

**From:** [Cyndy Johnsen](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncil-List](#)  
**Cc:** [board](#); [City Clerk](#); [Jennifer Ott](#); [Justin Long](#); [Allen Tai](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 7/16 Council Meeting Item 5-K (Aquatic Center)  
**Date:** Monday, July 15, 2024 12:29:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [7\\_16\\_2024\\_CC\\_5K\\_Aquatic\\_Center.pdf](#)

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Deary Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Members of the Council,

We hope you will consider our comments, attached.

Thank you!

Bike Walk Alameda Board



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July 16, 2024 / RE: [Item 5-K: City Aquatic Center Schematic Design Services and Community Engagement](#)

Dear Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Members of the City Council,

We wanted to take this opportunity to share some observations about what we believe is a flaw in our city's planning process, specifically regarding park and school projects. These projects don't seem to be getting the review and discussion they warrant given their potential impacts on transportation. As a result, we're building them in ways that perpetuate existing travel patterns that we as a city have committed to change.

How will we achieve our climate and safety goals if we keep building large parking lots and school drive-throughs that encourage more driving? We believe these projects would benefit from focused conversations around transportation impacts, with city targets in mind. Ideally, a transportation demand management plan would be created and reviewed by the Transportation Commission, the Planning Board, and/or other bodies that have familiarity with these issues.

Specifically regarding the Aquatic Center, for example, there's been no formal discussion about the size of the parking lot, which is now nearly twice as large as the original one planned for this area. A parking lot this size, offering free parking, is likely to induce driving private vehicles over other forms of transportation, despite the site's very bike- and transit-friendly location. Does it need to be this big? Ultimately, it may be necessary for a number of reasons, but we believe more discussion would serve us well.

Several years ago, Council [rescinded our minimum parking requirements](#) for commercial and residential developments. Council recognized that expansive parking increases auto trips and congestion, and discourages mode shift. However, we understand that the pool's parking lot size is based on some other aquatic-specific parking formula. It's concerning that we've essentially just replaced one set of minimum parking requirements with another one here.

We've shared some of our concerns about the parking lot with ARPD, and understand more opportunities for public input are to come, as described in this Item. However, we feel the current process does not allow for focused, informed discussion needed to understand and manage the potential long-term transportation impacts of these projects. We hope you'll consider asking staff to rethink the process to better align these projects with our city's goals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bike Walk Alameda Board