



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Scott Hanin, City Manager
DATE: October 4, 2018
SUBJECT: City Manager's Update

City Management Hillside Natural Area Update

Based on the recent concerns brought up by the public regarding the Hillside Natural Area (HNA), the following is an overview of the work that has been completed in the HNA thus far in 2018.

The Fire Department, on an on-going basis, confirms that the access roads within the HNA are always passable for emergency vehicle access. The water system in the HNA is known as a quill system. This system is charged and checked for flow once the fire season begins and is turned off and drained during the winter months to protect it from freezing. This system is not adequate for the suppression of a wildland fire but can be used for mop up operations and resupplying water tanks on fire engines. It should be noted that all of the fire hydrants within the City are pressure tested every year and flow tested every five years by engine company personnel.

During the month of April, the Fire Department burned over 20 slash piles of hazardous vegetation from fuel reduction work that had taken place in the previous year in the area of the Julian Tree Grove, also known as motorcycle hill. In June, CalFire assisted with ladder fuel reduction and the clearing of dead and dying brush in the areas of Memorial Grove, the Ken Smith Grove, and along the fire trail up to the Kerr property.

Every year in early April, weather permitting, the fire department uses contractors to complete vegetation management throughout the HNA. The contractors work, thus far, has included the following projects:

- Road side clearing and preparation for the HNA festival
 - Brush clearing around the old EBMUD site
 - Mowing and brush removal in the Julian fuel break
 - Mowing and brush removal on motorcycle hill
 - Mowing and brush removal on the northern entrance of the South Pine area and south of the Kerr property
 - Mowing around future slash piles on motorcycle hill
 - Clearing Scotch Broom on Potrero Hill
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- Mowing the floor of Memorial Grove
 - Mowing and brush removal in the area of Ken Smith Grove
 - Mowing and brush removal and Scotch Broom removal west of the Kerr property
 - Brush and eucalyptus sprout removal and mowing to the south of Wildwood
 - Mowing the open area west of Kent
 - Mowing and brush removal west of the Regency Trail Head
 - Mowing and brush removal south of Kent
 - Mowing and Scotch Broom removal upper fire trail above Quarry
 - Brush removal and Scotch Broom removal behind the homes on King Court

It should be noted that we are still in the process of completing fuel break maintenance in the South Pine area and vegetation management in the Quarry Hill Grove. This work will include a 30 foot road side clearance, brush control, and ladder fuel removal.

The Fire Department looks at the HNA as a year round vegetation management project and over the years, an enormous amount of work has been done by volunteers. Just one example would be the Friends of Five Creeks and their leader, Susan Schwartz. This group has done an outstanding job of cutting and pulling Scotch Broom throughout the HNA. The City is always looking for creative and responsible ways to manage the HNA from general fund support, grants, cost shares, and partnerships. We have been successful at increasing the level of vegetation management in the HNA through these types of programs. Currently, the Fire Department is in discussions with PG&E to see if there is a possibility to expand vegetation management in the PG&E right of way on Moeser.

The Public Works Department works closely with the Fire Department to identify and remove standing dead and dying trees near structures and fire roads. In September 2017, the Wildwood area of the HNA was prioritized for hazard tree removal. Public Works contractors performed a significant amount of working including removal of 23 Eucalyptus trees, pruning of 15 others, and the felling of a large dead Coast Live Oak tree. Additionally, three dead Monterey Pine and two dead Monterey Cypress were felled in HNA locations north of the Recycling Center. During the last few months of the current year, Public Works contractors have removed 18 standing dead or dying trees in the HNA and at Dorothy Rosenberg Memorial Park. Finally, in the last couple of weeks, Public Works staff and contractors have performed fire clearance work in the King Court area. This included removal of three hazard Eucalyptus and pruning of trees to reduce ladder fuels. Public Works staff continues to investigate opportunities to partner with other agencies and organize volunteer events to clear fire fuels in targeted areas in the HNA. Anyone

interested in organizing an Earth Day work party in the HNA should contact Maria Sanders, OESD Manager at msanders@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

As years have passed, regulations have changed and the HNA has increased in size to 102.5 acres and in popularity with diverse stakeholders including the Friends of Five Creeks, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, El Cerrito Mountain Bike Team and other active community groups, the City has identified the need to update the existing plans for the HNA. The 1994 Hillside Natural Area Fire Hazard Reduction Plan is one of these plans and is the most pertinent as it went through an environmental review process to assess impacts of fuel modification treatments pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Over time, the City will need to complete an update to the plan and the environmental assessment covering at a minimum, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, biological resources, and scenic/recreational resources. Until funding is available for this, the City will continue to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by using the existing plans as guides to complete the needed vegetation management in the HNA.

Staff from both departments are available to meet with residents to talk about prior and future plans and how they can help. Should more funds become available in the future, Council can consider additional work in the HNA, an update to the prior plans and other additional efforts.

October is Arts Month

National arts & humanities Month was launched by Americans for the Arts 30 years ago as National Arts Week in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. Here in El Cerrito, led by our Arts and Culture Commission, we celebrate the arts year-round and focus on promoting special events during the month of October. Go to www.el-cerrito.org/ArtsMonth for updates and additions to the El Cerrito Arts Month calendar

OUT LOUD at Off the Grid

The City's Poet Laureate, Dani Gabriel, will be featured at the Off the Grid food truck event the first Wednesday in October, November, and December from 5:00 p.m. to 9 p.m. Community members are invited to write, create poetry, and perform their work during an open mic. Dani and invited poets will be sharing their original work as well.

El Cerrito Free Folk Festival

City of El Cerrito Arts and Culture Commission is co-sponsoring the El Cerrito Free Folk Festival on Saturday, October 13 from 12:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. at El Cerrito High School. The El Cerrito Free Folk Festival presents a full schedule of performers, workshops and dance. There are two main stages, as well as a number of smaller performance areas for indoor and outdoor jams. Workshops are held in two locations, along with dedicated areas for the Family program.

**Community
Development
Department****Restaurant Week - October 11th-17th, 2018**

The 4th annual El Cerrito Restaurant Week is approaching. This year there are 9 restaurants participating, including four that are new to Restaurant Week and one that is new to El Cerrito.

- [Café N!ne](#)
- [El Mono](#)
- [Fatapple's Restaurant and Bakery](#)
- [Larb Thai Food & Tapas](#)
- [Los Moles Beer Garden](#)
- [Nation's Giant Hamburgers](#)
- [Noodles Fresh](#)
- [Papi's Pizza Roma](#)
- [SCENE Wine Bar](#)

Visit www.el-cerrito.org/Participating-Restaurants-Specials to see what each restaurant is offering.

For more information regarding Restaurant Week, contact Jennifer Peat in the Community Development Department at 510-215-4362 or email jpeat@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

CalOES Grant Application

As a result of the October 2017 wildfires, Federal funds were earmarked for jurisdictions to implement hazard mitigation strategies that minimize the loss of lives and reduce costly post-disaster recovery. On September 4, 2018, Community Development staff submitted a planning grant application to [California Governor's Office of Emergency Management Services \(Cal OES\)](#) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to inventory soft story multi-unit residential buildings. Soft story structures are generally classified as having soft weak or open front ground stories constructed prior to 1978 that are at risk of failure. This funding opportunity is supported by the City's [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan \(LHMP\)](#), contained in the Contra Costa County Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan, adopted on April 3, 2018, and our Affordable Housing Strategy adopted in 2017. Our LHMP identifies earthquakes as the number one hazard type in consideration with the impacts on people, property and the economy. A planning grant would allow the City to inventory at risk buildings and design a program for implementation that fits the needs of the City, its residents and property owners. Funding determinations are expected to be issued Spring 2019. For more information, please contact Aissia Ashoori at aashoori@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

El Dorado

The El Dorado Townhomes project is progressing through the plan check and construction process. The grading permit for the project has been issued as well as an encroachment permit for sidewalk replacement. Grading of the site has begun. Subsurface water was found on the site during the initial excavation. City staff has worked with the applicant as well as other agencies, such as the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a dewatering permit has been issued to allow the applicant to remove the water from the site. The Vector Control District has also been involved in the process and measures have been taken to ensure that the pools of water are not a breeding environment for vectors. Through the building permit process, City staff will ensure that the project is constructed appropriately to address the hydrological conditions identified on the site. In addition, the grading permit includes over-excavation of the site and back-filling with structural soil, which will also help to address the site hydrology.

On September 17, 2018. The City Council approved the Final Subdivision Map for the project. The recordation of the Final Map will allow the creation of the condominium units. City staff expects to issue the building permit for the project later this calendar year.

For more information on this project, contact Sean Moss, Senior Planner at smoss@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or call 510-215-4359

The Brace and Bolt Earthquake Preparedness Workshop

On **Tuesday, October 23, 2018 from 6:30PM-8:30PM** in the **El Cerrito City Council Chambers**, Jay Marlette will teach about the importance of earthquake retrofitting for single-family homes and duplexes, including measures that can be taken to make your living space safer. This workshop will cover the State Earthquake Brace and Bolt program, how to select a contractor, and the permit process. This workshop is being offered by the City's Development Services Division.

To register, contact Jennifer Peat in the Community Development Department at 215-4362 or <mailto:jpeat@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>.

Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program

Registration for the 2019 Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB) program will open in our community! Homeowners will be able to register from October 9 through November 13, 2018 for a grant of up to \$3,000 to be used toward a code-compliant seismic retrofit to make your homes more resistant to earthquake damage.

For more information, please visit EarthquakeBraceBolt.com

Finance Department

OpenGov Financial Transparency Site is Live

The Finance Department and City Manager's Office have partnered to launch the City's Financial Transparency Site at <http://el-cerrito.org/transparencyportal> using the OpenGov platform. As it is the City's goal to provide valuable information to the community regarding the

City's budget and ongoing finances, the site will be a helpful tool. Please take a look at the site and let us know if there are ways in which we can improve it. The next phase is to 1) use our social media networks and citywide newsletter to share information with the public and 2) begin working with departments on performance metrics to show on the site.

Fire Department

Urban Shield Training Exercise

On September 8th, six members of the El Cerrito Fire Department participated in the Urban Shield exercise. This multi-county drill that involved law enforcement, fire, EMS, CERT and many other support groups such as Red Cross was designed with numerous scenarios for each division of public safety. For the fire side, there were three main areas, marine emergencies dealing with water rescues, hazardous material emergencies and Urban Search and Rescue which the members of our Department participated in. Our personnel were teamed up with a City of Vacaville team and together they spent the day on four different assignments. These included a high angle rope rescue from a cargo crane in which the operator was shot in the control cab approximately 100' in the air. The active shooter, which was neutralized by on scene officers, was wounded and higher in the crane rigging. Both had to be removed to the ground by first climbing to the top, treating and securing the patients and then lowering them to the ground.

Another exercise included heavy lifting in which a large truck had to be raised off a car and the patient in the car treated, extricated and transported to the hospital. Our firefighters also participated in a confined rescue drill and a cribbing and shoring rescue on a partially collapsed building. The training these personnel participated in brings knowledge back to our Department and is important in keeping our personnel prepared for catastrophic events.

This is a link to a video that shows firsthand what Urban Shield is about and its relevance to our day-to-day operations.

<https://vimeo.com/acso/review/288215852/4348847ea6>

OES 300 to the Snell Fire

OES 300 was dispatched on September 9, 2018 to the Snell Fire in Napa County. The fire started on September 8 and immediately was threatening homes in the Butts Canyon Road and Snell Valley Road southeast of Middletown. The engine crew which consisted of Captains Hoyer-Nelson, Grupalo and Ciappara as well as Engineer Schwartzman was gone for a little over a week. The crew was initially tasked with their strike team to provide structure protection for the first few days and then transitioned to maintaining containment lines and assisting with hose lays and overhaul operations. Through the quick response of State and local resources, total acreage was contained to approximately 2,500 acres. The fire is now 100% contained.

Battalion Chief Janes and Captain Crumpacker to the Delta Fire

Kevin Janes was deployed once again with the California Interagency Incident Management Team #4 as a communication leader to the Delta Fire located near Lake Head in northern Shasta County. Working with the incident management team he was responsible for overseeing the communication plan for the fire which included evaluating and installing radio repeaters, insuring the management's radios systems were operational and the programming or cloning of all portable radios for the crews assigned to the fire. The fire started on September 5th and has consumed over 63,000 acres and destroyed over 20 structures. This was one of many fires that have burned in Shasta County and was within a couple of miles of the Carr Fire. Kevin returned home last week after two weeks on assignment. The fire is currently 97% contained.

Traviss Crumpacker was deployed to the Delta Fire also on September 12th and returned on Thursday, September 20th. He responded as a fire line medic where he was assigned to various divisions to provide ALS medical care in the event of a firefighter or hand crew personnel being injured. Due to the remote terrain on this fire, Traviss was actually "spiked out" which means that he spent 4 to 5 days out on the line for most of his deployment. Fire line paramedics and EMT's are being utilized more with the increase of firefighter injuries occurring on these large incidents. Our personnel respond with a complete cache of medical equipment as well as their personal equipment and often have to hike into their assignments. All our personnel are back safe and sound as the majority of the fires are mostly contained...for now.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant for Engine Replacement

This past week, the 2018 AFG Grant application through FEMA opened and the Fire Department is compiling data and will be submitting a grant request for the replacement of Engine 71. Engine 71 which was purchased in 2005 is nearing its front line replacement time of 15 years, however, due to the higher call volume at the main station, this engine is starting to show premature signs of wear and maintenance costs are increasing substantially. More important, the Department's only reserve engine is now 23 years old and has over 120,000 miles and is close to needing major repairs including rebuilding the pump as it no longer will pass its annual pump test and an in-frame engine overhaul due to high mileage and lower compression making it hard to start and causing excessive exhaust smoke. This grant program is the same that the Fire Department was able to secure funding for the ladder truck in 2014. The grant application period closes October 26th and it will take a few months to determine if our application is awarded.

Police Department Vandal

During the course of August and September, officers identified a person they believed was responsible for a significant amount of graffiti on the Ohlone Greenway and in the northern business district. Investigators worked with the Public Works Department to track the cost to clean up

the vandalism and authored a search and arrest warrant for a house in Richmond, CA. While serving the warrant, the investigators located the man, arrested him, and identified additional items of evidence linking the man to the vandalism incidents around the city. ECPD Investigators presented the case to the District Attorney's Office for review.

Naloxone Deployment

Over the past several months, the ECPD has trained police officers in the use of the opioid overdose medication, Naloxone. Officers are now carrying Naloxone doses in their patrol vehicles to help them respond to community members in crisis.

Public Works Department

Environmental Happenings

September and October are busy months, filled with environmental events hosted by the City's Operations + Environmental Services Division (OESD) and the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC). September events included a **Compost Giveaway** hosted at the El Cerrito Environmental Resources + Recycling Center, and a **Ride Electric Week Event**. Still coming up this month is a **Volunteer Recognition and EQC 10th Anniversary Celebration** on October 4, the **Citywide Garage Sale** on October 13, a **SunShares Solar and Electric Vehicle Workshop** at City Hall on October 15, an **E-Waste collection event** on October 20, and a "**Fixit Clinic**" on October 27. To learn more about upcoming "Green Happenings", visit the City's website at <http://www.el-cerrito.org/869/Whats-New> or contact Will Provost, Management Analyst, at (510) 525-7622 or wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

OESD also participated in two national volunteer events to leverage the efforts of 73 volunteers in helping to keep El Cerrito and the San Francisco Bay clean – **Corporate Caring Volunteer Week** and **Coastal Cleanup**. The Contra Costa Crisis Center organizes **Corporate Caring Volunteer Week** in Contra Costa County during a week in September. The event provides corporations and other businesses with volunteer opportunities for their employees at local non-profit and public agencies. For the past three years, Chevron employees have worked with Public Works staff to remove litter and invasive plants from the Ohlone Greenway south of Fairmount Avenue, in and near the rain garden area. This year, our work party drew 26 volunteers.

OESD, the EQC, and Friends of Five Creeks held their annual **Coastal Cleanup 2018** event at Cerrito Creek on September 15. El Cerrito's cleanup had 47 volunteers, who collected 170 pounds of recyclables and 372 pounds of trash, totaling nearly 550 pounds of litter removed from the creek altogether. Across Contra Costa County, there were over 1,500 volunteers who came out to clean up, hauling in about 15,000 pounds of trash. Thanks to all who participated. For more information about these and other volunteer clean up opportunities, contact Stephen Prée, Environmental Programs Manager, at spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Clean Water Program Update

Annual Report

In early September, Public Work's staff submitted the 2017-18 Annual Report for the City's Clean Water Program to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. The report highlighted El Cerrito's continued efforts to meet and exceed the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Notable highlights included: the City's robust public outreach and education campaign through newsletters, events, and programming; the numerous completed and proposed development projects that are being reviewed and monitored for compliance; and the city-wide implementation of trash capture devices.

For example, the report showed that through the City's installation of 122 trash capture devices, source control measures (e.g. El Cerrito's single-use bag), and regular cleanups, El Cerrito was able to claim an 84.5% reduction in the trash load. The current figure puts El Cerrito on track to achieve the 100% reduction that is required by 2022.

Planning for Green Infrastructure

On April 3, 2018, staff provided a report and presentation to City Council on the City's Clean Water Program and outlined the City's intended process to develop a Green Infrastructure Plan. The Green Infrastructure Plan, to be adopted by June 2019, fulfills a key requirement of the City's municipal stormwater permit and will prioritize potential green infrastructure projects to be built in El Cerrito. City staff anticipates completing a draft for public review in Spring 2019.

The City has already built several green infrastructure projects, such as rain gardens, including those at the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center, the City Hall and Public Safety Building, on the Ohlone Greenway, and on San Pablo Avenue at Eureka Avenue and at Madison Avenue. The Green Infrastructure Plan will prioritize additional projects for implementation and will set targets for the City to implement through 2040.

As part of the City's Green Infrastructure planning efforts, City staff participated in the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that was formed to assist in the development of the *Contra Costa Watersheds Stormwater Resource Plan* as led by the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. The Public Review Draft of the *Contra Costa Stormwater Resource Plan: Greening the Community for Healthy Watersheds (SWRP)*, available at <https://www.cccleanwater.org/resources/stormwater-resource-plan>, was released in late August 2018. The SWRP identifies thousands of potential stormwater management projects and programs designed to improve watersheds and communities throughout Contra Costa County. Of these projects, ten were selected for development of concept designs showing the project footprint, stormwater treatment facilities, projected pollutant load reductions and other benefits, and a cost estimate. The City's El Cerrito del Norte TOD Complete Street Improvements Project was one of the ten, which will greatly help the City seek and apply for stormwater

grants and leverage previously secured transportation grants for the project. In general, all the potential projects included in the SWRP are eligible for grants under the Stormwater Grant Program as well as other State funding sources. The Final SWRP is scheduled to be complete in January 2019 and the El Cerrito projects identified in the SWRP will be incorporated into the City's Green Infrastructure Plan.

For more information on the Clean Water Program, please contact Will Provost, Management Analyst, at (510) 525-7622 or wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

El Cerrito Receives Multiple Environmental Awards

The City of El Cerrito is proud to have received **three Beacon Spotlight Awards**, which "recognizes an agency's holistic approach to addressing climate change". El Cerrito received a Gold Level award for community greenhouse gas reductions, a Platinum Level award for energy savings, and a Platinum Level award for natural gas savings. Mayor Quinto and Assistant City Manager Karen Pinkos accepted the awards on behalf of the City at the 2018 League of California Cities conference.

Although it has not been publicly released as of this writing, the City will also be receiving an Honorable Mention from the National Waste & Recycling Association in its **2018 Recycling Facility of the Year Award** program. This award provides national recognition to the El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center for its state-of-the-art design and the comprehensive array of services it provides.

Maintenance Activities

In recent months, Public Works staff have worked to address deferred maintenance, and to repair and improve the City's existing infrastructure. Recent completed **park projects** include repairing the roof and replacing the skylights at the Harding Park Clubhouse, repairing areas of dry rot in the Community Center roofing system, replacing aging playground slides at the Cerrito Vista playground, installing more **dual stream garbage/recycling containers** along the Ohlone Greenway, resurfacing Castro Park asphalt paths and Tennis Court (including the addition of striping for six Pickleball courts). During this time, Public Works contractors have also removed 18 standing dead or dying trees in the Hillside Natural Area and at Dorothy Rosenberg Memorial Park and completed tree pruning at the north and south ends of the Ohlone Greenway for site line clearance. **Routine street tree pruning** commenced on October 1 and will prioritize maintenance on larger failure prone trees and existing service requests.

In the upcoming months, staff and contractors will be working on the following projects:

- **Sidewalks:** Contractors for the City will be removing through precision grinding approximately 200 sidewalk trip hazards in high traffic areas throughout the City.

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- **Rainy Season Preparation:** In accordance the City's permit with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Public Works staff and contractors have begun cleaning trash racks, removing sediment, clearing invasive vegetation, and conducting flood clearance pruning at rainy season hotspot locations throughout the City. In addition, staff will be sending the City's annual notice to property owners of private creeks, reminding them of their responsibility to maintain creek on their properties free of any debris that could clog storm drains and potentially cause flooding.
 - **Reseeding turf areas** at Castro Park next to Lawrence Street, Poinsett Park, and the Elm/ Blake Street pocket park.

For more information, contact the Public Works Operations + Environmental Services Division at (510) 215-4369.

LimeBike Pilot Extension

City staff recently worked with LimeBike, a dockless bike share program, to execute an agreement, extending the City's existing pilot program for six additional months. The new agreement requires LimeBike to do additional user education and also allows for a small number of e-assist bicycles to be incorporated into their fleet. El Cerrito's LimeBike program averages about 2,000 trips per month, even with a relatively small number of bicycles in the community. In recent months, the program has received relatively few complaints, as users are learning how to park properly, and residents are becoming more comfortable with seeing them around the community.

Since beginning operations in El Cerrito, LimeBike has also worked with City staff to educate the public at multiple events, including Bike to Work Day, a lunchtime event at Korematsu school, and at the Summer Bike Fest hosted by the El Cerrito Library and ECPD. For more information on bike-share, contact Will Provost, Management Analyst, at (510) 525-7622 or wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Capital Improvement Program Updates

2018 Slurry Seal Project

In September, the Public Works Department completed construction of the City's 2018 Slurry Seal Project. This project involved the installation of slurry seal surface treatment on the following 16 street segments:

1. Contra Costa Drive - King Drive to Buckingham Drive
 2. Cypress Avenue - San Pablo Avenue to South 56th Street
 3. Elm Court - Moeser Lane to End
 4. F Street - Cypress Avenue to End
 5. Ivy Court - Leneve Place to End
 6. Jordan Avenue - Tamalpais Avenue to Alta Punta Avenue
 7. Kearney Street - Fairmount Avenue to Eureka Avenue
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8. Leneve Place - Terrace Drive to Ivy Court
 9. Ludwig Avenue - Jordan Avenue to Poinsett Avenue
 10. Madera Circle - Madera Drive to Madera Drive
 11. Manor Circle - Elm Street to Manor Circle
 12. Poinsett Avenue - Ludwig Avenue to West City Limits
 13. Snowdon Avenue - Ganges Avenue to End (Beyond Gate)
 14. South 56th Street - South City Limits to Potrero Avenue
 15. Stockton Avenue - Richmond Street to Terrace Drive
 16. Tamalpais Avenue - Fairview Drive to Cutting Boulevard

Localized pavement repairs were completed on these street segments at the end of 2017 in anticipation of this project.

The City's contractor was Telfer Inc and Consulting Project Manager was Gerardo Avila of Avila Project Management. The project is funded by the City's Measure A – Street Improvement funds. For more information regarding the project, please contact Ana Bernardes, Acting Engineering Manager/Senior Engineer, at (510) 215-4385 or abernardes@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Centennial Park Phase I Improvements Project

Construction of the Centennial Park Phase I Improvements Project is well underway and is expected to be completed at end of November 2018. The project includes a new accessible path network; enhanced gathering spaces; passive and active recreational areas with new site amenities; improved children's play areas; and improved irrigation and landscaping.

The project is funded by several sources, including East Bay Regional Park District Measure WW, a grant from the California Department of Housing Community Development Housing Related Parks Program, and San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan developer contributions. For more information regarding this project, please contact Ana Bernardes, Acting Engineering Manager/Senior Engineer, at (510) 215-4385 or abernardes@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Ohlone BART Station Area Access, Safety and Placemaking Improvements Project

Construction work on Ohlone Greenway-BART Station Area Access, Safety and Placemaking Improvements Project (Ohlone ASP) is expected to be substantially complete by the end of October. The project is improving and widening the pedestrian and bicycle path next to the El Cerrito Plaza and Del Norte BART Stations and improving existing crosswalks on adjacent streets to create high visibility pedestrian zones with new striping, special pavement, improved signage, curb bulb-outs, upgraded curb ramps and flashing lights. The project also provides placemaking elements such as native landscaping, seating, lighting and other amenities to increase the sense of connectivity to the rest of the greenway and establish a strong sense of place at these transportation gateways to the community.

The construction duration has been long, approximately six months, as the project had to progress in phases to minimize impacts to pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists in the busy BART Station areas.

The remaining work, in general, consists of installation of traffic striping, roadway lighting, landscaping, concrete crosswalk treatments, concrete seat walls, and amenities including benches, signs, and trash & recycling receptacles.

This has been a major construction effort with several challenging elements. We appreciate the public's patience. For additional information, please visit the City's website at www.elcerrito.org/OhloneASP.

Korematsu Safe Routes to School Improvements, Phase 1 Project

The Public Works Department is currently developing the design for improvements at various locations along walking and bicycling routes to Korematsu Middle School. The project is intended to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, including students and neighborhood residents, and encourage walking and biking to school.

The project implements improvements in the immediate vicinity of the school including crosswalk enhancements on Richmond Street/Donal Avenue, Richmond Street/Gladys Avenue, Norvell Street/Gladys Avenue, Lawrence Street/Gladys Avenue, Lawrence Street/Donal Avenue, Navellier Street/Gladys Avenue, and Navellier Street/Potrero Avenue and a portion of the East Side Bicycle Boulevard on Norvell Street from Potrero Avenue to Schmidt Lane and Schmidt Lane from Norvell Street to Richmond Street. The East Side Bicycle Boulevard is an improvement identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan. The project is funded by a Transportation Development Act Article 3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Project grant and SB 1 - Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account funds.

The public is invited to review and share their comments on the proposed design on Wednesday, October 10, 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall. City staff and consultants will discuss the project background and previous community input. City staff anticipates completing the design by the end of this year and beginning construction in early 2019 to fulfill grant deadlines.

For additional information, please visit the City's website at <http://www.elcerrito.org/1026/Korematsu-Safe-Routes-to-School>.

Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

Public Works staff has been working with two additional neighborhoods, the Junction Avenue block between Hagen Boulevard and Morris Avenue and the Junction Avenue block between Cutting Boulevard and Knott Avenue, to address traffic concerns in accordance with the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP).

The NTMP process for the Junction Avenue from Hagen Boulevard to Morris Avenue block has consisted of a neighborhood petition demonstrating at least 60 percent support from households on this block, traffic data collection, an initial neighborhood traffic meeting in May 2018, and follow-up engineering evaluations. Public Works staff and our

transportation consultants, Fehr & Peer, have conducted additional evaluations to identify specific locations for speed humps based on the street geometry, presence of driveways and utilities, as well as, have developed specific recommendations for crosswalk enhancements and traffic sign and marking modifications to address neighborhood concerns. The second neighborhood meeting is scheduled during the week of October 8.

The Junction Avenue from Cutting Boulevard to Knott Avenue block is at an earlier phase in the NTMP process. To date, this has included a neighborhood petition demonstrating at least 60 percent support, traffic data collection and engineering evaluation. The initial neighborhood meeting is also scheduled during the week of October 8.

For more information regarding this program, please contact Ana Bernardes, Acting Engineering Manager/Senior Engineer, at (510) 215-4385 or abernardes@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, and visit the City's website at <http://www.el-cerrito.org/428/Neighborhood-Traffic>.

Recreation Dept.

Staffing Changes

Former Community Services Coordinator Taylor Melton has been promoted to the role of Recreation Supervisor of Youth Programs & Sports. Taylor has been an acting supervisor for 11 months and has overseen impressive growth of youth classes and summer camps despite the absence of a full-time employee. A major goal of this new division is to increase teen programming and youth sports.

After School Enrichment Programs

After school enrichment programs will begin over the next few weeks. In addition to offering a variety of enrichment classes at Harding and Madera Elementary Schools, the Recreation Department will also be offering classes at Fairmont Elementary School for the first time since the 2011-12 school year. Together with each school and volunteer parent groups, we have coordinated with professional contract instructors to host a variety of classes held conveniently on each campus after the school bell rings. Classes in art, coding, athletics, chess, chorus, language and more are all offered to provide students the opportunity to discover and develop new passions and interests after the school day ends. The department has also been working on a similar program for middle school students. Enrichment classes, including weightlifting and aikido, have begun at Castro Clubhouse right next door to Korematsu Middle School in response to the school community's request for safe, convenient after school options for their middle schoolers. The Recreation Department hopes to increase course offering for Korematsu students as the school year progresses.

Best of Contra Costa County Awards for Youth Programming

The Recreation Department is honored to once again receive 26 "Best of Contra Costa County Awards" as voted on by the readers of Parents' Press. Staff is grateful for the continued support and appreciation by the users of the City's youth programs and services as well as the *partners (indicated in italics where applicable)* we work with to deliver exemplary services.

Gold Medals:

- Best Aquatic and Water Sports Camp: Swim Camp

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- Best Arts and Crafts Summer Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept.
 - Best Circus Arts Summer Camp: *Living Dream Arts Circus Camp*
 - Best Counselor in Training Summer Program: L.I.T. (Leaders In Training) Program
 - Best Culinary Summer Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept. - *Cooking Round The World*
 - Best Dance Summer Camp: Dance & Drama Summer Camp
 - Best Holiday and Vacation Camp: Holiday Break, President Week & Spring Break Camp
 - Best Leadership Development Summer Camp: L.I.T. (Leaders In Training) Program
 - Best Nature and Outdoor Summer Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept. Summer Camps
 - Best Overnight Summer Camp: El Cerrito Camp Ravenclyff
 - Best Science Summer Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept. - Science Camps
 - Best Technology Summer Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept. - Technology Summer Camps
 - Best Teen Focused Summer Camp: Explorers Camp
 - Best Enrichment and After-School Programs: El Cerrito Rec. Dept.
 - Best Gymnastics Classes: Gymnastics Program with *Bindy Baker*
 - Best Language Classes: El Cerrito Rec. Dept. -Enrichment Classes
 - Best Martial Arts Classes: Karate Classes with *Leonard Baltz*
 - Best Swim Classes: El Cerrito Swim Center

Silver Medals:

- Best General and Traditional Summer Day Camp: El Cerrito Rec. Dept.
- Best Gymnastics Summer Camp: Gymnastics Camps with *Bindy Baker*
- Best Lego Summer Camp: *LEGO® Camps*
- Best Performing Arts Classes: Dance & Drama
- Best Sports Summer Camp: *El Cerrito Sports Camp*
- Best Art Classes: El Cerrito Rec. Dept.
- Best Circus Arts Classes: *Living Dream Arts Circus Classes*
- Best Birthday Outdoor Party Venue: El Cerrito Swim Center

Off Season Office Hours at the Community Center

Beginning on November 5, the office hours at the Community Center will change to mirror those at City Hall: Monday/Wednesday/every other Friday- 8am-4pm; Tuesday/Thursday 8am-6pm. Currently the office is open until 5pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and every other Friday and 6pm on Tuesday/Thursday. This change will continue at least through January 2019. As online enrollment continues to grow the goal of this change is to have all office staff available during all operating hours so that they can better serve customers immediately as well as bring greater focus to planning and implementing programs in a more efficient manner. Staff will carefully monitor customers' experience during this time and evaluate whether or not these hours should remain permanent or need to change back to the original hours as Spring and Summer registrations begin.

Mark Your Calendar

- ***Casa Cerrito Preschool Open House:*** Saturday, October 6th at 10am – Casa Cerrito Preschool, 6927 Portola Drive
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- **Halloween Carnival and Haunted House:** Saturday, October 27th, 1-5pm, El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane

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For up to date information on all of the happenings brought to you by the El Cerrito Recreation Department, please subscribe to our email newsletter **rECnews** at www.el-cerrito.org/recreation.

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