

Minutes
Mayor's Economic Development Advisory Panel
Alameda City Hall, Conference Room 391
Wednesday, June 4, 2025

1 CALL TO ORDER

City Staff Member Dwayne Dahlman called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

2 ROLL CALL

Present: Gia Schneider (remote), Joe Ernst, Brock Grunt, Dr. Sharine Thenard (remote), Eva Jennings, Madlen Saddik, and Mark Culyer.

Absent: David Mik, Becca Perata, Adam Elsesser, Matt Kreutz.

City Staff present: Eric Fonstein, Development Manager, Dwayne Dahlman, Economic Development Division Manager.

3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-A Review and approve March 25, 2025, Draft EDAP Minutes

Staff member Dahlman said since six members from the last meeting aren't present tonight, the approval of minutes will be tabled until the next meeting.

4 ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5 CONSENT CALENDAR

None

6 REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6-A Discuss Local Business Climate and Potential Impact Tariffs May Have on Local Business Sectors

Staff member Dahlman asked for members' advice about tariffs and what impact they are having or will have on their businesses.

- Panel member Ernst said for the local commercial real estate industry, they were expecting 2025 to be a year of recovery, part of that recovery is the fall out that needs to happen in the office and multi-family sector around commercial loans. Many properties and loans made in the last five to seven years that are coming due now. Capital markets are locked up.
- Leasing market over the last two years has been the slowest we've seen it. Everyone is making do with what they have and not looking for new space. And we won't get back to where we were quickly. It will take time.
- Panel member Schneider agreed there's so much uncertainty because the construction financing is tied to the 10-year outlook. Everyone is on pause due to uncertainty and the cost of capital.

- Panel member Jennings said College of Alameda has just completed and is moving into its new transportation technology center, but they are beginning a new project for its aviation technology program: renovating one hangar, demolishing a hangar, and building a new one. Lots of concerns about cost overruns. We are behind already so the costs are going up without the tariffs, so tariffs cause more concern she said.
- Staff member Dahlman and panel member Culyer discussed the possibility of the city contacting legislators.
- Panel member Grunt said the message is we need predictability to be able to plan future projects and activities.

6-B Discuss Marketing Messages for Choose Alameda Business Attraction Website

- Panel member Saddik said this project came from a discussion with City Manager Jennifer Ott who wants a website that is focused on branding the island to attract businesses easily to Alameda and retain them. It's all for economic development.
- Staff member Dahlman asked, What are the messages everyone on the panel wants conveyed on the site? He said the site is focused on the strengths that we have: biotech, Greentech, and blue tech along with your (panel members') industries. And geared toward attracting new investment in the city.
- Panel member Ernst said Fremont has always been strong in economic development: tech business, manufacturing, etc. Look at their sites and see what messages they have.
- Panel members Culyer and Ernst stressed creating a process in which a city employee answers the questions of any potential business, essentially holds their hand through the initial inquiry.
- Have a self-certification and plan check process that expedites the planning and permit process. Have a Certified Access Specialist (CAsp) inspector
- Panel member Ernst said everyone uses the Uniform CA Building Code with their little tweaks to it. The city should have published standards, which would be helpful for design teams, so they can say they are designing and building to the city's standards.
- Panel member Ernst said you should talk to some businesses about how they make location decisions. You'll find common things they look for, things they want to analyze, data they need, and then provide that data to potential businesses.
- Panel member Culyer said the city should create relationships with local colleges and universities that would allow certain programs to be taught here.
- Lastly, the panel agreed that information about the Oakland Alameda Access Project should be on the site, too, to show the long-term result will be an investment in the future of both communities.
- Staff member Dahlman said they'd like to have a draft of the site by late June or early July, but certainly by the panel's next meeting in September.

6-C Request Suggestions for Future Discussion Topics

- Panel member Culyer suggested having a welcome center at the main entrance to Alameda Point that had an architectural model of the Point that shows the plan for the site: where the parks, housing, and businesses will go so people understand what the vision is for it. It would also be good for current tenants to know the vision, too.
- Business retention - What should we be focused on for current businesses to be well served and get what they need?
- Staff member Dahlman said that an email satisfaction survey of current businesses was recently sent out, but we are still waiting for the returns.

7 STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

None

8 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

None

9 ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

10 ADJOURNMENT

Staff Member Dahlman adjourned the meeting at 7:21pm.