

From: [Jay](#)
To: [Lara Weisiger](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment re Item 7B
Date: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 12:15:16 PM

Hey, Lara.

Please add the message below as a comment on tonight's Item 7B.

Thank you.

Jay Garfinkle

September 1, 2025

RE: Item 7B

Honorable Members of the Alameda City Council,

The planning staff have presented us with an impressive list of infrastructure projects that they have determined will have to be addressed by the City sooner or later. The Council now has to determine which will be sooner, which will be later and which might, possibly, be never.

The members of the council must prioritize the several proposed projects. And in this regard, I would like to suggest that they approach this task as a corporate board of directors would rather than as a political party caucus as we have seen occasionally in the past.

The City has limited resources, the various grants of taxpayer funds notwithstanding. How should these resources be applied in a manor that will yield the optimal benefit for the most stockholders – the residents and taxpayers of the City. Not only does the Council have to consider the cost of each project but their urgency must also be factored into this process. Among the more urgent I would include the enhancement of safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and even for motorists. In addition, the integrity of our streets deserves a position high on the list of priorities. In this regard, I would encourage the Council to evaluate the value and effectiveness of recent and ongoing projects before extending them or initiating others that might serve the same goal of safety but without likely additional benefit and at much higher cost.

The recent placement of flashing warning lights at several of our pedestrian and cyclist crossings must certainly enhance safety at these locations; and will prove to be more effective, less disruptive for motorists and will be much less costly than the re-engineering of streets as has been proposed for Fernside Blvd. and for Otis Drive, the closing of selected streets to thru traffic, and the placement of speed bumps.

As an example of the *never* or very low priority projects I would submit the needlessly expensive conversion of several hundred yards of selected neighborhood streets into what would essentially serve as private garden districts. The residents of these districts might or might not appreciate them, what is certain, however, is that the vast majority of residents will be completely unaware of them and will likely never see them. Even so they will have the privilege of “donating” their taxes to fund them.

Please, lets be a responsible Board of Directors on behalf of the “Corporation’s” stakeholders.

Respectively,
Jay Garfinkle

From: [Mitch B](#)
To: [CITYCOUNCIL-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written comment for item 7-B of 9/2/25 City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, September 1, 2025 6:40:52 PM

Hello,

I will be making a public comment on item 7-B for the 9/2/25 city council meeting and wanted to share a written copy with linked citations. I want to clarify that the intent is not to disregard the positive work the city has been doing on this topic, but encourage more of it. The establishment of Special Revenue Fund (265): Parking has been a really helpful tool to study how much the city has been losing on parking (<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5191846&GUID=C0A02ECD-BFDD-4AD2-8215-58B3B360FD6A&Options=&Search=>). The intent of this public comment is to educate the engaged public who attend the meeting about the downsides of underpriced parking as well as the existence and concerns of those who don't drive. Unfortunately, you can only fit so much in 3 minutes and so the comment is focused on the current problems that need to be solved.

Pavement management is the second largest item in the 2025-2027 capital improvement budget (https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/publicworks/adoptedbycouncil_cip-budget-summary.pdf). At ~\$5.5 million a year, this ongoing project is paid for in part by the gas tax, vehicle registration, and the local sales tax. Surprisingly, it is not paid for by one thing that most people assume would pay for it. Special Revenue Fund (265): Parking which accounts for revenues collected from parking meters, parking enforcement, and the civic center parking garage is not used to pay for pavement management. Why? Because Special Revenue Fund (265): Parking has been losing money since 2020, even if debt servicing isn't considered (<https://stories.opengov.com/alamedaca/published/p-6Iz4F5T>). I'm going to repeat again because many people don't know this. The parking meters on Park St. and Webster St. and the Civic Center Parking Garage are losing money.

How could this be? Well, Berkeley charges \$3/hr with a daily max of \$25 (<https://berkeleyca.gov/city-services/parking/parking-garages-and-lots>), Emeryville charges \$2/hr for the first 2 hours, then increases to \$7/hr (<https://www.emeryville.org/Services/Getting-Around-Emeryville/Paid-Parking>), and most parking meters in Oakland cost \$3/hr but do vary by location (<https://www.oaklandca.gov/Public-Safety-Streets/Parking-Vehicles/Find-and-Pay-for-Parking-OakPark>). How much does parking cost in Alameda? \$1.50/hr on Park St., \$1/hr on Webster St., and \$0.75/hr in the civic center parking garage (<https://www.alamedaca.gov/RESIDENTS/Auto-Parking-in-Alameda/Park-and-Webster-Street-Area-Parking>), but of course it's free if the parking meters aren't operational. No wonder we're losing money. Parking, just like cars, is really expensive and we're undercharging. This is especially concerning as 10% of households in Alameda, myself included, don't own cars (<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT1Y2023.B08201?q=Alameda+city,+California>), and are typically lower income. So why are the less fortunate paying taxes to help pay for the parking of wealthier car owners?

Since 2014, one of Alameda's parking program goals is to achieve an 85% occupancy goal

(<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1810340&GUID=3D393E9C-973F-4994-B88F-72F383AEFCCE&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=85%25>). This is based off of a recommendation from the most influential figure in parking research, Dr. Donald Shoup (RIP), who recommends parking rates be set to achieve an occupancy rate of 85% *or less* to maintain parking turnover and allow people to visit local businesses. In 2014, city staff measured parking usage during peak hours and discovered that nearly every single street within 2 blocks of Webster St. and Park St. was over 85% occupied. However, despite this clear signal that parking rates needed to be raised, it was ultimately decided to not change the parking rates, the same rates that still exist today. 11 years later, the island is bigger and the value of the dollar is less. Anyone who tries to drive to Webster St. and Park St. during peak hours today knows that there is no street parking available and this is due to unnecessarily low rates.

Pavement management is a worthy goal for the city and it only makes sense that it should be paid for by those who damage it and make repairs necessary. One of the ways that they can pay for it is through public paid parking. Parking rates (and fines) are thoroughly out of date and if city parking revenue is doubled, it could raise \$2 million a year which could pay for more than a third of the current pavement management budget. For the sake of a balanced budget, fair taxation, fighting climate change, and supporting local business I urge the city to consider raising parking rates and fines. Thank you.

Thanks,
-Mitch Ball



Board of Directors

August 30, 2025

Denyse Trepanier
President

RE: [Item 7-B – Workshop to Discuss Alameda’s Infrastructure and Facility Needs Regarding Streets and Traffic Safety](#)

Brian Fowler
Treasurer

Dear Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, Members of the City Council, and Staff,

Tim Beloney
Secretary

Although this is just the first of several workshops, we want to acknowledge the significant level of funding required to deliver on the City’s strategic goals. As longtime advocates for increases in both capital and operating funding for prioritized projects in our adopted Active Transportation and Vision Zero plans, we welcome this discussion and the opportunity it presents.

Cyndy Johnsen
Board Member

Maria Piper
Board Member

Last year, an infrastructure bond proposal did not advance past Council. If this conversation leads toward a similar initiative, we hope it will find greater success. [Berkeley’s Measure FF](#), passed in 2024, offers a compelling model for Alameda.

Lucy Gigli
Founder, non-voting

In addition to major one-time measures, there are also opportunities to strengthen ongoing revenue through targeted fee adjustments. For instance, aligning citation fines—such as those for parking in bike lanes—with rates in nearby cities like [Oakland](#), and stepping up enforcement of those violations, could offset costs while discouraging unsafe behavior. Parking meter rates offer another potential improvement: the upcoming implementation of demand-responsive pricing is expected to improve parking availability and might shift the current system from a net loss to a revenue-positive model. In the meantime, it may be worth prioritizing getting all the non-operational parking kiosks along Park Street working, as well as exploring interim meter adjustments to bring Alameda’s low parking rates more in line with neighboring cities. [Most meters in Oakland, for example, cost \\$3/hour](#), double the charge for parking on Park Street.

We also want to highlight the other side of the fiscal equation: cost savings. Street safety infrastructure is not just a public good — it’s a fiscally responsible investment. Traffic crashes carry enormous and often hidden costs. [A study by the City of San Francisco](#) estimated the annual cost of traffic collisions at over \$500 million. Using national metrics, traffic violence may be costing Alameda \$10–15 million annually, factoring in emergency response, healthcare, property damage, and lost productivity. These are costs we pay—whether or not we budget for them. Investing in proven safety measures—such as daylighting, safer intersections, protected bike lanes, and traffic calming—not only saves lives but reduces long-term financial burdens.

These cost savings extend beyond safety: reducing vehicle miles traveled also means lower street maintenance costs. As SUVs and EVs get heavier, they accelerate wear and tear on our roads. Encouraging biking, walking, and transit

reduces this damage, along with congestion and emissions—delivering long-term benefits for the City.

A person walking, biking, or taking transit instead of driving (or being driven) is:

- One less car in traffic and one less space taken up by parking
- One less source of serious injury risk
- One less vehicle wearing down the street

Streets that are safe and welcoming for everyone, including kids, seniors, cyclists, and pedestrians are not just livable and equitable — they're a sound financial investment. Inaction and delay are costly. As Council, Staff, and the community evaluate priorities and funding options, please consider safe streets and our growing Low Stress Network as core infrastructure, and a smart financial strategy for meeting the City's environmental, safety, and public health goals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bike Walk Alameda Board