

From: Mitch B <mitchaball@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, November 10, 2025 11:58 AM

To: Lara Weisiger <lweisiger@alamedaca.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written non-agenda comment for for 11/10/25 Planning Board Meeting

Hello,

I will be making a non-agenda public comment for the 11/10/25 planning board meeting and wanted to share a written copy with linked citations.

With construction on the Webster and Posey tube about to begin, Alameda will likely be facing high traffic congestion in the next few years before the Oakland Alameda Access Project finishes. I work in between these two tunnels and often pass by the congestion that already exists when I bike to and from work. The city has made meaningful progress in enabling people to use other modes of transportation in recent years from bike lanes to the water taxi and vehicle miles traveled are reducing

(https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/v/3/departments/alameda/building-planning-transportation/sustainability/carp/alamedacarp_2024-annual-report.pdf, p3).

However, there are still ways that people are being artificially incentivized to use cars, and the city can end these incentives by simply enabling enforcement of a 30 year old California state law.

For those of you who don't know, "parking cash-out" law has been on the books since 1992 but often goes unenforced. The intent of this law is to prevent employers from subsidizing car use more than they subsidize any other modes of transportation. This law requires qualifying companies to offer employees who don't drive to work the ability to "cash-out" their parking space and receive cash or alternative transit subsidies instead, equivalent to the cost of each parking space

(<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/californias-parking-cash-out-law>). This could be huge for individuals who can't afford to own cars or families who can't afford to own multiple cars. Additionally, for those who currently drive to work but could use other modes, this could be a great incentive to stop contributing to rush hour congestion and road maintenance costs. These people deserve to be properly compensated for the true economic consequences of their decision.

Alameda just needs to do two things to enforce this law. Firstly, adopt a financial penalty for businesses that do not comply with this state law. The state law explicitly grants cities the power to do this. Secondly, change zoning to require that commercial leases have their parking "unbundled" and listed as a separate, adjustable line item in the lease. This makes calculation of the cost of parking easy and allows businesses to save money by reducing their parking footprint. Additionally, it also benefits commercial lessors as it allows them to identify land unclaimed by lessees that is prime for in-fill development. In-fill development in the form of new jobs, homes, and property tax revenue that will likely complete after the Oakland Alameda Access Project finishes. As you are all well aware, we have huge

swathes of asphalt all over Alameda. Much of this goes unparked and is for all intents and purposes vacant land, but just hasn't been formally recognized as such. Unbundling parking is not a radical policy and is in fact already required of all new residential development in most of California. Alameda can go farther by requiring that all commercial and residential leases in Alameda, on development both new and old, offer only unbundled parking.

It's not fair that tenants and employees who don't or can't drive are made to pay for parking they don't use and don't want. It's a distortion of the market that encourages speculation of effectively vacant land. Unbundling parking and enforcement of parking cash out law reduces car congestion, protects the environment, encourages new development during a housing crisis, doesn't have any high construction costs, and instead actually provides financial relief to the city's road maintenance budget as well as Alamedans who need it the most and so should be implemented here in Alameda.

Thank you,
-Mitch Ball