



AGENDA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Saturday, September 22, 2012 – 9:30 a.m.
City Council Chambers

Meeting Location
El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

Bill Jones – Mayor

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Lyman
Councilmember Rebecca Benassini

Councilmember Ann Cheng
Councilmember Janet Abelson

9:30 a.m. ROLL CALL

CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Comments are limited to 3 minutes per person and to this special agenda only.

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION ON THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The City Council will discuss the City's Mission Statement, vision and values within the context of developing a Strategic Plan.

ADJOURN SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

- This meeting will not be televised.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk, (510) 215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).



Outline of City of El Cerrito City Council Strategic Planning Study Session

Study Session Program (Vision and Values)

Saturday, September 22, 2012
El Cerrito Council Chambers, City Hall
9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Desired Outcome: City Council direction on Vision and Values for the City of El Cerrito.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Purpose: Understand how the day will proceed.

2. Overview of the Strategic Planning Process and Desired Outcomes

Purpose: Establish a common understanding of the process, terminology and outcomes.

- Powepoint presentation about the strategic planning process and important strategic plan elements

3. Review Community and Stakeholder Input

Purpose: Understand common perspectives about the strengths, limitations, opportunities, threats, and vision for the City of El Cerrito.

- Handouts and visuals

4. Review Adopted Mission Statement

Purpose: Set the stage for a discussion of a vision for the El Cerrito that is mindful of the City's adopted mission.

5. Review Draft Vision and Values

Purpose: Provide input on El Cerrito's vision (what the City should become in the future) and values (what the city stands for in fulfilling its purpose and achieving its mission).

6. Review Next Steps

- Management Partners will prepare a draft document that presents Vision, Mission and Values for the City of El Cerrito
- Management Partners will review the draft with the City's senior management team
- City Manager and staff will present the draft to the Council

- Management Partners will engage senior staff and the new City Council in a process to identify goals and strategies that will achieve City's vision
- Management Partners will prepare a draft strategic plan based on the cumulative input that began with community outreach and engagement and concluded with the second City Council workshop
- City Manager and staff will present the draft strategic plan to the Council in early 2013
- Management Partners will assist with City with the alignment of City programs and services to the goals and strategies contained in the Strategic Plan

7. Adjourn





City of El Cerrito City Council Strategic Planning Study Session

Adopted Mission and Draft Vision and Values

For Discussion with the City Council

This document contains the City's adopted mission statement together with drafts of a vision statement and set of values. These drafts are intended to serve as a starting point for the El Cerrito City Council, who will be convening to create elements of a strategic plan on September 22, 2012. Management Partners drafted vision and values concepts following interviews with the City Council, employee and community stakeholder focus groups, a public survey and community outreach efforts, and a workshop with El Cerrito staff. It is expected that the City Council will modify the drafts in order to ensure that they convey the Council's direction.

Under each of these sections, there are questions for Council members' consideration to help identify desired changes. These drafts and the questions will be discussed at the City Council study session on September 22, 2012.

MISSION

A mission statement conveys the purpose of the organization, the essential reasons for its existence. It serves as the foundation for policy and resource decisions. *The City Council adopted the following mission statement in 2011:*

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

VISION

A vision statement describes the desired future as a result of the organization's work. The best vision statements are concise, easy to remember and reflect the balcony view of the City's future.

Options for City of El Cerrito Vision Statement

The following options utilize words and phrases commonly identified by community and staff stakeholders to describe their vision for a future El Cerrito.

Option 1:

The City of El Cerrito is a thriving community with vibrant neighborhoods, engaged residents, a respect for the environment and a focus on a sustainable future.

Option 2:

The City of El Cerrito is a vibrant and sustainable community where people are connected to each other, local businesses and the environment.

Option 3:

The City of El Cerrito is a safe, friendly, unique and thriving community.

Questions for the City Council:

What do you like about the options that are provided? What would you change? What stands out and/or is your preferred option?

How closely do these convey your vision for El Cerrito?

Is something missing? If so, what?



ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

The underlying values of an organization drive behavior and support effective implementation of the mission, vision, and goals. Seven draft values have been identified as important in fulfilling El Cerrito's purpose and are presented for the City Council's consideration.

1. **Ethical**
2. **Leadership**
3. **Responsiveness**
4. **Innovation and Creativity**
5. **Professional Excellence**
6. **Fiscal Responsibility**
7. **Transparency and Open Communication**

Each of the suggested values as associated behaviors, as listed below.

ETHICAL

- Keeps the public's interest always in mind
- Abides by professional codes of conduct
- Exercises good judgment
- Does the right thing even when no one is looking
- Knows and follows ethical rules
- Has the courage to say no
- Is accountable
- Open/honest communication

LEADERSHIP

- Has and communicates a vision
- Stands for something
- Sets the example
- Has courage
- Is Inspiring
- Communicates and listens effectively
- Makes the hard decisions
- Demonstrates compassion
- Mentors
- Remains steadfast
- Is willing to admit failures/faults
- Puts others first (emotional intelligence)

RESPONSIVENESS

- Seeks and utilizes community input
- Listens/responds actively



- Is timely
- Keeps others informed and up to date
- Keeps commitments and does what is said will be done; is reliable
- Engages – two way interaction

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY

- Identifies new ideas/methods/techniques and embrace those that lead to improvement
- Uses emerging technology with purpose
- Problem solves
- Takes risks (calculated)
- Encourages outside-the-box thinking
- Fosters empowerment
- Make it safe to make mistakes and to learn from them

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Demonstrates respect
- Is dedicated
- Dependable/reliable
- Keeps skills and knowledge current
- Exhibits excellent interpersonal skills
- Provides stewardship
- Identifies/forecasts issues
- Solution-oriented
- Pays attention to detail
- Humility
- Sees the public and City employees as sources of creative ideas and effective solutions

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Ensure responsible spending of the City revenues with services delivered in the most cost effective, efficient manner
- Maintains financial reserves consistent with City Financial Policy
- Adheres to best practice financial policies and practices
- Attracts outside funding and resources when appropriate
- Forecasts
- Maintains fiscal discipline
- Addresses unfunded liabilities

TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN COMMUNICATION

- Operates in such a way that others can easily see one's actions
- Champions public transparency laws to enhance accountability and builds trust in government
- Follows open meeting laws in conducting the public's business
- Facilitates public participation in open meetings; encourages candor and welcomes



input

- Provides free and easy access to information regarding matters of public interest
- Provides timely, accurate information that is easy to access and to understand
- Seeks ways to increase community participation and inclusion in government
- Considers media, technology and other channels to reach the public
- Listens carefully and remains open to different perspectives
- Explains policies, issues, and changes
- Develops creative ways to get the public involved in a productive way

Questions for the City Council:

Do you concur that these are the important values for El Cerrito as an organization? (Yes/No)

Is something missing? If so, what?

What changes would you suggest?





STRATEGIC PLANNING BACKGROUND MATERIALS

Themes Identified through Council Members, Focus Groups and Survey

An effective strategic plan is informed by knowledge of current trends and demographic data that affect and shape the community. In addition, an effective plan reflects common or shared perspectives and opinions about the organization and community. This document summarizes the results of considerable outreach and public input gathered through the following means:

- Council interviews
- Focus groups
- Community input in public settings and via an online survey

Management Partners held one-on-one interviews with all five City Council members and conducted six focus groups, which engaged supervisors, managers, line staff and an array of community representatives. The City conducted outreach to the community through a number of community events and via an online survey, including the Fourth of July Celebration, an Open House at City Hall, Futbol Club Opening Day and an online survey.

Please review the information presented on the following pages prior to our workshop on Saturday, September 22. The information has been used to inform the activities and discussion we will engage on as a team. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Nancy Hetrick of Management Partners at (408) 437-5400.

Section I below presents compiled themes from Council interviews and stakeholder focus groups. Additional input gathered through community outreach is in presented in Section II that follows.

I. Council and Focus Group Themes

El Cerrito's strengths and uniqueness

- Changing and progressive city built upon an educated community
- Confidence in municipal leadership and employees who are trusted by the public and known for their dedication to professionalism and customer service
- Good rapport is maintained between the city staff, city council and community
- Transparency is maintained and improved by incorporating technology and a "Be Obvious" mentality
- Community engagement, involvement and willpower to fix issues
- Varied demographics
- Ethnic and economic diversity in the community

- Small town in an urban setting
- Location, including its proximity to San Francisco and Berkeley
- Geographic features and climate
- Lower crime rates than neighboring cities
- A higher quality of life, thanks to well-educated families and higher incomes
- Responsive city staff with excellent customer service skills who listen to community ideas
- Prompt, capable and responsive public safety
- Available and involved city staff at community events
- Long-term commitment to environmental issues
- Regionally renowned recycling center
- Accessibility to Greenway bicycle/pedestrian trail
- Widespread support for community arts and music, such as “worldOne”
- Good, safe place to raise a family in a community oriented environment
- Attractive neighborhoods with affordable housing
- Well maintained parks and open space
- Good roads
- Access to a Community Center and various community resources
- City resourcefulness to maintain service during a rough economy
- Homey, friendly and familiar community
- Strong resident outreach via newsletter and the informative city website

Limitations

- Lack of a central hub or city center
- Impacts due to budget cuts and available funds from the State government
- Lack of improvements and upgrades to the library, community centers and public facilities
- Lack of control over outside agencies (roads/Caltrans, BART, sewers)
- Funding to attend to conflicting priorities from the City and the community
- Lack of diversity within City leadership
- Lack of establishing a common and well known community identity
- Lack of dining options, entertainment venues, shopping, and grocery stores
- Lack of walkability
- Lack of funding for the library
- Business hostile environment through the City
- Limited city finances available in the budget
- Limited State & County budgets
- Lack of sporting facilities and programs for teens and adults
- Lack of playgrounds and child recreational opportunities
- Struggling school systems
- Lack of in-town employment
- The city is built out



Opportunities for El Cerrito

- Develop a comprehensive business strategy to foster more commercial growth
- Raise awareness and take action towards sustainable operations including building community gardens and prompting the public to invest in alternate methods of transportation
- Partner and cooperate with neighboring cities, counties and communities to coordinate development and growth
- Look at how to redevelop sites like Portola and Windrush or re-designate unused parking for other purposes
- Focus on adopting a General Plan and Economic Development Plan
- Creating long term goals and strategies for business development
- Develop a clear roadmap for businesses including streamlining and making it easier for them to establish and do business
- Greater transparency from the City, including breaking down how tax dollars are spent and creating more opportunities to connect with elected officials
- Create and host more public and community events
- Establish a stronger and more concrete community identity, utilizing effective public relations
- Attract top restaurants and chefs, but more dining in general (particularly fine dining)
- Determine how office space opportunities could be used for retail advantage and how to fill vacant spaces
- Support pop-up options for retail or art studios for vacant spaces
- Utilize proximity to UC Berkeley and the new LBL facility in Richmond for business opportunities
- Build a destination where the old Safeway is located where retail, community gardens, food trucks or 24-Hour Fitness might prosper
- Develop a new library and improve public facilities

Threats

- Budget cuts and the lack of available funding from the State government
- Insuring quality education is delivered in local schools via funding and politics
- Negative impacts from the recession on the community and the City and its ability to maintain service levels and provide needed improvements and upgrades to public facilities
- Climate change and natural disasters
- The State's budget cuts and lack of available funding, including the dissolution of Redevelopment Agencies
- Unfunded mandates and liabilities including pensions for city workers
- Animosity between businesses and the City
- Fire threat or oil refinery accidents
- Isolationism from not partnering/collaborating with other communities (Richmond, San Pablo, Berkeley)
- Municipal budget restraints including a loss of revenues and tax increases



- Other cities recruiting talent away from El Cerrito
- Neighboring cities and counties offering better and more programs and events for the public
- Falling real estate prices and property values

Desirable goals and priorities

- Improve infrastructure including public facilities, utilities and public transportation (BART, trolley, bike and pedestrian paths)
- Maintain high levels of public safety
- Focus on economic development with a strong civic center
- Stimulate local entertainment, shopping, and dining
- Seek outside funding to support development projects
- Business development, especially small business development
- Establish a local identity
- Provide more funding/resources for the library, schools, playgrounds, and public facilities
- Increase the amount of open space and parks
- Provide more opportunities for youth and family, especially daycare, skate parks, and after school programs

Words that describe a vision for El Cerrito's future

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| • Pride | • Affordable | • Charming |
| • Family-friendly | • Cool | • Paid for |
| • Unique | • Engaged | • Beautiful |
| • Special | • Community-driven | • Inviting |
| • Destination | • Accessible | • Booming |
| • Sustainable | • Safe | • Interesting |
| • Smart | • Inclusive | • Creative |
| • Energetic | • Fun | • City Center |
| • Leader | • Comfortable | • Vibrant |
| • Innovation | • Diverse | • Walkable |
| • Wild | • Eventful | • Cooperation |

Phrases to express a vision for El Cerrito's future

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Easy access to open space (Bay Trail to Tilden) | • Enthused, younger population |
| • Freedom of choices for living, working, transportation, schools, and programs | • Transit-oriented areas developed |
| • Engaged community | • Diverse population |
| • Beautified city trees | • Sidewalks without cracks |
| • Happy people | • Dynamic |
| | • Interactive, know and interact with neighbors |



- Destination (attractions, street scapes/bike racks, place to gather/shop, hike trails, easy-to-use transit, theaters/party venues, restaurants)
- Safe to walk around
- Cars more slowly (not because of congestion)
- Good schools and facilities
- State of the art public facilities
- High walk scores
- Economically healthy
- Intergenerational opportunities
- Scholastically superior
- Cutting-edge/risk-taking
- Healthy destination
- Good reputation

Values in El Cerrito

- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Sustainability (the 3 E's – Economics, Environment, Equity)
- Pragmatism
- Functionality
- Low key
- Honesty
- Transparency
- Innovation
- Dedication (employees, recognize quality work and people)
- Efforts for the good of the whole
- Positive interaction
- Respect
- Friendliness
- Transit
- Customer Service
- Fiscal responsibility
- State of the art / cutting edge

Most Pressing Issues

- Leadership training
- Maintaining a balanced budget
- Responsible transition from redevelopment and honor redevelopment commitments
- Negative impacts of the economy on the community, city finances and state resources

Most Pressing Issues in Five Years

- Resources to maintain new facilities
- Development/economic development
- Relationship with State of California
- Maintaining public safety
- Improve traffic conditions and congestion
- Sufficient and affordable housing options



II. Community Themes

The community's ideas about El Cerrito are summarized in the themes listed below.

I love El Cerrito because...

Amenities

- Well-funded and accessible amenities
- Cerrito Theater, El Cerrito Plaza
- History walk on San Pablo Avenue
- It has a lot of beautiful places to walk (e.g., Ohlone Greenway, Hillside trail)
- Has well cared for parks, dog parks, play structures
- Great Recycling Center/program, which offers curbside recycling/compost
- Community center offers well-rounded recreational program
 - Soccer and baseball clubs; baseball fields; swim center
 - Good schools, including elementary schools, the new high school, and EL Cerrito Preschool Cooperative (ECPC)
- Wide variety of community events (i.e., movie night)
- Beautiful City Hall

Location

- Great weather, location and views of the Bay
- Centrally located for diverse activities
- Access to public transportation (BART), easy access to I-80, SF
- Good selection of rental houses with more affordable rents than Berkeley/Albany

Community

- Diverse, creative, kid-friendly place with community events
- Friendly, awesome people
- Small town in urban setting
- It's not Berkeley
- Peaceful, easy, calm, clean
- Attractive neighborhoods
- People have a "green attitude," are open to building a sustainable community
- Anyone who wants to can contribute, make things better, or change what they don't like

Government

- Thoughtful city government, they seem to balance budget with improvements
- El Cerrito continues to grow and improve with all our "Stakeholders"
- Police and Fire Departments committed to creating a safe community (bicycle patrol)
- Accessible city government; easy to talk to City departments
- San Pablo Avenue improvements



El Cerrito is unique because...

Amenities

- There is a focus on a wide variety of amenities, services, community events
- Excellent senior center and recreational program for kids and adults
- Our own movie theatre and performing arts venues
- Chung Mei Orphanage/Building, Beautiful, historic structure worth protecting
- Library open every day
- State of the art Recycle Center
- Bike-friendly streets
- Open spaces: Ohlone Trail, Canyon Trail Park, Hill-side Park

Location

- Quite, attractive, small city adjacent to a large city
- It's in a central location for recreation, transit, employment
- It has two BART stations within 2 miles

Community

- El Cerrito is a clean, helpful, productive, creative, diverse community
- People are free to have individual + unique opinions without having to agree with the current popular status quo
- Small enough for real community, large enough for diversity
- Environmental focus and environmental history
- It shares its history
- It's still small enough to feel safe, and people are kind
- Great walkability
- Foresighted commitment to environment
- Variety of affordable homes

Government

- Well run city with good Police Department
- Animal ordinance
- City is small enough that officials listen to the community

El Cerrito could improve upon... / I'd love to see...

Amenities

- New, better-equipped library
- More parks and improvement park on Eureka for young families, add benches to Hillside trail
- Maintaining quality of schools; need new middle school
- More teenagers activities (ice skating, laser tag, indoor swimming, mini-golf, skate park)
- Increased hours at swimming pool
- More dedicated sports fields (soccer/baseball)
- Bicycle lanes/paths



- More family events at Cerrito Theatre
- Better restaurants and shopping (need children's clothing store), more mom-and-pop stores
- Car-sharing (Zipcars)

Safety

- Keep bushes and trees trimmed near crosswalks so drivers can see pedestrians
- Safer high school transportation
- City needs to be more pedestrian safe/friendly
- Crime; there are lots of car burglaries

Traffic/Roads

- Improve traffic congestion on main thoroughfares and at the El Cerrito Plaza
- Kearny (Wall to Conlon) and North end of Ohlone need better lighting
- Fewer speed bumps and other obstacles to hinder drivers
- A crossway at Richmond & Waldo

Community

- Enhance historic preservation efforts
- Fewer empty, unattractive storefronts
- More places to walk, gather, hang out, run into friends and neighbors

Government

- Commitment to funding for public schools

Challenges facing the City

Economic/Fiscal

- Redevelopment of empty San Pablo Ave storefronts; attracting and retaining businesses to fill available/vacant real estate
- Financial deficit/diminished funds with downturn in economy
 - Obtaining funding needed for projects, library, parks, infrastructure, other meaningful and important amenities

Public Safety

- So close to Richmond crime
- Parking enforcement
- Reducing the crime, homelessness, and loitering that is in our public areas, neighborhoods, and near the schools

Amenities and infrastructure

- Better restaurants and outdoor dining, and shopping
- Bring in more entertainment options for teens and adults
- Public building need renovations, including library, public safety building, senior center
- Modernize community center
- Maintain parks
- Traffic
- Sidewalks



Community

- Shifting demographics
- Preventing overcrowding and saying “no” to overdevelopment
- How to keep families in El Cerrito after elementary school
- Adding more trees on blocks that do not have them in front of homes
- Preserving our historic resources, including periodical archives
- Defining the city in a more creative way
- Need a downtown/community centric focus
- Maintaining or improving diversity of population
- Attracting and keeping young people
- Encouraging development/growth while maintaining history and a sense of “place”

Government

- There’s a lot of diversity, but it’s often not represented in public life
- Budget
- Underground(ing) utilities
- Getting more people involved in community actions
- BART modification and construction more thoroughly reviewed with community and user group feedback

