

## City of Alameda - City Council Strategic Retreat #1, 2023

# Summary Report

March 9th, 2023

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# Overview

On May 9, the City of Alameda City Council and the Executive Management Team convened in person from 5:30pm - 8:30pm to discuss the vision statement and strategic priority areas for inclusion in the Strategic Roadmap for fiscal years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26. In preparing for this retreat, the strategic planning consultant CivicMakers interviewed each City Council member individually and facilitated a focus group with the Executive Management Team to gather preliminary input on their vision and priorities.

## Agenda

- 4:30 pm – Collaboration and Dinner
- 5:30 pm – Public Comment
- 5:45 pm – City Manager Welcome & Agenda
- 5:55 pm – Overview & Discussion of Strategic Plan and Process
- 6:00 pm – Review of Draft Vision and Discussion
- 7:15 pm – Review of Draft Strategic Priorities, Discussion & Dot Voting Activity
- 8:20 pm – Wrap Up & Next Steps

## Attendees

<p><b><u>City Council:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft (through 2026)</li> <li>• Vice Mayor Tony Daysog (through 2026)</li> <li>• Councilmember Trish Herrera Spencer (through 2024)</li> <li>• Councilmember Malia Vella (through 2024)</li> <li>• Councilmember Tracy Jensen (through 2026)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Consultants:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike King, CivicMakers</li> <li>• Brittany Henry, CivicMakers</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>City Staff:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Ott (City Manager)</li> <li>• Amy Wooldridge (Assistant City Manager)</li> <li>• Sarah Henry (Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer)</li> <li>• Yibin Shen (City Attorney)</li> <li>• Elizabeth Mackenzie (Chief Asst. City Attorney)</li> <li>• Lara Weisiger (City Clerk)</li> <li>• Nick Luby (Fire Chief)</li> <li>• Nishant Joshi (Police Chief)</li> <li>• Erin Smith (Public Works Director)</li> <li>• Lisa Maxwell (Community Development Director)</li> <li>• Nico Procos (Alameda Municipal Power General Manager)</li> <li>• Andrew Thomas (Planning, Building &amp; Transportation Director)</li> <li>• Dave Leidsiemer (Acting Recreation and Parks Director)</li> <li>• Jane Chisaki (Library Director)</li> <li>• Margaret O'Brien (Finance Director)</li> <li>• Jessica Romeo (Human Resources Director)</li> <li>• Carolyn Hogg (Information Technology Director)</li> </ul>
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## Meeting Purpose, Objectives, and Outputs

### Purpose

- Share information about the strategic planning process and desired outcomes
- Understand and respond to any questions/concerns about the strategic planning process and product
- Provide an opportunity for the City Council to reflect on their areas of alignment and deliberate on their areas of difference

### Desired Outcomes

- Gather inputs that will allow the project team to design a successful strategic planning process and product
- Gather inputs that will allow the project team to produce a revised draft vision and priorities list
- Gather inputs to inform a survey for City Council to fill out ahead of the next retreat and to inform the design of the next retreat on April 18, 2023

### Outputs

Input from this March 6 convening was used to craft a revision to the draft vision and draft priorities. These documents incorporate the feedback received from the City Council. To view these, click the following links:

- [Vision Statement](#) [Draft v2]
- [Priorities & Objectives](#) [Draft v2]

## Agenda Overview

During the retreat City Council participated in three exercises where they exchanged dialogue, gave direct edits, and provided feedback on each of the below topic areas.

The intention was not to come out of this retreat with a neat and tidy decision. This was a critical opportunity to gather further input between Council survey and the next retreat.

### Topic 1: Strategic Roadmap Process

The consultant team shared an overview of the planned strategic planning process and expected outcomes. The City Council was invited to respond to the following discussion prompt.

#### Prompt:

*Does what we have shared reflect how you would like to see the City of Alameda's Strategic Roadmap created and implemented? Do you have any comments or clarifying questions?*



### Topic 2. Vision Statement

The Strategic Roadmap starts with a shared vision for the future of Alameda. From that shared vision, we identified six core priorities required to achieve the vision (see below). To accomplish each priority, we will develop key objectives and projects, name responsible departments, and create a timeline. The draft vision is a summary of what we heard from our one-one-one interviews with each member of the City Council.

**Prompt:** *What ~ three concepts are most important for you to see in the vision? Are these reflected in the draft vision? What, if anything, would you change or remove and why?*

### **Draft Vision Statement**

*“Alamedans of all ages, cultures and backgrounds feel supported and engaged in community and civic opportunities to continually make Alameda a better and safer place to live.*

*Alameda Point is becoming a fully activated community, contributing to the economic, cultural and recreational landscape of the entire city. Residents walk, bike and take public transit to more destinations on the island and across the Bay Area, reducing local traffic congestion and accidents.*

*Alameda is more resilient to climate change and sea level rise, external factors that uniquely impact its island community. Alameda residents and businesses feel prepared and trust in local agencies to keep them safe during future natural disasters, including earthquakes and flooding.*

*New and existing households feel welcomed and can afford housing that meets their needs. Housing is available for homeless individuals and families who have access to ongoing social service support. Residents are proud to have beautiful, clean green and blue spaces for play and recreation, and businesses, restaurants, and public events and art that reflect the vibrancy of their neighborhoods.*

*Overall, there is a collective feeling of pride and hope for the island, especially for the wellbeing of its youth. Alameda celebrates its many assets - in housing, business, transportation, recreation, and infrastructure – that contribute to the long-term betterment of Alameda’s residents and environment.”*

### **Topic 3. Strategic Priorities & Objectives**

The draft priorities are a summary of what we heard from our one-one-one interviews with each member of the City Council. We also incorporated some concepts from a focus group with the Executive Management Team, shown in italics.

#### **Prompt:**

*Do the priorities and objectives (sub-bullets) capture the necessary steps to move toward realizing your vision? What would you change and why?*

### **Draft Priorities**

#### **1. Community Safety & Services**

- Adequately staff public safety officers and improve response times and ticketing practices
  - Reduce crime
  - Support adequate mental health services for youth
  - Offer high-quality educational programs and supports for families
  - Adequately staff and support recreational programs and libraries
  - *Ensure active, beautiful and resilient green and blue spaces, community events and public art*
- 2. Transportation & Infrastructure**
- Build safe, efficient public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including laying groundwork for BART station
  - Reduce traffic accidents and improve ingress and egress from the island
  - Address deferred maintenance and implement top priority smart growth, revitalization, parks and other public infrastructure projects
  - *Ensure safe, clean and accessible streets and public facilities*
- 3. Alameda Point Development**
- Implement comprehensive plans for housing, transportation, environmental sustainability, job creation, and diversity in Alameda Point
  - Build a sense of community and vibrancy
- 4. Climate Change & Sea Level Rise Resilience**
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
  - Prepare for sea level rise
  - Offer eco-friendly energy incentives and educational programs
  - Plan for disaster readiness
  - *Mitigate climate change impacts through resilient design*
- 5. Housing & Homelessness**
- Build more affordable housing
  - Provide mental health and wraparound services for unhoused population and those who are housing insecure
  - Address impacts of short-term rentals
- 6. Fiscally Responsible & Inclusive Governance**
- Explore governance models for greater representation of the city
  - Support the next generation of local government leaders
  - Pursue inclusive community and business engagement in City planning and policymaking
  - Offer a full range of fiscally sustainable public services
  - *Encourage economic and community development, including a strong and successful business sector*

## Summary of Participation

This section summarizes the input given on each of these exercises: Strategic Roadmap Process, Vision Statement, and Strategic Priorities.

### Strategic Roadmap Process - Comments

- Critical to think about implementation
- Use this process to prioritize items in climate action plan
- How we deliver services / our pride in it is a special part of Alameda
- How do we intentionally leverage our assets and amenities including infrastructure
- Capture good work from last 6 months
- Find ways to reflect day-to-day critical services that may not show up in Roadmap
- Public participation, now and in the future
- Don't want to adopt previous plan when we have changes on Council
- Our work has a longer time horizon than 3 years — we are carrying on the legacy of previous councils

### Vision Statement - Comments

- Want more emphasis on meaningful public participation (ensuring that it is ADA accessible, and potentially includes virtual options or even child care considerations)
- New and existing households prioritized and welcomed into the community
- 5th paragraph - flip 1st + 2nd sentence and add “architecture” — “youth and aged”
- Reference to schools is missing — they are a neighborhood asset, community space like parks
- Remove “safe” from first paragraph — address more in following paragraphs
- Start with our people - move up 4th paragraph
- Move Alameda Point paragraph to 4th
- Include Schools after “recreation”
- Prioritize housing (move up)
- Combine transportation, infrastructure + climate change items
- Safety is broad — include mental health , parks and rec — adequate amount of capital resources + safety personnel
- Last paragraph — last sentence is weak. “Our most important asset is our people, not brick + mortar (secondary)” (Councilmember Spencer). Highlight infrastructure in middle sections
- Need more continuity in paragraphs — 1st + 2nd sentences don't feel connected
- Remove/change “celebrates’ — ”leverages”
- Have pillars (transportation/safety/ housing, sustainability, DEI principles, accountability, governance) underscored by fiscal/infrastructure
- Do not want to overlook the fire dept and roads in safety outlook
- I like the climate change + resilience paragraph

## Strategic Priority Areas - Comments

Council Member comments/edits shown in *italics*.

### 1. Community Safety & Service

- Adequately staff public safety officers (*e.g., by paying competitive salaries and benefits*)
  - *Provide appropriate tools and technology to public safety officers and support staff*
- Reduce crime
- Support adequate mental health services *for everyone*
- Offer high-quality educational programs and supports for families
- Adequately staff and support recreational programs and libraries
- Ensure active, beautiful and resilient green, blue and community spaces, community events and public art
- *Improve response times and public safety responses*

### 2. Transportation and Infrastructure

- Build *a comprehensive, integrated*, safe, efficient public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including laying groundwork for BART station and *bike/pedestrian bridge*
- Reduce traffic accidents and improve ingress and egress from the island — *includes vehicular congestion, parking, speed — prevent pedestrian collisions (pedestrian safety)*
- Address deferred maintenance and implement top priority smart growth, revitalization, parks and other public infrastructure projects
- Ensure safe, **clean (keyword)** and accessible streets and public facilities (*e.g. buildings and parks*)

### 3. Climate Change & Sea Level Resilience

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Prepare for sea level rise
- Offer eco-friendly energy incentives and educational programs
- Plan for disaster readiness
  - *Promotion of green infrastructure (includes urban foresting)*
- Mitigate climate change impacts through resilient design
- *Manage shoreline retreat (instead of walls and hardscape)*

### 4. Housing & Homelessness

- Build more affordable housing



- Provide mental health and wraparound services for unhoused population and those who are housing insecure
- Address impacts of short-term rentals
- *Safety net assistance/fund i.e. prevention*
- *Integrating housing into surrounding community e.g. AFFH*
- *Build more housing at any income level*
- *Affordable-by-design housing*
- *Homeownership affordability*
- *Housing for teach + those outside of AUSD network*

#### 5. **Fiscally Responsible & inclusive Governance** (*meaningful outreach + engagement*)

- Explore governance models for greater representation of the city
- Support the next generation of local government leaders
- Pursue *involvement of community members + businesses* in City Planning and policymaking.
- Offer a full range of ~~fiscally sustainable~~ public services *that are fiscally sustainable*
- Encourage economic and community development, including a strong and successful business sector
- *Practice long-term economic planning*

#### 6. **Alameda Point Development**

- Build a sense of community and vibrancy
- Implement comprehensive plans for housing, transportation environment sustainability, job creation, and diversity in Alameda Point (*should be included under other priority areas*)
- *Support our existing businesses*

## Priority Areas - Dot Voting Summary

Overall City Council agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed revised priority area names. The chart summarizes survey responses and comments in response to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed revised priority name?”

### Priorities/Objectives

- **Community Safety & Services = 4 dots**
  - Adequately staff public safety officers (e.g., by paying competitive salaries and benefits) = 4
  - Support adequate mental health services for everyone = 2
  - Reduce crime = 1
  - Ensure active, beautiful and resilient green and blue spaces, community events and public art = 1
- **Transportation & Infrastructure = 4**
  - Build a comprehensive, integrated, safe, efficient public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including laying groundwork for BART station and bike/pedestrian bridge = 3
  - Reduce car/traffic congestion, parking challenges, and vehicle speed to prevent accidents (especially with pedestrians) and improve ingress and egress from the island = 2
  - Address deferred maintenance and implement top priority smart growth, revitalization, parks and other public infrastructure projects = 2
- **Climate Change & Sea Level Rise Resilience = 4**
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions = 3
  - Promote green infrastructure (including the urban forest) = 3
  - Prepare for sea level rise = 2
  - Offer eco-friendly energy incentives and educational programs = 1
  - Manage shoreline retreat (instead of walls and hardscape) = 1
- **Housing & Homelessness = 3**
  - Homeownership affordability = 3
  - Integrate housing into surrounding communities (e.g., AFFH) = 2
  - Build more housing at any income level = 1
  - Build more affordable housing = 1
  - Provide mental health and wraparound services for unhoused population and those who are housing insecure = 1
  - Address impacts of short-term rentals = 1
  - Safety net assistance/fund (i.e., prevention) = 1
  - Housing for teachers and those outside of Alameda USD = 1
- **Fiscally Responsible & Inclusive Governance = 3**
  - Explore governance models for greater representation of the city = 2

- Pursue the involvement of community members and businesses in City planning and policymaking = 2
  - Practice long-term economic planning = 2
  - Offer a full range of public services that are fiscally sustainable = 1
- **Alameda Point Development = 1**
  - Support our existing businesses = 2