



May 18, 2021

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Vice Mayor Malia Vella
Councilmember Tony Daysog
Councilmember John Knox White
Councilmember Trish Herrera Spencer

RE: City Budget Workshop Agenda Items:
2-B Operating Budget
2-C Capital Improvement Program Budget
2-D ARPA Priorities

Dear Members of the City Council:

Thank you for your leadership in making Alameda a safer and more resilient city. We recognize that the City's budget priorities codify its policy priorities over the two-year budget cycle. We also recognize that the budget is a "zero sum game" and the City has many urgent needs for funding.

CASA members are here tonight to support the prioritization of sustainability and resilience measures in the City of Alameda's Fiscal Year 21-22 and 22-23 budgets.

Agenda Item 2-B Operating Budget

- We recognize and support the inclusion of the CivicSpark Fellow in the supplemental budget memo.

Agenda Item 2-C Capital Improvement Program

- We recognize and support the inclusion of the Urban Forestry Plan and recommend full funding at \$175,000 per year.
- We support funding of the De-Pave Park Master Plan at \$250,000. We recognize that this will increase the City's competitiveness for grant funding for the next stages of development.

Agenda Item 2-D American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Priorities

We support a "going slow" approach to allocating General Fund reserves that may be available through ARPA. These one-time funds will be needed for investing in Alameda's future.

Please consider these funding priorities in your deliberations.

- **Preparing Alameda for the Future** - Climate Change and Adaptation (sea-level rise, GHG reduction) – the staff report recommends that the City Council use the five priority policy areas for allocating resources from ARPA funds. We strongly support using these



Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda

one-time funds to invest in Alameda's future. Alameda is especially vulnerable to the threats of sea level rise and needs a significant amount of investment to address this existential threat.

- **Smart City Broadband** – The City is developing a Smart City Master Plan to ensure more equitable internet access, traffic signal synchronization, more energy efficient street lights, remote lighting, irrigation for enhanced water conservation, multimodal citywide traffic counts, citywide parking data, enhanced transportation safety measures, better connected City buildings and economic development opportunities. We support reserving ARPA funds to dedicate to implementation of the Smart City Master Plan.
- **Resilience Hubs** – A key opportunity for investment in our neighborhoods is funding for Resilience Hubs. Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities enhanced to support residents, enhance community connectivity, and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event. CASA, the Alameda Maker Farm and Alameda Backyard Growers are supporting the development of a Resilience Hub on land leased from the Alameda Point Collaborative.

The goal of the Hub will be to support the surrounding neighborhood with on-going services and resilience in the event of a natural disaster or emergency. Members are currently enrolled in leadership training through the NorCal Resilience Network and will engage the local neighborhood in the future vision for the Hub. Funding for a disaster communication system could be allocated from ARPA funds.

Enhancements to the City's Community Emergency Response Team (**CERT**) program to include neighborhood-based solutions and making neighborhoods more resilient is a key goal of CARP. We support reserving ARPA funds to investing in neighborhood-based solutions for resiliency.

CASA members will be in the audience at the Budget Workshop to provide public comment as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Abbe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ruth Abbe, Steering Committee
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda
415-235-1356

Dear Mayor, City Council and City Manager,

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan Act funds are for Alameda to lay the groundwork for a strong and equitable recovery from the pandemic. This includes “Address(ing) systemic public health and economic challenges that have contributed to the inequal impact of the pandemic on certain populations.” With these funds, Alameda can make real strides towards providing the community with services that have been long needed and which have been exponentially increased by the pandemic.

We need Mental Health Services. The mental health crisis that existed pre-pandemic is even worse now. Of the people that survived COVID-19, **1 in 3** have neurological conditions that most often present as depression and anxiety but can include psychosis. People who did not have COVID-19 are also reporting significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression and substance misuse due to the effects of navigating life during a pandemic. Given the lack of mental health services available at the county level, we need to invest a meaningful portion of these funds into mental health services.

The Mayor and Council have discussed the need for wrap-around mental health services and how they are key to the success of the alternative response team. With these funds you could create the type of setup where mental health services, crisis services, substance misuse service, housing services, medical services, case management and benefits counselors are all available at one location. The Federal Government provided specific examples of the ways these funds could be spent. Here are some of those examples:

- Mental Health Treatment
- Substance Misuse Treatment
- Behavioral Health Services
- Hotlines or Warmlines
- Crisis Intervention
- Community Health Workers
- Public Benefits Navigators
- Service to address individuals experiencing Homelessness
- Residential counseling and Housing navigation assistance
- Support for vulnerable populations to access medical or public health services
- Enhancement of healthcare capacity, including alternative care facilities

Creating a Crisis Clinic in Alameda provides the community a place to go when they are experiencing a mental health challenge before things escalate to needing a psychiatric hold. Creating a Crisis Clinic also provides the alternative response team a place to bring individuals in crisis but who do not meet the criteria for a psychiatric hold. Making mental health treatment, substance misuse services, homelessness services, public health services and support services more available in our community will make for a more effective alternative response team and will benefit the entire community including those hardest hit by the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Beth Kenny

By electronic transmission:

May 11, 2021

Mayor and City Council
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA. 94501

Subject: 2021-23 Budget - -Improved City of Alameda Tree Protection Ordinance (Items-2-B, 2-C and 2-D on May 11, 2021 City Council agenda)

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and Councilmembers:

As part of your budget deliberations, I urge the City Council to direct staff to resume work on improving Alameda's Tree Protection Ordinance. Alameda's ordinance is currently limited to just Coast Live Oaks and a limited number of street trees.

An improved Tree Protection Ordinance is highly consistent with Alameda's climate change mitigation objectives. **Every tree counts towards the reduction of carbon from the atmosphere and towards creating the cooling climate with its transpiration. Additionally, the City of Alameda declared a climate emergency in 2019, whereby we only have 9 1/2 years to draw down the carbon and get to net carbon neutral by 2030.**

The mature trees that would be protected under an improved ordinance provide exponentially greater climate change mitigation than newly planted trees. While planting new trees is extremely important, it takes many years and in some cases centuries for new trees to compensate for the loss of large mature trees.

Most Bay Area communities have tree protection ordinances that cover a broad range of species and address such issues as excessive pruning and construction-related root damage. Examples of other communities that have good ordinances that could serve as starting points for Alameda include Walnut Creek, Concord, Fremont and Palo Alto.

Among other things, an improved Tree Protection Ordinance should include:

1. Expand the definition of protected trees to ALL trees (not just Coast Live Oaks and the limited number of street trees listed in the current ordinance) over a specified size (perhaps 28" trunk diameter, like Walnut Creek), except for specified "undesirable" species, which could include such trees as Blue Gum Eucalyptus.
2. Require a permit for any tree "removal".
3. Define "removal" to include things like removal of over a certain percentage of a tree's canopy or height as well as removal of roots over a certain size within a specified percentage of the protected root zone.

4. For development-related tree removals, require implementation of project alternatives, alternative siting or configuration of the proposed improvements that would avoid removal.
5. Provide more effective penalties for illegal removals.

Although the 2017-2018 Tree Protection Ordinance work was all performed by city staff, if additional funding is needed to complete the ordinance, the American Rescue Plan funds to be considered under Item 2-D of the City Council's May 11 agenda could be a possible source, given the observation under Item 1.a. of the staff report's "Recommended Framework For Council's Consideration" that projects that address climate change and adaptation (including greenhouse gas reduction) are an eligible activity under the American Rescue Plan.

Please call me at 510-523-0411 if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY



May 11, 2021

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Vice Mayor Malia Vella
Councilmember Tony Daysog
Councilmember John Knox White
Councilmember Trish Herrera Spencer

RE: City Budget Workshop Agenda Items:
2-B Operating Budget
2-C Capital Improvement Program Budget
2-D ARPA Priorities

Dear Members of the City Council:

Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA) strongly supports prioritization of sustainability and resilience measures in the City of Alameda's Fiscal Year 21-22 and 22-23 budgets.

In March 2019, the City Council adopted its **Climate Emergency Declaration** and committed to leadership in climate mitigation and adaptation. In September 2019, the City Council adopted a far-reaching Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) designed to keep Alameda on the **Climate Safe Path**. In September 2020, the City Council received a new report on the **risks and vulnerabilities** from Alameda's emergent groundwater.

Alameda needs to be resilient – not only to the threats and vulnerabilities related to pandemics, racial injustice, institutional violence, and the housing crisis – but also to the other immediate threats of climate change, including droughts, fires, and flooding. In the past year, we have learned that community resilience can be achieved through raising money for restaurant meals for first responders and the most vulnerable; pitching in to schedule vaccination appointments for seniors and others experiencing the digital divide; and learning to build community through resilient neighborhoods and resilience hubs.

We have specific requests for consideration related to the City Manager's recommendations from the City Departments:

Agenda Item 2-B Operating Budget

- **Sustainability Expenses** – the City Manager does not recommend funding the CivicSpark Fellow for FY 22 and FY 23. We wish to remind the City Council that it has exactly one staff member dedicated to implementation of the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, our new Sustainability and Resilience Manager. While we appreciate the City's investment in a senior leadership position, we would like to remind you that the CARP identified eight positions needed to achieve the City's climate action and resiliency goals. We request full funding of the Sustainability Expenses at \$86,000 each year (an increase of \$36,000 in FY 22 and \$46,000 in FY 23).

- **Add Senior Transportation Coordinator** – we strongly support the addition of a senior transportation coordinator funded through Measure B/BB. Transportation impacts account for 70% of the City’s greenhouse gas emissions. The transportation staff has done an excellent job in developing the Action Transportation Plan and the Transportation Choices Plan and we agree that additional resources are needed to implement these plans.

Agenda Item 2-C Capital Improvement Program

- **Master Street Tree Plan Update** – we strongly support moving forward to develop an Urban Forestry Plan, addressing not only street trees, but also trees on private property, in our parks and at our schools. CASA is a supporter of the Urban Greenbelt Initiative to invest in green infrastructure throughout the county. However, because of our outdated Master Street Tree Plan, lack of funding for increasing tree planting and tree maintenance (as anticipated by CARP), and our emergent groundwater issue that may impact the type of species that should be planted in Alameda, we need a new state-of-the-art master plan for increasing the urban canopy and sequestering carbon emissions. Returning Alameda to a Tree City USA will have the co-benefit of increasing the well-being and desirability of Alameda neighborhoods. We recommend increasing allocated funding from \$125,000 per year for FY 22 and FY 23 to \$200,000 per year to ensure that the Urban Forestry Plan fully meets the needs of the community.
- **Sea Level Rise Adaptation** – Two projects are listed in the Capital Improvement Program (Veteran’s Court and the Northern Shoreline). However, there are eleven priority projects listed as location-based priority flooding assets identified during the vulnerability assessment, including Crown Beach, Eastshore Drive, Bay Farm Lagoon, and Bay Farm Island Touchdown and Towata Park. All of these projects require inventories, feasibility studies, conceptual designs and construction activities. We recommend moving forward on the studies in order to prepare the City for potential future regional and federal funding.
- **De-Pave Park Master Plan** – is not listed in the Capital Improvement Program, but is an essential component in the City’s resilience and adaptation efforts. We recommend full funding of the \$250,000 master plan to increase the City’s competitiveness for grant funding.

Agenda Item 2-D American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Priorities

- **Preparing Alameda for the Future** - Climate Change and Adaptation (sea-level rise, GHG reduction) – the staff report recommends that the City Council use the five priority policy areas for allocating resources from ARPA funds. We strongly support using these one-time funds to invest in Alameda’s future. Alameda is especially vulnerable to the threats of sea level rise and needs a significant amount of investment to address this existential threat.



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- **Resilience Hubs** – A key opportunity for investment in our neighborhoods is funding for Resilience Hubs. Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities enhanced to support residents, enhance community connectivity, and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event. CASA, the Alameda Maker Farm and Alameda Backyard Growers are supporting the development of a Resilience Hub on land leased from the Alameda Point Collaborative. The goal of the Hub will be to support the surrounding neighborhood with on-going services and resilience in the event of a natural disaster or emergency. Members are currently enrolled in leadership training through the NorCal Resilience Network and will engage the local neighborhood in the future vision for the Hub. Funding for a disaster communication system could be allocated from ARPA funds. The formation of resilient neighborhoods is a key goal of CARP.

CASA members will be in the audience at the Budget Workshop to provide public comment as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Abbe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ruth Abbe, Steering Committee
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda
415-235-1356

Re: Items 2-C & 2-D, Capital Improvement Program Budget & ARPA

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

As you prepare to consider the budget, please remember that the city has identified preparing Alameda for climate change and adaptation (sea level rise, GHG reduction) as a top priority. And the Recreation and Parks Commission selected DePave Park as its top park priority. The American Funds Rescue Act provides opportunities for green infrastructure from the federal government or from savings in the city's General Fund.

The difference between funding DePave Park master planning and the other worthy projects is that with DePave Park, the planning expenditure will unlock grant funding from the state and federal government. No master plan, no construction grants. Spending money on a DePave Park master plan is leverage money -- it will open the door for more funding.

Implementing a DePave Park master plan checks at least three boxes: 1) Alameda Point infrastructure (not traditional infrastructure, but important infrastructure nevertheless); 2) climate adaptation; and 3) it's leverage money that is actually worth more than the initial spending.

Furthermore, the city's Sustainability and Resilience Manager recently sent a letter to USACE regarding new dredging guidance and beneficial reuse of dredge spoils at Alameda Point. If our resilience officer is promoting wetlands and natural habitat adaptation projects in Alameda and highlighting DePave Park, this policy direction should be reflected in the budget, not just in comment letters.

Parks Director Amy Wooldridge could confirm what amount of money is needed to get the process rolling. A consulting firm could be hired, just like with other consulting contracts like the General Plan update.

We need to be clear if the city envisions transforming a concrete-paved naval tarmac into a thriving ecological park that adapts to future sea level rise. Thank you for considering making DePave Park part of our infrastructure needs.

Sincerely,
Richard Bangert

From: [Laura Thomas](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [Malia](#); [John Knox White](#)
Cc: [Lara Weisiger](#); [Eric Levitt](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Item 6-D on agenda
Date: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 4:03:18 PM

Dear Mayor Ashcraft, members of the city council and staff

Re: April 20, 2021 City Council agenda Item 6-D

The list of proposed city projects for the \$29.5 million in federal Covid relief Alameda is slated to receive is quite startling in its near absence of programs to support the survival needs of residents. It fails to acknowledge that many Alamedans who did not sicken and die from Covid are still suffering from the privations of high rent, lost jobs, and much uncertainty and stress.

While the summary of proposed projects offers one nod to the needs of people facing housing uncertainty (\$800,000 for tiny homes), and another to shoring up the city finances which is understandable (the \$15.5 million to compensate for revenue lost), the majority of the proposals focus on projects that benefit the usual half of Alameda - those who own homes and are secure.

Pickle ball courts are one example. Pickle ball is played by the mostly retired who suffered very little during this pandemic. Why are they on this list?

Where is the equity in this proposal?

The Alameda Justice Alliance joins Transform Alameda in asking the money be spent on housing and mental health services.

Part of the \$29 million could fund the purchase of at least one apartment building that could be turned into cooperative housing, following the model of the Woodstock Homes in the west end. It could also be used to start a public bank or launch land trust initiatives where housing can be kept from falling into the hands of predatory investors. The city must join municipalities across the U.S. that are viewing the de-commodification of housing as one sure route to building the economic equity among residents crucial to maintaining a healthy and vibrant populace.

Mental health services are also direly needed in this town and were needed before the pandemic struck, as you may recall from a school district report two years back that two-thirds of Alameda teens were suffering from depression. It didn't raise much of an alarm then, but now, post-pandemic, it should be a no-brainer. The emotional well-being of our citizens should join stable housing as the council's next highest priority.

The Alameda Justice Alliance is prepared to sit down with city staff and discuss these priorities and how the money could be best spent to establish programs that bring true relief and sustainability to the folks most harmed by a crisis that did not affect all of us equally. We must recognize that fact and respond accordingly.

Let's rework this list.

Sincerely,

Laura Thomas

Alameda Justice Alliance

From: [Transform Alameda](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for Tonight's CC Meeting
Date: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 3:25:11 PM

Dear City Council Members, Mayor, and Vice Mayor:

Transform Alameda is excited that the City of Alameda has the rare opportunity to use \$29 million in federal funding through the APRA to meet the pressing survival needs of our community. We were therefore disappointed to see that the City's initial ARPA funds proposal fails to prioritize meeting these survival needs, and instead prioritizes using the funds for recreation and infrastructure, uses which, by and large, would benefit already privileged and well-resourced residents.

The pandemic has illuminated so many societal conditions that have yet to be addressed with urgency. From vast income inequality, to multiple systems of oppression at play that caused devastating health outcomes for Black, brown and Indigenous folks, to an education system that truly only works for some families - we're in crisis as a nation. Alameda is not immune to these conditions and people in our community are struggling. The priority for the ARPA funds should be to meet Alameda's survival needs. Full stop.

Here is a short list of suggestions that should be explored. These come with hours of discussion from multiple Alameda neighbors. We hope you will take them seriously and consider how to implement some or all of them with the ARPA funds. There is an entire group of folks in this city ready and willing to help think through these ideas and make them come to life!

- Buy existing multifamily housing (instead of building temporary sheds or tiny houses) to be used to shelter unhoused community members. We propose having experienced community-based organizations, familiar with our neighbors' housing needs, rent the homes from the City and run a new housing program with the buildings.
- Put money aside to provide rapid funding for community-based organizations to purchase foreclosed properties pursuant to SB1079, and use the properties to meet community housing needs, such as emergency transitional housing.
- Fund the start-up costs and the first year of operations for a frontline mental health crisis response program like MACRO or Mental Health First in Oakland. This program should be accounted for in the upcoming two-year budget cycle as well. ARPA funds can provide the budgetary boost needed to immediately get a program like this off the ground.
- Fund mental health services for Alameda residents who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.
- Issue stimulus payments to or create a pilot UBI or guaranteed income program for low-income Alameda residents.

Thank you for considering these suggestions.

Respectfully,

Transform Alameda

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[Web](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

From: [Savanna Cheer](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#); [John Knox White](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [City Clerk](#); [Manager Manager](#); [Lara Weisiger](#); [Eric Levitt](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ARPA funds - how to spend
Date: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 11:33:05 AM

Hello all:

I noticed that at tonight's city council meeting you'll be hearing from staff on how to potentially spend the \$29 million in ARPA funding that the city will receive.

The pandemic has illuminated so many societal conditions that have to be addressed with urgency. From vast income inequality, to multiple systems of oppression at play that caused devastating health outcomes for Black, brown and Indigenous folks, to an education system that truly only works for some families - we're in crisis as a nation. Alameda is not immune to these conditions and people in our community are struggling. The priority for the ARPA funds should be to meet people in Alameda's survival needs. Full stop.

Here is a short list of suggestions that should be explored. These come with hours of discussion from multiple Alameda neighbors. I hope you'll take them seriously and consider how to implement some or all of them with the ARPA funds. There is an entire group of folks in this city ready and willing to help think through these ideas and make them come to life!

- Buy existing multifamily housing (instead of building temporary sheds or tiny houses) to be used to shelter unhoused community members, Have experienced community-based organizations, familiar with our neighbors' housing needs, rent the homes from the City and run a new housing program.
- Put money aside to provide rapid funding for community-based organizations to purchase foreclosed properties pursuant to SB1079, and use the properties to meet community housing needs, such as emergency transitional housing.
- Fund the start-up costs and the first year of operations for a frontline mental health crisis response program like MACRO or Mental Health First in Oakland. This program should be accounted for in the upcoming two-year budget cycle as well. ARPA funds can provide the budgetary boost needed to immediately get a program like this off the ground.
- Fund mental health services for Alameda residents who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.
- Issue stimulus payments to or create a pilot UBI or guaranteed income program

for low-income Alameda residents.

Thank you for considering these suggestions.

Take care,
Savanna Cheer



P.O. Box 1024, Alameda, California 94501 |
***.alamedafriends.com

April 15, 2021

Honorable Mayor Ashcraft, Vice Mayor Vella, and Councilmembers, Daysog, Herrera Spencer and Knox White

RE: Wifi Hotspot Lending Program

The Board of the Friends of the Alameda Free Library urges your support for the Library's request to implement a wifi hotspot device lending program from funding received by the City from the American Rescue Plan Act.

The Library proposes a very modest budget of \$50,000 to establish the device lending program. While we know the rules for use of funds have not been finalized we feel strongly that this should be considered part of the City's priorities to build out infrastructure. The need for reliable internet for students, seniors, and low-income residents is great during this time of distance learning, work from home, in addition to the ongoing need to make appointments online or apply for jobs or benefits. Additionally, ongoing this program would bridge the city's Internet access gap in Alameda communities in areas such as the West Side where we know there is a lack of wifi access. And we are uncertain about the extent of the planned broadband access.

While some businesses, libraries and Mastick Senior Center offer free wifi inside, a strong wifi signal is required to reach beyond the walls of the building. We do see people sitting in cars around the library to use its wifi.

The Library proposes a device lending program with 25-30 hotpots which can host up to 15 devices. Including a 4 year contract would allow time to evaluate the need for this program, for the City to install and evaluate the implementation of its broadband system throughout Alameda neighborhoods, and to determine ongoing funding should it prove successful.

We urge the Council to fund this request and to support internet access for Alamedans without access to the internet today and tomorrow.

Board of the Friends of the Alameda Free Library

Karen Butter, President,
Kumar Fanse, Vice President
Josephine Sam, Treasurer
David Beall, Secretary
Becky Cyr
William D. Gibbs II
Marlene Grevich
Marcie Johnson
Karen Manuel
Honora Murphy

Billy Reinschmiedt
Carole Robie
Karen Roemer
Eileen Savel
Doris Ung
Jo Wizenread