FY 2020-21 budget process by preparing a one-year budget that would be considered prior to July 1, with the intention to perform a more detailed budget process during the summer months, in order to amend the budget by October 1. Assuming that the shelter-in-place order ends within the next 2 months, this will allow City staff to have a much clearer picture of the sustained revenue losses and prepare an amended budget accordingly. On April 25, 2020, the City Council discussed and took action to reduce its own budget for FY 2020-21.

Staff continues to develop scenarios in response to the continuing emergency and are currently preparing further reductions for implementation. On May 5, 2020, the City Council will receive a report on additional actions taken with respect to the budget since the April 25, 2020 City Council meeting, including actions that will be effective this fiscal year, with the most up-to-date information that will be finalized prior to the meeting.

Staff will also provide the Council with the most current information with respect to the revised County public health order, and how staff is responding.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This fiscal update is consistent with Strategic Plan Goal A: Deliver exemplary government services and Goal B: Achieve long-term financial sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

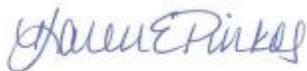
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

While the impacts on the economy due to the COVID-19 public health crisis continue to evolve, staff currently projects that the City is facing at least a \$4 million dollar loss in revenue. City staff has already provided the Council proposed reductions of approximately \$2 million for FY 2020-21. Staff is considering this reduction the baseline from which we must work as we develop a further \$2 million in cuts to the General Fund for the FY 2020-21 budget, and preparing to react should there be further reductions necessary due to a prolonged emergency or a resulting recession. City staff is preparing the most up-to-date estimates for additional cost savings that will be presented to the City Council during the May 5, 2020 meeting, and there will be further updates to the City Council at each upcoming City Council meeting for discussion and consideration.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:



Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:



SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIALS **(Revised 5/6/2020)**

CITY COUNCIL MEETING **May 5, 2020**

PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX

1. Public Comments received by 12:00 p.m. May 5, 2020
2. Public Comments Read into the Record

AGENDA ITEM 6A-6C – Public Hearings

1. PowerPoint Presentation

AGENDA ITEM 7.A. – Budget and Financial Update

1. Supplemental Memo to City Council
2. PowerPoint Presentation



**PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
May 5, 2020**

The following Public Comments were **received by 12:00 p.m. 5/5/2020**, were provided directly to City Councilmembers in advance of the meeting, and were posted online as supplemental materials at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials.

Public Comments – Not on the Agenda:

1. Cordell Hindler
2. Les Pozdena

Public Comments – Consent Item No. 7A:

1. Susan and Paul Duncan

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
Date: Thursday, April 30, 2020 9:43:03 PM

hello Holly. i have a couple of comments for the council.

1. is to invite Andy Katz to come and provide an update regarding the needs for a hospital in West County
2. to balanced the budget by having only simple dinners

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Les Pozdena](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: public comments – not on the agenda
Date: Friday, May 1, 2020 8:59:03 AM

As lockdown restrictions ease, the City should consider blocking off alleys, parking lots, and streets where possible so that restaurants and cafes can reopen safely with outdoor seating. This strategy is being used in other cities and will allow restaurants to continue making money while keeping patrons safe.

From: [Sue Duncan](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda item 7A
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 11:55:41 AM

Susan and Paul Duncan, El Cerrito

City Council,

As you continue the process of implementing huge cost reductions to bring the city back to financial security, please keep in mind the most recent community input regarding the Strategic Plan update. We understand that the update has not been formally adopted yet, but Management Partners did present their findings to you.

- 1) (quality education)
- 2) long-term Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability
- 3) Wild Fire Prevention and Safety

Thank you,

Sue and Paul Duncan



**PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
May 5, 2020**

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

Public Comments – Not on the Agenda:

1. Gary Prost
2. Marlene George (2 submissions)
3. Ira Sharenow
4. Barbara Chan
5. Robin Mitchell

Public Comments – on Consent Item #4D:

1. Jeffrey Levin

Public Comments – on Consent Item #4F:

1. Howdy Goudey

Public Comments – on Agenda Item #6C:

1. Nick Zamorano
2. Howdy Goudey (2 submissions)

Public Comments – on Policy Item #7A:

1. Denice A. Dennis
2. Cathy Hanville
3. Marlene George
4. Ira Sharenow
5. Aylin Beyce
6. Howdy Goudey

From: [Gary Prost](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments – Noton the Agenda: El Cerrito2020-21 Budget Adjustments – Overtime Pay for Management
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 12:25:33 PM

El Cerrito City Council Meeting, 5 May 2020

Honorable Mayor Lyman and Council:

When adjusting our city budget to resolve our shortfalls, Council has to stop dithering about small-budget items like keeping the library open more than 35 hours per week. While important, these won't solve the budget deficit. Personnel costs are the largest part of the budget and have to be addressed.

I don't know what union contracts mandate, but I have never worked for a company that paid overtime to salaried professionals, let alone management. Managers are commonly expected to work however many hours are needed to get the job done... that's why they get paid the big bucks. The U.S. Department of Labor defines overtime as more than 40 hours per week, not 37 ½ hours per week (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/overtime>).

In summary, El Cerrito should not pay overtime for management.

Thank you,

Gary Prost
[REDACTED], El Cerrito

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Gary Prost
[REDACTED]
<http://garyprostgeology.com/>
www.crcpress.com/9781498756082

From: [Marlene George](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Non Agenda/Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 2:30:06 PM

The City hired Management Partners to undertake a community wide strategic planning process to determine community priorities for the biennial 2020/22 budgets. At a recent city council meeting, the city manager listed the top four priorities as a result of this process. They are: schools/education, public safety, financial solvency and emergency preparedness. The taxpaying public has a right to a full report and not just basic conclusions as reported by the city manager. The process involved community and staff focus groups, an online survey and a strategic plan open house. It is important for full transparency to know the exact process, how many staff and community members participated and the tabulation of all responses from all the different forums. The exact numbers of who participated and the raw data of responses are important to know. A full report containing these details and a comprehensive analysis of what the priorities are and their implications for budget planning should be undertaken and published for public consumption. The city is embarking on serious cuts to balance the budget. Services consistent with community priorities should not be cut and in some instances increased. The city council recently spared the library from cuts to hours of operation based on the interpretation that the library fell under the priority of education. It is important for the community to have a full report on the results of the strategic planning process and not just a summary.

Marlene George
El Cerrito Resident

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Mike Cunningham](#); [Cathy Hanville](#); [Judith Marie](#); [Aylin Beyce](#); [Rose Stamm](#); [Elizabeth Thorsnes](#); [Marlene George](#); [Sherry Drobner](#)
Subject: public comments – not on the agenda
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:25:08 PM

Is the council going to hold another Town Hall?

Question for the city attorney. Are council members and the city manager allowed to email the public?
How can council and staff communicate with the public?

What is staff's timeline for asking for another tax hike? What type of tax hike will you be seeking?

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [Barbara Chan CMC](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Greg Lyman](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Gabe Quinto](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Not on the Agenda 5/5/2020
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:59:34 PM

Council Members,

Thank you for your thoughtful discussion about the importance of our Library services at the last council meeting. Your approval of the continuation of hours despite Karen Pinkos' recommendation that they be cut back, demonstrates that you listened to your constituents, and are taking steps to take back the reins of fiscal oversight. Your action is one step towards regaining trust among fellow El Cerritans.

I applaud Council Member Pardue-Okimoto for acknowledging her part in leading our City to its current financial state. Such honesty and humility demonstrates integrity.

I ask that the Council take 4 more steps:

1. Make all electronic council meetings participatory, as was done with the Planning Commission
2. Authorize all city committees and commissions to resume meeting per regular schedule using videoconferencing tools that allow public participation
3. People have demonstrated they can flatten the corona virus curve. Life-saving behavior and business operation changes can be applied with the same zeal to Climate Change. I urge you to incorporate Climate Actions into each and every city job description going forward, for it is everyone's responsibility to work in a way that reduces GHG emissions and improves sustainability for all.
4. In business, when the top managers or CEO make gross errors, they are fired or resign and effective leaders are brought in. The independent auditor cautioned the city several times that the financial health of our city was not strong and actions needed to be taken to correct the situation. The City Managers refuted his analysis and the council at those times went along with the CM's recommendations, even raising salaries.

Have you considered terminating the City Manager's employment? While she and her predecessor may not have defrauded our city, they certainly Mis-Managed our finances and should bear some consequences and responsibility for putting us in this position that has nothing to do with covid-19.

At the very least, I urge the Council to reduce the City Manager's compensation substantially. Not only will this save a good deal of money, it will demonstrate that you are holding her accountable.

Respectfully,
Barbara Chan

[REDACTED]
El Cerrito 94530
[REDACTED]

From: Robin Mitchell

5/5/2020 -- Comment for items not on the agenda for City Council Meeting

Dear Mayor, Council Members and City Staff

The current dual crises that the city is facing, from the Corona virus pandemic as well as previous fiscal problems, is very sobering, and I know that you are all trying to determine a viable path forward.

Because of the pandemic, and the “pause” of human activity, Mother Earth is breathing a sigh of relief. The natural world is showing amazing recovery and resilience in just a few months. The air and water is cleaner due to lack of pollution from cars, trucks and planes, and animals are taking back some of their habitat in parks and preserves. The question is how can we maintain that trend after the pandemic has passed without the suffering that has accompanied it? This is something that should be given serious discussion.

The past few weeks I have participated in the Bringing Back the Natives virtual native plant garden tours (via Zoom) that could not happen in person due to the shelter in place orders. In some ways, they were almost (well not really but almost) better than having them in person, because I was able to see gardens and their hosts that I wouldn't have otherwise been able to see.

The other positive aspect of the virtual tour was a presentation by Dr. Doug Tallamy from the University of Delaware entitled “Restoring the Little Things That Run the World: Why insects matter and what we can do to save them”. Here is a link to his talk for the tour.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiAnuJ0KPds&feature=youtu.be&t=439>

His premise, supported by research, is that local landscapes, including personal gardens and city parks, is that it is important to support insects because they are the basis of the food web in our ecosystem. Insects are food for baby birds, and without them you will have local extinctions of birds and other animals. And the majority of local insects have evolved with the local native plants, so in order to support our insects we need to be planting locally native plants.

In thinking about the city's recovery process from the current crises, I would hope that Dr. Tallamy's words can be taken to heart. If the city receives recovery stimulus funding, I hope that native plant landscaping projects on all city properties could be included. It may not seem that important, but as he says, “Garden as if your life depended on it”, because it does. Here is a link to his website: <http://www.bringingnaturehome.net/>

From: [Marlene George](#)
To: [Ira Sharenow](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [Greg Lyman](#); [Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Mike Cunningham](#); [Cathy Hanville](#); [Judith Marie](#); [Aylin Beyce](#); [Rose Stamm](#); [Elizabeth Thorsnes](#); [Sherry Drobner](#)
Subject: Re: public comments – not on the agenda
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:58:31 PM

No tax hike. We are taxed enough.

Marlene George

On Tue, May 5, 2020, 5:20 PM Ira Sharenow <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Is the council going to hold another Town Hall?

Question for the city attorney. Are council members and the city manager allowed to email the public?
How can council and staff communicate with the public?

What is staff's timeline for asking for another tax hike? What type of tax hike will you be seeking?

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [Jeffrey Levin](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item 4D
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 11:42:46 AM

On behalf of East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) I want to thank the City Council for this proclamation.

El Cerrito has been a consistent supporter of Affordable Housing Week – last year the grand opening of the Hana Gardens Senior Housing was one of our featured events. We also want to thank the City for its history of supporting affordable housing, most recently with Hana Gardens, the adoption of an inclusionary zoning ordinance, passage of a moratorium on evictions during the COVID-19 crisis, and creation of a tenant protections task force to consider other policies to prevent displacement and stabilize communities.

The COVID crisis has laid bare many of the problems with our current housing system and the incredible need for affordable housing. We see the link between housing and health care, for example, as it's impossible to shelter in place without a place to shelter. We see that stability and affordability are critical. As we head into a deep recession, we also see how vulnerable tenants and owners are to economic downturn, and we will be challenged to preserve the housing opportunities we have and to expand the supply of housing that is permanently affordable to those who the market doesn't serve well.

We look forward to working with the City as we face these challenges, and we again want to thank you for this proclamation. Around the Bay Area, groups are celebrating Affordable Housing month in the South Bay, on the Peninsula, and in San Francisco with affordable housing week events of their own. And I want to remind everyone that EBHO's first online Affordable Housing Week kickoff celebration is this Thursday evening, and we will also have several online events over the next week and a half. We hope you'll be able to join us at www.ebho.org

Jeff Levin, Policy Director
East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)
538 Ninth Street, Suite 200 | Oakland, CA 94607
510-663-3830 ext. 316 | jeff@ebho.org

Join us for EBHO's first virtual Affordable Housing Week Kickoff Event! [RSVP here](#) to get the links to this digital event.

NOTE: I am generally in the office only on Monday afternoons and all day on Tuesday and Thursday, so I may not be able to reply to your e-mail right away.

Join us or renew your membership for 2020! Thank you for supporting our efforts to protect, preserve and create affordable housing for all!

Visit us at www.EBHO.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

From: [Howdy Goudey](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Not on the Agenda (Consent item 4F)
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 2:39:07 PM

Mayor Lyman and Councilmembers,

This comment relates to consent item 4F authorizing the Mayor to sign all applicable letters in support of local government relief related to COVID19. I support this action and I hope that support for local government is forthcoming. However, I also encourage the City Council to authorize additional language laying out specific priority funding areas with the idea that any letters written in support of recovery funding suggest conditioning the funding on the delivery of services in key areas of unmet need.

I understand that there is also need to support for the large number of essential services the city is already providing, but it is important to use this context of stimulus and recovery funding to make progress on important city priorities that have historically been underfunded. In many cases these topics are also high priorities of other branches of government, who might look more favorably on achieving additional goals beyond the baseline of keeping local government operating at the status quo level.

I would recommend explicitly adding recommendations in these letters to condition recovery funding on the delivery and integration of the following into city services:

1. Production, maintenance and management of affordable housing
2. Accelerating Climate Action goals and implementation
3. Fire hazard mitigation with highly integrated environmental stewardship and habitat restoration
4. Disaster preparedness
5. Parks and recreation infrastructure
6. Green infrastructure

Please consider pulling item 4F from consent and adding the intention to advocate for recovery funding conditioned on delivering the largely unfunded city priorities listed above and others identified by Council.

Thanks,
Howdy Goudey
El Cerrito

From: [nick zamorano](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 6C
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:44:20 PM

Upon reviewing the city's master fee schedule I noticed that there was no line item for first responders and ambulance transfers. I can only assume that department staff has not addressed the need for billing emergency medical services to residents health insurance plans. I respectfully question why this has not been considered. As I and others have commented at previous city council meetings, Albany and Berkeley charge \$300 per hour for these services. These fees are charged directly to the health plans of those residents who use these services. Again, I am requesting city staff to propose to council EMS billing for adoption to the master fee schedule. These fees would be able to pay for the fire department's vegetation management/fire abatement program for straight time or overtime hours. The state auditor has already questioned the sustainability of El Cerrito to operate a full service fire department and the collection of additional revenue would certainly help maintain essential fire department services. I believe the community deserves to be told why billing for emergency medical services is suitable for Albany and Berkeley but not suitable for the city of El Cerrito. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Nick Zamorano
Make El Cerrito Fire Safe

From: [Howdy Goudey](#)
 To: [City Clerk](#)
 Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #6C
 Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:41:34 PM

Mayor Lyman and Councilmembers,

There is unfortunate inconsistency in format and information provided in the FY20/21 master fee schedule (Item 6C). While some departments did a nice job of itemizing the changes with color coding and incremental changes, this format was not continued for the large section of "misc." building permits fees, but it was provided for the mechanical, plumbing and electrical (MPE) section of building permits. By the way, the electrical section of MPE permits was completely omitted from the packet this year, so you should make sure not to adopt the fee schedule without all the intended fees.

The proposed misc. building permit fees, checked against last year, have raises of 10-40% without adequate discussion of why this is justified (see table below). Likewise, most of the MPE section has stated increases over 20% without adequate justification or discussion. Just a couple of years ago a comprehensive fee study was supposed to have established appropriate fees. Why are the building permit fees, unlike all the other fees, so wildly out of sync with actual costs already? There is discussion in the explanation section about the 65% plan check fee adder, as though this is a new adaptive practice, but this was exactly how it was done last year, so it isn't new and it doesn't explain any changes in overall cost. It is also concerning that the building permit fees are not easy to understand with quick inspection of each line item, as the separate 65% plan check fee is added to each item in some tables (explained in small print at the top). Also, the MPE permits have an added flat issuance fee of \$118 on top of the line item price. In general, the fees should be structured so they can be read off a single line, or nearby lines, and not a comprehensive reading of the tables.

	FY19-20			FY20-21			percent increase	permit fraction of parts and labor
	plan check fee	permit fee	total fee	plan check fee	permit fee	total fee		
EV charging res.	\$104.28	\$160.43	\$264.71	\$126.75	\$195.00	\$321.75	21.5%	>30%
EV charging comm.	\$218.71	\$336.47	\$555.18	\$240.50	\$370.00	\$610.50	10.0%	
EV charging comm. 2-4	\$163.92	\$252.19	\$416.11	\$180.70	\$278.00	\$458.70	10.2%	
EV charging comm. 5+	\$109.35	\$168.23	\$277.58	\$120.25	\$185.00	\$305.25	10.0%	
Solar PV <10kW	\$142.42	\$219.11	\$361.53	\$195.00	\$300.00	\$495.00	36.9%	5-6% typical
Solar PV inc. above 10kW	\$71.82	\$110.49	\$182.31	\$97.50	\$150.00	\$247.50	35.8%	
Solar thermal <30kWh	\$142.42	\$219.11	\$361.53	\$195.00	\$300.00	\$495.00	36.9%	
Solar thermal inc. above 30kWh	\$71.82	\$110.49	\$182.31	\$97.50	\$150.00	\$247.50	35.8%	
Antenna	\$243.46	\$374.55	\$618.01	\$340.60	\$524.00	\$864.60	39.9%	>50%
Room addition <300 sqft	\$417.93	\$642.97	\$1,060.90	\$530.40	\$816.00	\$1,346.40	26.9%	
ADU new	\$551.02	\$847.72	\$1,398.74	\$644.15	\$991.00	\$1,635.15	16.9%	set at 50% cost 2 years ago
ADU conversion	\$415.49	\$639.22	\$1,054.71	\$453.70	\$698.00	\$1,151.70	9.2%	set at 50% cost 2 years ago

I have commented before that the EV charging station permit fee is already too high and it is proposed to raise this fee another 20% this year. This permit fee poses a disincentive to the installation of safe, dedicated EV charging infrastructure. A fee that is greater than 30% of the cost of parts and installation causes many EV drivers to stick with the manufacturer issued 120 Volt charging cord which they use with existing household circuits and extension cords that are more susceptible to inadequate conditions and safety issues. Both EV charging and solar PV permits have state mandated expedited permit processes, that should not be that complicated to implement, by virtue of being prescriptive and streamlined. Why are solar permits seeing more than 35% fee increases this year? This is not consistent with the reality of plan check and inspection requirements for these expedited permits. While the solar permit cost is a more reasonable 5% of the installed cost of a typical solar system, it seems like price gouging when the fee for an expensive project is raised just because it will likely be tolerated. The law requires permit fees to only recover the actual costs. Please explain why it takes \$500 to permit an routine streamlined solar system application?

It appears that the 50% cost recovery discount for ADUs is still in effect. While I think this is a desirable incentive, in an budget crisis environment, it would seem that Council would want to set fees to the appropriate cost recovery rates. This kind of subsidy has already been removed from solar PV permits that were free for many years.

There is also a 25% discount for incorporating universal design into an ADU project. Again this is highly desirable, but there are many places we could offer such discounts for better outcomes, including a 25% permit discount for using beyond code compliant energy efficient appliances such as EPA Energystar "most efficient" designated products (furnaces, heat pumps, A/C, etc.). Either stick with accurate cost recovery, or have a full discussion of incentive options, but it isn't appropriate to offer incentives with only narrow consideration.

Thanks,
 Howdy Goudey
 El Cerrito

From: [Howdy Goudey](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #6C
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 9:21:14 PM

Mayor Lyman and Councilmembers,

If you look at the table I provided in my other comment, it doesn't appear that the FY20/21 ADU fees are double what they were last year, which would have been consistent with full cost recovery, as the previous years had discounted fees for ADUs. Or, did the ADUs go to full recovery last year?.

On the comment made by Mayor Lyman about the high \$800 fee for tree establishment and maintenance, this is only in the case of mitigation for tree removal. According to this fee schedule, a home owner can pay \$300 for the city to plant a street tree and \$100 for the homeowner to do it, as long as they provide the required establishment work (watering).

Thanks,
Howdy Goudey
El Cerrito

Agenda Item 7A
Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Dear Mayor Lyman and City Councilmembers,

Bay Area Communities and the state of CA should be commended for their rapid response to Covid19. This health emergency has shown how rapidly local and state governments can mobilize when urgent measures are required to sustain the health of the community.

As you consider budget issues, I am writing to urge you to commit the required resources to take urgent action on the Climate Emergency. It is imperative that the city stand by the Climate Emergency Resolution adopted by the City Council in August 2019. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2018 report urged a reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2045.

El Cerrito is a small city, however there **are many cities in the Bay Area to learn from, that have developed plans and begun implementation on the urgent action necessary to address the Climate Emergency.** The City of Albany's Climate Action Plan, which was adopted in December, 2019, is a resource. <https://www.albanyca.org/home/showdocument?id=43215>
Albany has developed a plan for 70% reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2045. The report states that "It is important to acknowledge that climate action is an investment in the community and local economy, and that there are significant financial, social, and environmental costs of inaction."

Please consider the Climate Emergency in your budget. Planning and budget actions should include:
--support for the Environmental Quality Committee to meet remotely during the shelter-in-place to specifically discuss recommendations to the City Council to immediately begin reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The EQC is a strong, knowledgeable group of people and their approved 2020 work plan includes a declaration of 2020 as the Year of Climate Emergency and work on the Climate Action Plan. This could include review of Bay Area Climate Emergency Plans and recommendations to the City Council.

--a report from the Council Sub-committee on the Climate Emergency, with next steps to move forward.

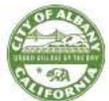
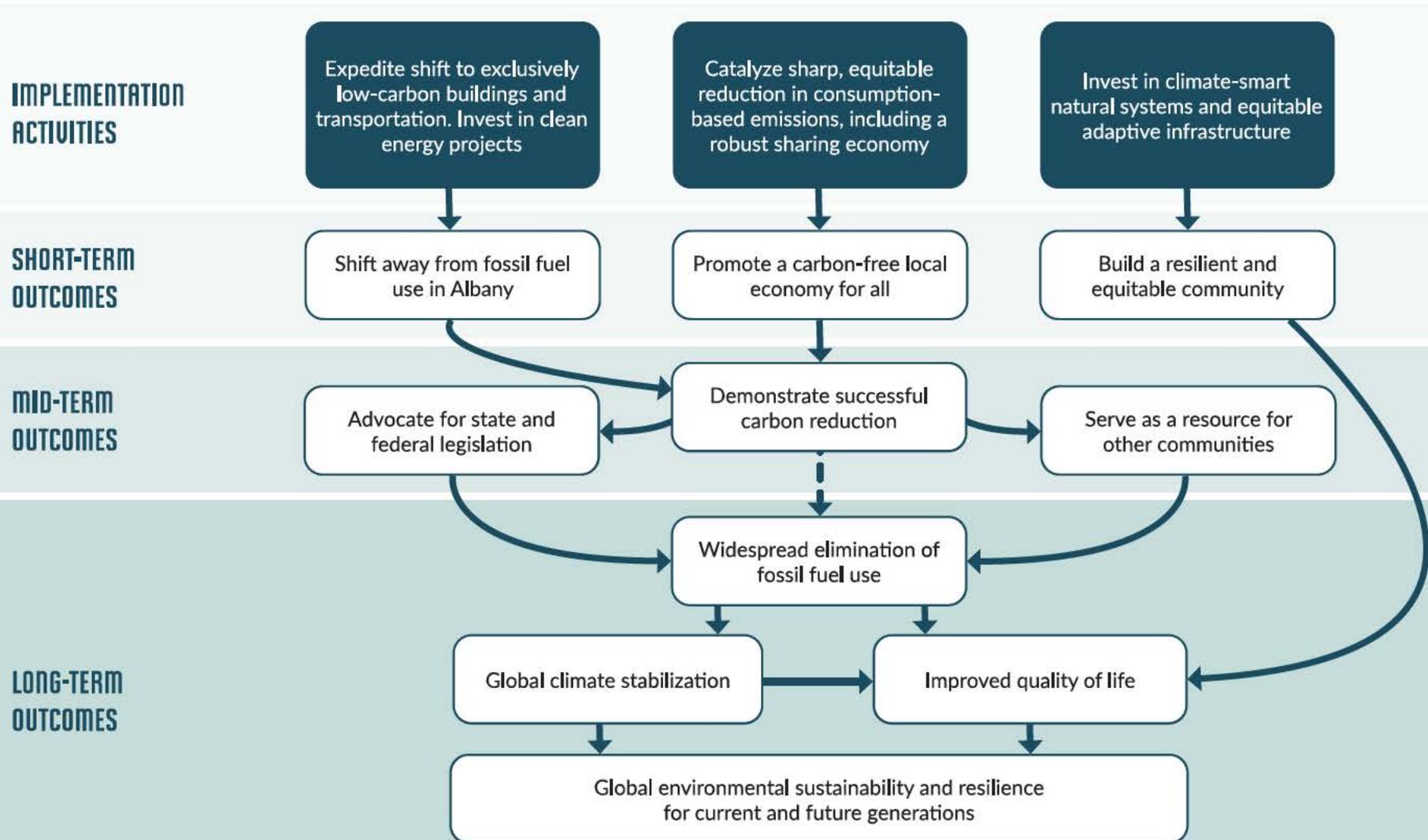
--Staffing that is adequate for moving climate emergency actions forward as quickly as possible to reach at least a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Toward climate justice and health for all,
Denice A. Dennis, MPH,
El Cerrito Resident and
Volunteer, 350 East Bay and 1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations


attachments

ALBANY IN 2045: HOW WE'LL GET THERE

As we work toward our vision, we hope Albany's pioneering climate action will inspire others to act and have a ripple effect with global impact.



THE PLAN AT A GLANCE

The City of Albany is committed to reducing local greenhouse gas emissions to stabilize the global climate. This Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) builds on the success of the City's first Climate Action Plan (CAP) and sets new targets—a 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, carbon neutrality by 2045, and smart, equitable resilience investments to help us weather the unavoidable—to make sure Albany is livable, equitable, resilient, and engaged for generations to come.

Plan Development

Hundreds of Albany community members informed development of this Plan through community surveys, public workshops, stakeholder focus group meetings, and ongoing engagement with community groups and City of Albany committees and commissions. The citizen-led Climate Action Committee and subcommittees identified, assessed, and formalized the Plan's goals and strategies.

CHALLENGE

- Current emissions are ~53,00 MT CO₂e, largely from transportation and natural gas combustion
- Climate risks include flooding, extreme heat, and wildfire

GOALS

- 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035
- Carbon-neutral by 2045
- Smart, equitable resilience investments

VISION

Albany works together to ensure a vibrant and sustainable urban village that is livable, equitable, resilient, and engaged.

A Comprehensive Plan

The City of Albany has already made great progress: The City has taken action that has reduced community greenhouse gas emissions 33% from 2005 to 2018. However, there is still more that must be done. This Plan focuses on impactful and meaningful opportunities to address climate impacts and foster resilience. It prioritizes actions that not only significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also demonstrate Albany's innovation and leadership in climate action.

STRATEGIES



Advance active, shared, and electric transportation

The City aims to eliminate fossil fuel use in the transportation sector by making it easy and affordable to choose to walk, bike, or take the bus, and to choose zero emission cars and trucks to move people and goods.



Electrify new and existing buildings

To reduce emissions from buildings, the City Council aims to convert the energy supply to renewable electricity while maximizing local energy generation.



Facilitate a carbon-free economy

The City will catalyze a sharing community and economy, buy low-carbon products, and offer many ways to reduce waste and carbon emissions at home, work, and school.



Accelerate resilience

The City will store carbon in trees, soil, land, and buildings, and ensure that the built environment is equipped with battery energy storage and other resilience measures to make sure all are prepared and can overcome climate change's unavoidable impacts.

Implementation

The City will be responsible for oversight of this Plan and its implementation. Success will be measured by the implementation status of each action, and using key performance indicators. Successful implementation will require engagement from the whole community and recognition of the needs and risks faced by the most vulnerable community members in implementation.

What Does Success Look Like?

The City of Albany aims to demonstrate that sharp and swift carbon emissions reduction is possible, allowing the City to serve as a resource for other communities and advocate effectively for state and federal climate legislation. Ultimately, success will be widespread elimination of fossil fuel use, improved quality of life, and global climate stabilization that ensures a sustainable, resilient City for current and future generations.



From: [Cathy Hanville](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Item 7A
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 3:08:49 PM

It is my understanding that deficit in revenue for 19/20 (attachment 1 to item 7A from 4/21/20 was projected as 2.251 million dollars.

Please answer the following regarding this deficit

1. Have the projected numbers changed at all since that meeting?
2. Can you clarify the assumptions that were used to come up with that number as a projected deficit
3. How does that deficit factor into planning for 20/21 FT? Do we need to make an additional 2 million dollars in cuts?
4. Does this deficit factor into banks decisions on giving us the loan we need or a favorable interest rate?

As an additional comment on the budget please have the city manager/finance director release either some simple slides or a one pager explaining the current situation with current numbers as to this situation along with assumptions used to get there.

Your exhausted community should not have to plow through hours of meetings in order to understand what is going on. Oftentimes I myself find myself more confused after a meeting than before it. Slides help a lot. Then at least those of us dedicated to this city's financial well being can distribute them with explanations. But clear and concise explanations using simple terminology would be appreciated.

Cathy Hanville
El Cerrito

From: [Marlene George](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 7 A - Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 3:13:59 PM

I found the city manager's report regarding the budget and financial update seriously lacking in terms of the essential information needed by the council to take action and for the public to have a clear understanding of city's current financial status. A member of the public should be able to read the Budget and Financial Update and have a true understanding of the city's current finances, the budget targets set by the council, actions taken by the city manager and what further actions and cuts are required. There should have been a summary of the budget cuts necessary to achieve the \$2,000,000 reductions prior to COVID-19. I have been following the budget hearings carefully and studying all official reports and attachments and inquired with those in the know in the community and no one seems to know what the hard number is for the pre - COVID-19 deficit. Many numbers in terms of the deficit have been discussed but what are we really starting with in terms of a deficit. It is estimated that the post covid-19 deficit is around \$4,000,000. So what is the total number in terms of the deficit needed for cuts. The council asked for a 5% reduction prior to the economic crisis and at the last meeting another 10% in cuts. No where is there an explanation of what all this means, what are the real numbers and what are the totals for pre and post covid-19 cuts and what is the remaining target? We also need a 10% emergency reserve, how does this all fit into the budget cuts. There is an attachment to the report showing hourly cuts to fire and police personnel with no explanation of what this means. What are the projected savings and for how long?

The public is entitled to know what is going on and not have to stay tuned in for a five hour meeting to get an in person analysis by the city manager and finance director and hope the council asks the right questions to get the right answers. A more comprehensive report is needed for full transparency with much more specific information.

Marlene George
El Cerrito resident

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Ira Sharenow](#)
Subject: public comments – agenda item #7A
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:18:19 PM

I believe that the proposal put forth by the city manager is regressive.

The highly paid managers, who get way more than market rate, are basically taking the same furlough as the SEIU workers. However, the managers have a much better pension plan and so when looking at the cuts as a percentage of overall compensation, the SEIU workers are hit much harder than the over-compensated managers. In fact the over-compensated managers might even like to have a few more days off.

Most of the most highly compensated workers are taking no pay cut. Nothing is being done about fire department overtime. Are you going to use non-uniformed staff to do inspections?

Are expenditures being reduced by \$4 million? Are you taking into account increased CalPERS costs and increased health insurance costs?

What are the assumptions relating to layoffs for recreational workers?

We need to see monthly cash flow data.

We need a report from a council member on the status of the potential payday loan.

We need a coherent presentation that the public can understand.

Ira Sharenow

El Cerrito, CA

From: [Aylin Beyce](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item 7a
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 8:50:54 PM

Council Members,

Thank you for approving continuation of our El Cerrito Library Hours. Your actions were heartening and gave citizens hope that you are fighting for our city.

I ask that the Council take 4 more steps:

1. Make all electronic council meetings participatory, as was done with the Planning Commission
2. Authorize all city committees and commissions to resume meeting per regular schedule using video conferencing tools that allow public participation
3. People have demonstrated they can flatten the corona virus curve. Life-saving behavior and business operation changes can be applied with the same zeal to Climate Change. I urge you to incorporate Climate Actions into each and every city job description going forward, for it is everyone's responsibility to work in a way that reduces GHG emissions and improves sustainability for all.
4. In business, when the top managers or CEO make gross errors, they are fired or resign and effective leaders are brought in. The independent auditor cautioned the city several times that the financial health of our city was not strong and actions needed to be taken to correct the situation. The City Managers refuted his analysis and the council at those times went along with the CM's recommendations, even raising salaries.

Have you considered terminating the City Manager's employment? While she and her predecessor may not have defrauded our city, they certainly Mis-Managed our finances and should bear some consequences and responsibility for putting us in this position that has nothing to do with covid-19.

At the very least, I urge the Council to reduce the City Manager's compensation substantially. Not only will this save a good deal of money, it will demonstrate that you are holding her accountable.

Best,

Aylin Beyce

From: [Howdy Goudey](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #7A
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 8:51:08 PM

Mayor Lyman and Councilmembers,

Thank you for your action at the Saturday Council meeting to maintain expanded library hours and the vital community services they provide.

I also wish to thank Councilmember Pardue-Okimoto for her important statements of values and direction on the budget provided at that same meeting.

I appreciate the proposal offered tonight to cut costs through furloughs for management and SEIU employees. It would be helpful to understand how many employees this includes in each group and how many other city employees are excluded. It is encouraging that there is the potential to achieve most of the additional 2 million dollars currently needed to balance the projected budget shortfall with these cuts if taken through the full year, but I would like to encourage Council to fully analyze the potential to spread the furlough and income reduction sacrifices equitably throughout all city employees in a manner that is proportional to their income as the current proposal does.

While I understand that many labor unions have worked hard for their members to secure good contracts, I hope that all El Cerrito employees share the sentiment that they do not want to experience lesser impacts when their colleagues are sacrificing more. Please work toward an equitable allocation of these cuts. Hopefully the 10% scenario can be avoided if the cuts are spread over more employees.

I hope that the part time employees can be brought back at some level, as they have had to sacrifice 100% of their income for more than 2 months. Even if their job involves interacting with the public and that activity is currently curtailed by the shelter in place, I hope there is consideration of having them provide other other useful work needed by the city that is not inconsistent with shelter in place.

In the environment of the climate emergency, please do not forget to integrate climate action into the budget. While I understand that there isn't much room in the budget for new funding. It is important to make a commitment to increased climate action implementation in all the work the city is already doing.

Likewise, the much needed efforts on fire hazard mitigation should include attention to habitat restoration and stewardship, not just cutting without thinking.

Thanks,
Howdy Goudey
El Cerrito