Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice-Mayor Pryor and City Councilors Boller, Daysog and Jensen,

✅ **I'm writing in support of changes and additions to the Alameda Free Library's budget that reflect the evolving role libraries play in our community (Agenda Item 3-A – 2025-5016). I send this in my capacity as President of the Alameda Free Library Board, reflecting the consensus of our Board following a deep discussion and approval of these proposals by Library Director Michael Eitner.**

These proposals address urgent needs across three key areas:

Staffing our branches sustainably

Hiring two full-time librarians, reducing reliance on part-time roles, and reconfiguring branch hours will allow us to serve Alamedans more consistently. Right now, our patchwork schedule—driven by hard-to-fill part-time roles—stretches staff too thin, creating a Jenga-like system prone to collapse. Shifting to full-time coverage enables better staffing at both Bay Farm and West End branches and increases service capacity. This proposal is data-informed: door count data shows limited usage during extended evening hours, which can still be supported by our digital library and home delivery services. Importantly, Alameda's per-capita library spending remains below the county average, meaning this investment continues to offer strong value.

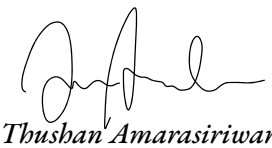
Fulfilling the social safety net role our library serves

Libraries today serve more than just informational needs—they're among the only public indoor spaces open throughout the day. In response, the Library piloted a part-time social worker role with promising results. However, the part-time structure led to continual turnover, limiting the program's impact. Funding a full-time position will enable consistent support for vulnerable patrons, relieve librarians from responsibilities beyond their training, and help address social issues early—before they escalate into public safety concerns.

Increasing security for patrons and staff

Earlier this year, a librarian was hospitalized following an attack by a library guest. Since then, our Board has listened closely to staff concerns about safety. While APD has stepped up with walk-throughs, a library is a unique public space where balancing access and safety is crucial. I hope you push for more collaboration between Librarians, Social Services, Police and Fire Staff to collaborate on this pressing safety concern. We support hiring a contracted, unarmed security presence to help de-escalate and serve as a presence in difficult situations. This complements the staffing changes and social services work outlined above.

Appreciate your help supporting Alameda's popular services at our libraries in a sustainable and safe way.



Thushan Amarasiriwardena

President of the Alameda Free Library Board
Alamedan, Santa Clara & Walnut

Cc: Alameda Free Library Director–Michael Eitner, City Manager–Jennifer Ott, Assistant City Manager–Amy Wooldridge, Social Services Manager–Marcie Johnson, Alameda Free Library Board, Social Service Human Relations Board, Alameda Fire Chief–Nick Luby, Alameda Police Chief–Nishant Joshi

From: Samantha Green
To: City Clerk
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of Alameda Free Library Social Worker - budget hearings
Date: Monday, May 12, 2025 2:24:21 PM

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the inclusion of a full-time social worker at the Alameda Free Library Main Branch. While I understand the importance of scrutinizing every budget item during this time and prioritizing essential services, I firmly believe that this position is both necessary and highly beneficial to our community.

Across the United States, hundreds of public libraries have integrated full-time social workers into their staff, acknowledging the critical role they play in serving diverse and often underserved populations. During the most recent budget hearing, the need for this role was primarily discussed in terms of enhancing the safety and well-being of library staff—an important and valid consideration. However, it is essential to recognize that the broader and more lasting benefit lies in the support such professionals provide to the community at large.

Social workers possess specialized training to engage with individuals who may be difficult to reach, including skills in de-escalation and crisis intervention. More importantly, they serve as an accessible bridge to the broader social support network—particularly for those who may not otherwise seek assistance through traditional channels such as 2-1-1 or local nonprofit organizations.

The library is a trusted and widely used public space. By establishing a full-time social work presence, we can ensure that vulnerable community members receive timely support, while also allowing for the development of targeted programming and stronger relationships with patrons. Ultimately, investing in prevention through accessible social services will reduce long-term costs and strengthen the overall health of our community.

Respectfully,

Samantha Green

Friends of the Alameda Free Library

May 10, 2025

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Vice Mayor Michele Pryor
Councilmember Greg Boller
Councilmember Tony Daysog
Councilmember Tracy Jensen

RE: Agenda Item 3-A :Budget Workshop- Library Budget

We all want to think of libraries as ideal institutions free from modern day problems. In reality libraries are confronted with all societal issues. Public librarians encounter it all - domestic disputes, patrons experiencing mental challenges, patrons viewing pornography, feuds between patrons and between patrons and staff, and much more. And these are not isolated incidents - they occur on a regular basis — frequently hidden from view of regular patrons, city leaders and the community — but day to day experiences of library staff.

The volunteers of the Friends of the Alameda Free Library also confront unacceptable patron behaviors on a fairly regular basis and request assistance from library staff who in many cases are not equipped to address the issues.

The request from Director Eitner is a reasonable, necessary and proactive step to ensure the safety and security of all who work, visit and enjoy our wonderful library. The library of today is not the library from earlier years and we must recognize that fact. Please support Director Eitner's request for a security guard and social worker.

Thank you for your leadership and action.

Karen Butter, President

Friends of the Alameda Free Library

From: Marcie Soslau
To: CITYCOUNCIL-List
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Library Social Worker
Date: Friday, May 9, 2025 1:59:52 PM

Dear Madam Mayor and Honorable City Council Members,

My name is Marcie Soslau Johnson. I am writing in support of Library Director Michael Eitner's request for the addition of a professional Social Worker to the Alameda Free Library (AFL) staff.

In my capacity as a Friends of Alameda Free Library board member and volunteer, and as former City staff who worked closely with community members in need, I believe that AFL should receive critical support at their Main Library site for community members suffering from the effects of things like institutionalized racism, the rising cost of living, system navigation, lack of education, and isolation. The Alameda Family Services social worker located at Mastick Senior Center is a great example of successful and desperately needed co-located services.

I love living in Alameda and appreciate the difficult decisions that will need to be made in the current political and financial landscape.

Thank you for your time,

Marcie Soslau Johnson
2531 Webb Ave, 94501

CASA
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda

May 5, 2025

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Vice Mayor Michele Pryor
Councilmember Greg Boller
Councilmember Tony Daysog
Councilmember Tracy Jensen

RE: Agenda Item 3-A Budget Workshop

Dear Members of the City Council:

Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA) was formed in 2008 to support the implementation of the City's Local Action Plan for Climate Protection, now the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP).

We have long advocated for the City to invest in the staffing resources identified in the plan.

The City hired a dedicated Sustainability and Resilience Manager in December 2020 and has sponsored an AmeriCorps CivicSpark fellow each year since September 2017 (first reporting to Public Works and now reporting Transportation and Planning).

Many of the key implementation actions in CARP are listed as "Not Funded" or only "Partially Funded." Several of these require staffing resources.

Last week the Trump administration cut the funding of the AmeriCorps program and all CivicSpark fellows were furloughed. It is possible that this program will end permanently.

The City Council's 2023-2026 strategic plan identified "Build Resilience to Climate Change & Water Level Rise" as a strategic priority.

We ask the City Council to consider fully funding the staffing levels identified in CARP and, at the very least, fund a program assistant position to replace the loss of the AmeriCorps CivicSpark fellow.

Sincerely,

Ruth Abbe, Steering Committee
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda

From:	Christi Toa
To:	CITYCOUNCIL-List; Transportation Commission
Subject:	[EXTERNAL] A win for Woodstock to my family
Date:	Monday, May 5, 2025 10:10:13 AM

Dear Honorable City Council Members and Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support of the city's continuing support to alternative transportation infrastructure in our city. As a resident of the Bay37 community, I have witnessed firsthand how Woodstock, our water shuttle service between Alameda and Oakland, has positively impacted my family's mobility and quality of life.

For my family specifically, Woodstock has been transformative. My elderly parents have been visiting me from overseas for the past few weeks, and Woodstock has enabled them to independently travel beyond Alameda, accessing destinations like Jack London Square and Oakland Chinatown for their shopping needs. Prior to the launch of the water shuttle last year, such travel was not feasible for them. While we have several major retailers nearby (Target, Safeway, and Lucky), the cultural grocery options, product variety, and competitive pricing in Chinatown better serve their needs.

Some may suggest that existing bus service should suffice. However, Woodstock's predictable schedules, frequent service, and clearly defined route create a significantly lower barrier to entry compared to traditional bus service, especially for seniors and those less familiar with public transit systems. While the current Wednesday through Sunday service has proven valuable, expanding operations to Monday and Tuesday would further enhance its utility for our community.

I strongly encourage the Council to:
1. Continue funding alternative transportation initiatives that reduce car dependency, including expanding Woodstock service to 7 days a week
2. Strengthen enforcement of pedestrian safety measures
3. Expand infrastructure supporting diverse transportation options
4. Increase frequency of all public transit services to improve convenience and accessibility

The adage "if you build it, they will come" applies not only to automobile infrastructure but also to alternative transportation methods. Investment in these systems demonstrably increases their adoption and usage by the community.

Thank you for your continuing support to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Christi Toa
Bay37 Community Resident

Board of Directors

Denyse Trepanier
President

Brian Fowler
Treasurer

Tim Beloney
Secretary

Cyndy Johnsen
Board Member

Maria Piper
Board Member

Lucy Gigli
Founder, non-voting

May 5, 2025

RE: Item 3-A: Budget Workshop

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

We hope you will consider our thoughts regarding budgeting for staff, below. These positions are important for implementing and maintaining prioritized projects and programs identified in adopted plans like the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, the Vision Zero Action Plan, and the Active Transportation Plan (ATP). For these plans to succeed, there must be adequate staff support.

On page 3 of Exhibit 3 (Workforce Change Request), we urge you to reconsider three proposed positions that are currently not recommended:

- The two Public Works positions (**Maintenance Worker I and II**) are to maintain Alameda's expanding network of bike lanes and trails. Regular maintenance ensures these facilities remain safe, accessible, and that the City's substantial investments in them are protected.

- The **PB&T Transportation Coordinator** position would fill staffing gaps to support Safe Routes to Schools, Vision Zero efforts, grant management, and projects such as the bicycle/pedestrian Wooden Bridge connection to Bay Farm Island. The Wooden Bridge improvement project is identified in the ATP for completion next year, but progress has been limited — and the need for a replacement grows increasingly urgent with rising sea levels. The proposal for this to be a term-limited position allows the City to meet pressing needs without long-term pension obligations.

We also respectfully request funding for additional **parking enforcement** staff within Public Works. Parking in bike lanes remains a pervasive problem citywide, particularly in commercial districts. Despite a staffing increase last fall, issues persist and significant coverage gaps remain — including the absence of enforcement after 7:00 p.m. Monday–Saturday and all day on Sundays. Addressing these shortfalls is necessary to ensure the safety and functionality of our active transportation network. To help offset costs, we recommend amending the Master Fee Schedule to establish a fine for parking in bike lanes. This would also align Alameda's policies with those of neighboring cities.

Thank you again for your consideration. We're grateful for your thoughtful leadership navigating us through these challenging times.

Bike Walk Alameda Board

Good evening,

My name is Kevin Horikoshi, and I am the President of the Alameda Police Officers Association. I am here to express my concerns about the delay in hiring new officers. My first concern is that our current MOU has us budgeted for 88 officers. If there is a delay in getting us to full staffing, it will go against our MOU. We went through a similar situation in 2020, which did not work well. I believe it is a key factor in why we are in our current staffing position. As a result of the 2020 hiring delay, we lack experienced officers with experience ranging from 6-9 years. The 6-9 year officers are generally field training officers and supervisors. With the lack of officers in these ranges, we are looking to new and less experienced employees to train and supervise the Department.

We are currently over 20% below our staffing level. We are the only Department in the City with those types of numbers. I understand you have tough decisions to make regarding the budget, but I am asking you to make investing in the Police Department a priority. Hiring employees is not the biggest issue; retaining employees is of the utmost importance. Since 2021, we have hired 48 new police officers; however, in that same time frame, we have lost 48. We have lost these 48 officers for different reasons, but the most staggering number to me is that we have lost 16 officers because they went to another Police Department.

As of 04/21/2025, there were 55 officers and sergeants. Below is the breakdown of their years of experience:

1-5 Year Employee:	35 (15 are currently on probation)
6 Year Employee:	4
7 Year Employee:	1
8 Year Employee:	1
9 Year Employee:	1
10 – 14 Year Employee:	8
15-19 Year Employee:	2
20+ Year Employee:	3

When I think about the retention of officers, two things come to mind: career growth/development and wages/salaries. If we delay hiring, we also delay opportunities for my members to further their careers. Yes, patrol is fully staffed, but with any delay in hiring, there will be a delay in opportunities to get into a specialized assignment. Currently outside of patrol, we have 1 Detective Sergeant and 2 Detectives, 1 Traffic Sergeant and no

Traffic Officer, 1 Community Resource Sergeant and 1 Community Resource Officer. Our current staffing levels provide our sergeants and officers with little opportunity to work anything other than patrol.

We are also having difficulty staying competitive with the salaries of some of our surrounding agencies. These two factors will make it difficult to maintain our staffing levels and continue to offer the level of service that our community deserves.

The hiring process takes approximately 150 days from start to finish. After the employee is hired, they need to go through training. For an entry-level employee, they need to go to a six-month police academy and then about five months of on-the-job training before they are on their own as a solo officer. A lateral employee's training depends on their experience. Their training time can vary between one to five months. Therefore, if we delayed hiring for two years, we would not be able to hire a new employee until January 2028, and they would not be serving as a patrol officer until November 2028. At the rate we are currently losing employees, we will lose 36 employees by that time.

My ask is that you invest in the Police Department and make public safety a priority. Please consider other ways to balance the budget without compromising the community's safety.

Thank you for your time.

Kevin Horikoshi

Alameda Police Officers Association, President.

Alameda Native History Project
2201 Shoreline Drive #6334
Alameda, California 94501
(510) 747-8423
info@nativehistoryproject.org

April 24, 2025

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Members of the Alameda City Council
Alameda City Hall
2263 Santa Clara Ave
Alameda, CA 94501

RE: Budget Workshop for FY 2025–26 and 2026–27 – Request to Reallocate Archive Funding

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and Members of the Alameda City Council,

I am writing to provide public comment for **Agenda Item 3-A** of the **May 5, 2025 Special City Council Meeting**—the **Budget Workshop for Fiscal Years 2025–26 and 2026–27**.

Specifically, I urge the City Council to discontinue funding for Alameda Museum's role in housing the City's Official Archives, and to relocate those materials to a secure and accessible municipal facility—specifically City Hall West.

While Alameda Museum is a private organization, the City currently entrusts it with the storage of publicly owned historical records—and allocates public funds in support of this role. That arrangement is no longer tenable. Public records require public oversight, transparency, and accessibility. Even a small subsidy becomes indefensible when it supports an institution that has failed to uphold the basic responsibilities of stewardship and inclusion.

Alameda Museum has consistently failed to uphold basic standards for archival stewardship, transparency, and cultural accountability. While a public catalog exists, it fails to distinguish City-owned materials from the Museum's private holdings. Public records have been comingled

to the point of near inextricability—a direct violation of public trust and a breakdown in municipal oversight.

The Museum also lacks the cultural competency and legal awareness necessary to handle Native American artifacts responsibly. It continues to hold items found in the ground across Alameda, dismissing them as non-funerary simply because they were not retrieved from the Sather Mound. This reasoning is both incorrect and irrelevant: under California law, these are Tribal Cultural Resources and must be treated with the same care and protection afforded to all such items.

Rather than respond to public concerns with accountability, the Museum has quietly removed sensitive materials from display. They have not pursued cultural sensitivity training. They have not engaged with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. And if they have, they should be able to prove it. That is not responsible stewardship—it is censorship. And it undermines the Museum's credibility as a public-facing institution.

The Museum continues to center white settler narratives—Victorian homes, civic clubs, and military contributions—while erasing:

- Ohlone people, whose ancestral shellmounds were destroyed and used as road base for Bay Farm Road.
- African American communities, whose ongoing struggle for fair housing remains undocumented.
- Chinese and Asian American laborers, who drained the West End and sustained Alameda's agriculture amid open racism.
- The Spanish colonial period, and its devastating legacy for Indigenous communities.

These are not gaps in knowledge. They are choices—choices that public funding should not support. The City must take responsibility for ensuring that its archives are stored, protected, and made available in a way that reflects the full breadth of Alameda's history and serves the entire community.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the City Council to:

1. **Cease all public funding** related to Alameda Museum's storage or management of City records, beginning this budget cycle.
2. **Commission an independent audit** and inventory of all City-owned historical materials currently under the Museum's control.
3. **Relocate the City's Official Archives** to a municipally managed site—such as City Hall West—that guarantees access and security.
4. **Implement formal custodianship standards** and access policies to protect City archives and ensure public transparency.
5. **Establish a working group or commission** to develop an inclusive cultural history center or archive reflecting the stories of all Alamedans—especially those erased from the current narrative.

This issue is about more than where records are stored. It is about who is remembered, who is forgotten, and what kind of Alameda we want to build.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to equity and truth in public memory.

Respectfully,

Gabriel Duncan
Founder, Alameda Native History Project
info@nativehistoryproject.org