

**From:** [Trish Spencer](#)  
**To:** [Lara Weisiger](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] public comments for 11/21/23 City Council meeting---NO. NO, and YES  
**Date:** Sunday, November 19, 2023 7:52:53 AM

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**From:** Shelby S <sheehan.shelby@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 11:14:53 AM  
**To:** Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>; Malia Vella <mvella@alamedaca.gov>; tjensen@alamedaca.gov <tjensen@alamedaca.gov>; Trish Spencer <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>; Tony Daysog <tdaysog@alamedaca.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] public comments for 11/21/23 City Council meeting---NO. NO, and YES

Hello Councilmembers, City staff, and other interested parties--

This public comment provides my input on upcoming priorities and projects.

(Not that you asked but...)

At a time when the City Council is planning to ask Alamedans to foot the bill for infrastructure repairs through a new tax (but not without first wasting \$70K on a consultant to "study it"!), and in light of the budget constraints and the early stage of these projects, Councilmember Vella's concerns about priorities are well-appreciated.

Maybe it's time to rethink those priorities—starting with this meeting.

Maybe, just maybe, staff should be spending time looking for infrastructure grants instead of ones for new pools or bike lanes.

Maybe it's even appropriate for Council to forgo funding for projects like:

- (1) the overpriced \$30 million Swim Center
- (2) the ill-advised Webster/Park St parklets project giving Rays electric another \$350K  
(while in the same meeting awarding him a separate \$860K overpriced contract), and
- (3) the related unsafe bike lane restriping on Webster—which is a high-risk/high-parking turnover street)  
--or at least forgo them for the time being.

And maybe now is the time to curb spending on overpriced discretionary projects in favor of closely audited costs and competitive bids for infrastructure spending...

For example: Are you aware that the November 7 City Council meeting contained budget assignments for over \$12 million?

That one meeting alone could fund 5% of the infrastructure needs.

...now that I mention it...I want to take a look at upcoming items for any **unnecessary or excessive City (aka: "Public") funds**, such as:

**#1. Item 5-C 2023-3419: \$225,000 to update the Climate Plan--must it be updated?**

- If so, should it cost so much? How about we wait? I think Staff could accomplish the needed changes in-house in about 2 weeks.
- Also, this shouldn't be on the consent calendar.

**#2. Item 5-D 2023-3513: \$1.6+ million for a roof replacement of the Mastick Center (~\$1mil for 16K SF) and the Police Building (\$600,000 for 10K SF). WOW is that high!!**

- **The attached Garland contract cost per SF appears to be exorbitant and cost prohibitive:**
  - the estimated roof replacement costs are 6x higher than all other comparable commercial roof replacement projects in the City database, which all have pricing that is consistent with each other and statewide estimates.
    - By comparison, this commercial re-roofing project (w/o sheathing) should cost ~\$260,000, not \$1.6 million. (I made a spreadsheet)
  - Why is the City using a contractor from Ohio? Who are these guys anyway?
    - Why isn't the contract with someone local?
    - Aren't there DBE or local and company requirements for public contracts?

- What happened to all the local company bids? Why aren't there any?
  - The contract also noted costs are subject to "Surge pricing" right now, increasing costs.
    - The contract has a random "multiplier" that increases the project cost by \$200,000
  - The Police Building was issued a roof replacement permit in 2021.
    - Central Bay Roofing (**from Alameda**) had a permit for the Police Building roof for \$25K, **which is 95% less** than the current bid.
  - Also, this item shouldn't be on the consent calendar.
- **This contract needs to be rebid and reevaluated—these costs are way too high.**
  - *Can't anyone Google for cost comparisons? That's the first thing I did, then I looked at the City's permit database. Easy peasey.*

**(ps. you wanna know what City buildings actually need new roofs? The Big Whites**

--and the Base Reuse Department has the funds because these are income-generating properties AND reroofing was already budgeted this FY--why it hasn't started is beyond me...)

### **#3. Item 7-A 2023-3517: Vets Memorial Building repairs**

**On the other hand, its nice to see this item on the calendar—its waaaay overdue and will provide City revenues and a grand public event space. Hooray!**

Its time to give our veterans the respect they deserve instead of just the usual lip service. Property owners have to spend money maintaining their properties so no whining. Its time for the City to fulfill their maintenance obligations. And the upcoming improvements will add value and revenue.

The faster you get this done the more income the Building can generate. Problem solved!

Heres your motto: "We can get a grant for that".

—I have an idea: let the Historical Advisory Board do something other than be the garage-demolition approval group and let them look for grants as per their duties.

I have to note that I am was bothered by the Staff statement unilaterally declaring HAB doesn't need to approve the plans when that actually hasn't been confirmed by HAB review. Don't you think it's up to them to decide AFTER seeing the plans? You know, per the Charter and the municipal code? Plus they're experts.

Don't you think HAB would have some good input on the Historic Building?  
—Another thought: Give them back control of their own agenda that is now (illegally) controlled by City employees.  
(Just a thought...)

I fully endorse this wonderful beautification project. The Veterans Memorial Building is not just a beautifully-architected gathering space for our veterans, the stage and auditorium constitute a unique income generating event space that will provide increasing revenues for every dollar spent. Don't short-change it.

- Old smelly rug? Get rid of it. It's a health hazard as well.
- Heating system? Who needs that? Just kidding—pretty sure its mandated.
- ADA access?---required. But they must not encroach on the front exterior façade—sounds like a project for HAB...
- OMG hot water for the bathrooms? Lemme think about that one...No rationale for not doing that one. way overdue.
- Convective heaters? Agreed.
- Wood floor refinishing=more attractive rental - \$\$\$. Agreed.
- Extra rooms beautified = thank you Vets, that's a yes. Plus don't you think they could be available to the public and will provide extra revenue? So yes to those as well.
- 100% the building needs a kitchen. As far as priorities, do the kitchen before the auditorium floors as the kitchen will add a functional benefit. Ps the small elevator is not a barrier--If you cant use a cart in the elevator, put a table inside and put trays on it.--We do that all the time in the catering industry.
- Bar? It should be lower priority but should be done. You can easily get grants for the hazard removal as well as the restoration.
  - Grown ups like parties with bars—you said you wanted weddings right?
  - --Thats the BIG money maker
  - —why would you sabotage the location after putting “all this money” into it?
  - Yep, do the bar. Kitchen first, floors, then bar.

*By the way--as far as the O Club already having a kitchen so the Vets Building doesn't need one?*

*First of all, that place is also run down and stinky—and its on the other side of town.*

*And now there is almost no parking--did you know that?*

*You can thank AUSD and the back door of the Planning Department for that, who*

*snuck in an illegal fenced off bus yard on the lot rented to a private party (on publicly-owned EDC property), and stealing parking from the O Club. Yay.....Its fully-operational and not even permitted yet—Go figure. Welcome to Alameda.*

**But back to this project: I'm looking forward to watching these plans come to fruition. Cheers!**