

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sunny Tsou](#); [Andy Wang](#); [Xiomara Cisneros](#); [Hanson Hom](#); [Diana Ariza](#); [Teresa Ruiz](#); [Asheshh Saheba](#)
Cc: [Planning](#); [ARPD](#); [Jennifer Warner](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on PLN24-0614 Alameda Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, June 22, 2025 4:58:09 PM

Dear Planning Board members (with a CC to Planning and ARPD staff),

At the Monday meeting, the Planning Board is reviewing documents for the Alameda Aquatic Center that assume "about 100%" of people will arrive for special events at the public pools by private auto. This may make strategic sense as an upper-bound for the purposes of CEQA analysis. However, it makes no sense in terms of planning and operations for a popular new destination in Alameda.

The TDM document submitted as part of this application is a placeholder, without firm commitment to parking management or to transportation mode-share targets. If this were a shopping center proposed by a private developer, the Planning Board and city staff would typically not be satisfied without a commitment to a defined TDM program with parameters.

I encourage you all to use Monday's meeting to:

1. Ask the project team to substantiate the need for the proposed number of new off-street parking within Jean Sweeney Open Space Park.
2. Request that the Aquatic Center team return with an actionable TDM program, with paid/managed parking for all newly built off-street parking from day one and mode-share targets as conditions of project approval.

The success of Alameda's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan — which the Planning Board just voted to update for another 5 years — depends upon our collective commitment to build public facilities that systematically nudge us all toward more sustainable means of getting around town (transportation being the single largest source of carbon emissions in Alameda). Let's get this right for a public facility that will hopefully be quite popular and last for decades to come.

Thanks for your time,
Drew Dara-Abrams
Alameda resident and member of the city Transportation Commission



Board of Directors

June 21, 2025

Denyse Trepanier
President

RE: [Item 5: Aquatic Center Design Review](#)

Brian Fowler
Treasurer

Dear Members of the Planning Board and Staff,

Tim Beloney
Secretary

We're pleased to see several encouraging elements in this project, including the addition of 10 BikeLink lockers and the pedestrian improvements along Atlantic Avenue. While the four trail connectors from adjacent neighborhoods are part of a separate project, they will clearly serve this facility as well, and we're glad to hear they will be moving forward soon.

Cyndy Johnsen
Board Member

Maria Piper
Board Member

We're also encouraged by the inclusion of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, particularly the 2-hour parking limit and potential parking fees. We support implementing paid parking from day one. Doing so could generate revenue to enhance offerings while incentivizing users to make more sustainable travel choices.

Lucy Gigli
Founder, non-voting

Although this project may qualify as "less than significant" under state VMT thresholds—due in large part to its local-serving nature—it will generate a lot of local trips. The estimated 1,670 daily summer trips in particular will work against efforts to reduce driving within Alameda. That makes it all the more important to do everything possible to encourage alternatives to driving.

Please consider supplementing the proposed TDM strategies with these:

- Offer "Bike to Swim" or "Bus to Swim" discounts—e.g., discounted admission for patrons showing a bike helmet or Clipper card ride history, funded by parking revenue.
- Coordinate bike repair clinics or safety classes at the center in partnership with Transportation Planning.
- Work with Transportation Planning to build a bikeshare station at the facility when that program rolls out.
- Host "Bike-in Swim Nights" paired with family-friendly group rides to the facility led by ARPD.
- Prioritize biking and transit in signage and outreach, listing those directions before driving directions to establish a default green transportation mindset.
- Designate carpool parking near the entrance to incentivize shared trips.

We remain concerned about the size of the parking lot. At 71 spaces, it still exceeds the 60 envisioned in the original Jean Sweeney Open Space Plan and paves over precious open space currently used as a community-built bike pump track. Basing its size on driving patterns at other swim facilities, as standard as that may be, will only reinforce car dependence. Alameda has no parking minimums, and the site has excellent bike, walk, and transit access to this site.

With the right infrastructure and incentives, we can shift travel behavior, as seen at the nearby Seaplane Lagoon ferry, where 23% of passengers arrive by bike or scooter.

As an island city committed to climate leadership, we should prioritize open space preservation and sustainable mobility—not replicate the patterns driving our climate crisis. This aquatic center is a valuable opportunity to model that commitment.

Thank you for all your work on this important project.

Bike Walk Alameda Board