MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Karen Pinkos, City Manager
DATE: April 14, 2023
SUBJECT: City Manager’s Update

This time of year is a busy one for your City staff team. We are working hard on the process and development of the next fiscal year budget, getting ready for summertime activities, and planning some of our most popular events. This year we are also preparing to work with our community on updating our Citywide Strategic Plan that will create new strategic goals and objectives and affirm our mission, vision, and values. There's a lot of wonderful things going on in El Cerrito, and so much more to come!

Coming up this weekend on April 15 is our popular Earth Day event, back in full swing. It will be bittersweet without Earth Day's biggest champion, the late Councilmember Janet Abelson, but going forward we hold this event in her honor and with her in mind as we work together to beautify and celebrate our exceptional natural environment in our City. More information is at http://www.El-cerrito.org/Earthday.

The following weekend, April 22, we will hold a Community Budget Town Hall. This is a chance for the community to find out about the City's budget and our fiscal health, as well as provide an opportunity for input and feedback to staff regarding budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1. The meeting will be in person in our Council Chambers, as well as on zoom, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The City Council will be discussing the budget at their upcoming meetings in May, including a special meeting on May 9 that will focus on the City's departments. Staff will then present the full proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 to the City Council at their meeting on June 6, 2023. For more information on the City's budget process, go to our Budget Process page on the City's website at http://www.el-cerrito.org/BudgetProcess.

We’re also getting ready for our signature event, the 4th of July worldOne festival, which is coming up quickly! Last year, our event returned from its pandemic hiatus as a HUGE success thanks to our generous donors, sponsors, vendors, entertainers, and of course attendees! Our staff is busy planning and working to bring you another awesome festival, and we encourage you to be a part of the fun. Check out all the details at www.el-cerrito.org/July4. If you are interested in being a donor or sponsor, click on this link!

I'm looking forward to seeing friends and neighbors out and about El Cerrito! As always, please take care of yourselves and each other.

Karen Pinkos
City Manager
City of El Cerrito
CITY MANAGEMENT

Budget Town Hall April 22 at 10am
Community members are invited to attend a Budget Town Hall on Saturday, April 22 to learn more about the City budget and provide their input as the City begins development of the budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (Flyer Attached). The Budget Town Hall meeting will be in a “hybrid” format, occurring both in-person, with the opportunity to also participate remotely.

**Budget Town Hall**
Saturday April 22, 10 am - 12 pm
City Council Chambers, El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530

The Zoom meeting link will be available closer to the event at [el-cerrito.org/BudgetTownHall](http://el-cerrito.org/BudgetTownHall).

For community members that are unable to attend the Town Hall or would like to provide written comments, an [online survey](https://polco.us/sw4ws5) has also been created to ensure the City can hear the priorities that are most important to residents and businesses. All interested parties can provide input virtually, using the survey linked here: [https://polco.us/sw4ws5](https://polco.us/sw4ws5)

Residents, businesses, and interested parties can find out more and stay tuned for the latest information at [el-cerrito.org/BudgetProcess](http://el-cerrito.org/BudgetProcess), with new information posted as it becomes available.

National Community Survey Results Now Available
Over the years the City of El Cerrito has participated in the National Community Survey (NCS) several times, including in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2012, 2016, 2019, and most recently in 2022. The NCS provides important feedback to the City, capturing residents’ opinions around various facets of the community, ranging from parks and recreation to safety or the quality of utilities. Moreover, because similar surveys have been conducted in over 500 communities, the survey results provide important insights as the results can both be benchmarked against other communities and analyzed for changes in resident opinions in El Cerrito over time.
The Report of Results for 2022 is now available on the City’s website at el-cerrito.org/CommunitySurvey. The report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 463 residents of the City of El Cerrito collected from November 30, 2022 to January 11th, 2023. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic profile of adults in El Cerrito.

Highlights from the report include:

- **Quality of Life** – residents rating of quality of life in El Cerrito is at 87% the highest rating of all the years the City has done the survey
- **Library** – 75% rated building a new Library at the El Cerrito Plaza BART development as a High Priority or Medium Priority, the highest of any of the potential facilities mentioned
- **Safety** – 92% feel very or somewhat safe in their neighborhood during the day
  - Only 52% felt very safe or somewhat safe from property crime
  - 8 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the El Cerrito Police Department for treating all residents fairly, enforcing the law, and using appropriate force
- **Recycling** – 90% rated recycling services as excellent or good, much higher than the national benchmark
- **El Cerrito**, as a community, has room for improvement to receive more positive ratings around community economic health (as a place to work or visit, the vibrancy of downtown, cost of living, affordability, etc.)
- **Residents rated** Parks (90%), Public Safety (88%), Open Space & Trails (84%), and Library (84%), as the highest priorities for the next two years.

Importantly, this data will be used to feed into the Strategic Planning process that is beginning in April 2023 and will support the City in refining strategic goals and setting the City’s short-term and long-term priorities to inform the City’s budget and workplan.

At the April 4, 2023, City Council meeting, a summary of these results was presented with key findings to the City Council. A copy of the presentation has also been uploaded to the City’s website at el-cerrito.org/CommunitySurvey. For more information about the NCS or Strategic Planning process, please contact Assistant to the City Manager, Will Provost, at wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

**Now Accepting Donations and Sponsorship for the 4th of July Festival**

For many, the annual City of El Cerrito and worldOne July 4th Festival has been a chance to celebrate amongst high-flying banners, world-class music, food, friends, and more. Last year, thanks to our many sponsors and donors, the festival returned with great success!

The City is now seeking proud sponsorship from businesses and organizations, as well as individual donations from the community for our 2023 festival. Our goal is to reach $50,000 in raised funds that will allow the event to continue to be admission free, support high quality
musical performances and family entertainment such as rides and bounce houses, and keep costs low for participating non-profits and civic organizations. Donations to the City of El Cerrito may be tax-deductible and will only be used for the 2023, or future, 4th of July Festival. To become a sponsor today, visit www.el-cerrito.org/july4donations.

Looking for other ways to support the event? Help us spread the word, volunteer the day of, or participate as a vendor. Visit www.el-cerrito.org/july4 for details.

**Contra Costa Water District Announces Water Awareness Youth Art Contest**
The Water Awareness Youth Art Contest is on! Local youths from 8 to 18 years old are encouraged to learn about water and express their artistic talents! Learn more about prizes, rules, and how to submit artwork. Entries accepted March 6 through May 12. View the flyer for full contest rules and the consent form.

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**CITY CLERK**

**Recent City Council Meeting Highlights**

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023 (Regular Meeting)**

- Economic Development Committee Re-appointments (Jean Shrem and George Gager)
- Committee on Aging Re-appointments (Janet James and Kim Marlia)
- Proclamations recognizing Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness and Education and Sharing Day
- Received Annual Progress Report for General Plan and Housing Update
- Received Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
- Received Presentation on Contra Costa Transportation Authority Workplan
- Presented Police Officer, Professional Staff, and Volunteer of the Year Awards
- Awarded Contract for Lease/Installation of License Plate Readers

**Tuesday, April 4, 2023 (Special Meeting)**
The City Council held interviews and appointed the following El Cerrito residents to serve on city commissions:

- Troy Tyler (Park & Recreation Commission)
- Mina Wilson (Human Relations Commission)

**Tuesday, April 4, 2023 (Regular Meeting)**

- Received presentation on the 2022 El Cerrito National Community Survey
- Environmental Quality Committee Appointment (Pamela Austin)
- Proclamations recognizing Earth Day and Fair Housing Month
- Approved resolution in support of ending oil and gas drilling in Contra Costa County

**Upcoming City Council Meeting(s)**

**Tuesday, April 18, 2023 (Regular Meeting)**

- Marin Clean Energy presentation
- Quarterly Cash and Investment Report
• El Cerrito Library update and National Library Week

**Tuesday, May 2, 2023 (Regular Meeting)**

• Master Fee Schedule
• Public hearing on Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District
• Public hearing on Storm Drain Fees
• Budget Study Session

**Tuesday, May 9, 2023 (Special Meeting)**

• Department overview/Budget Presentations

Agenda materials and public comment instructions are available online at [www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials](http://www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials) as well as video archives. For more information, please contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or (510) 215-4305.

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**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Planning Applications/Updates**

On April 3, the Zoning Administrator approved an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) to allow a food truck to operate on a vacant site at 10192 San Pablo Avenue. The City also has a pending application for a project containing 44 residential housing units on the site. The AUP allows an active use on the site while it is vacant. The AUP is temporary and will expire if the development project is approved.

Contact the Planning Division at planning@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or 510-215-4330 for more information.

**Affordable Housing Waitlist and Workshops**

Visit the April 2023 Affordable Housing Opportunities page to view current openings throughout the Bay Area – (Courtesy of [Openhouse](http://www.openhouse.org))

**Home Match, Contra Costa County: Available Rooms Catalog (March 2023)**

If you see something of interest, contact Home Match at 925-956-7385 or homematchcontracosta@frontporch.net. If you are looking for housing, Home Match provides affordable opportunities to those who currently live, work or study in Contra Costa County.

The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALC) currently has waitlist openings for several properties in the East Bay. Please visit [https://ebaldc.org/how-to-apply/](https://ebaldc.org/how-to-apply/) to learn more.
First Time Homebuyer Workshop: April 22, 2023 – 9am
This virtual workshop will help you determine if you are ready for homeownership, how to select a lender and shop for a home, all about closing costs, and how to be a successful homeowner.

Visit [https://www.echofairhousing.org/homebuyer-class-registration.html](https://www.echofairhousing.org/homebuyer-class-registration.html) to reserve your space.

Welcome to El Cerrito!

On April 5, 2023, California Fish Grill celebrated the grand opening of their newest location at El Cerrito Plaza. Their menu offers an array of seafood for everyone. Stop by and give them a try at 5040 El Cerrito Plaza, Unit E004 (formerly MOD Pizza) or visit [www.cafishgrill.com](http://www.cafishgrill.com).

We are also pleased to announce that the Harvey Auto Group acquired El Cerrito Honda this month. El Cerrito Honda joins 6 other Harvey Group family dealerships: Dublin Honda, Tracy Honda, Dublin Mazda, Tracy Mazda, San Leandro Mazda, and Hayward Honda. The Harvey family began building their business over 69 years ago in Richmond on San Pablo Avenue operating a motorcycle dealership. There will be no change in business operations, and we look forward to working with the Harvey Group for years to come.
Contra Costa Guaranteed Income Working Group Meeting: April 25 at 6pm

- **What:** An opportunity to learn more about guaranteed income and its community benefits through facilitated small group discussions.
- **Who:** The intended audience is Contra Costa residents who would most benefit from a guaranteed income program.
- **Certified Spanish interpretation** will be provided
- **Participants will be compensated with a $50 stipend:** You must register and attend to receive the stipend

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**Bike to Work Day - Thursday, May 18, 2023**

Each year, the City participates in the regional Bike to Work Day by hosting an Energizer Station along the Ohlone Greenway at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station. Energizer Stations are a big part of Bike to Work Day. Located along many commute routes during morning commute hours, bicyclists can stop by for refreshments, giveaways, and bicycling information or simply to be 'cheered on' by fellow participants.

For more information, visit [www.el-cerrito.org/biketoworkday](http://www.el-cerrito.org/biketoworkday), or email [community@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:community@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us)
**FIRE**

**Emergency Supply Sale**
A reliable water supply is an important part of any preparedness program. Following a major earthquake, you need to be ready to have drinking, cooking, and sanitation water before EBMUD can get residential customers back online. Municipal governments will distribute potable water supplies within several days but that means standing in line with containers to get your rationed water. The most reliable way to assure adequate water is to store water at your home and office. To help community members prepare, the El Cerrito/Kensington Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) organization is coordinating a water storage and fire extinguisher sale, in partnership with the Lamorinda CERT organization. Place your water storage and fire extinguisher orders online before noon on April 27. Visit the CERT website or see attached flyer for full details.

**Is Your Home Fire Safe?**
The El Cerrito Fire Department will be conducting Defensible Space inspections starting in May. It is every property owner’s responsibility to maintain their property year-round.

For more information on City standards, go to: el-cerrito.org/Vegetation-Management

You can also download a Resident Vegetation Reduction Checklist. Make sure you are in compliance by walking your own property with the checklist. For further questions, you can contact the Fire Department at fire@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Thank you for helping to make El Cerrito more fire safe!

**POLICE**

**Calls for Service**
The El Cerrito Police Department (ECPD) handled 1,826 calls for service in March. To read more about the types of calls the ECPD handles, check out our Nixle Feed at www.nixle.com.

**Employment Opportunities with the ECPD**
The ECPD is currently looking for candidates for Police Recruit and Police Officer. These jobs offer an unmatched ability to make positive change in our community and offer great benefits to boot! If you or someone you know is interested in joining the ECPD team, please have them check out our available positions at: https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/elcerrito_
**New Officers**

The El Cerrito Police Department welcomed two new recruits this month. Welcome Officer Chand and Officer Reynolds to the ECPD team!

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**PUBLIC WORKS**

**Earth Day is April 15, 2023**

Help spread the word, El Cerrito’s Earth Day Celebration will be Saturday, April 15, 2023! The festivities will include volunteer work parties from 9am to 12pm, followed by an appreciation lunch at the Community Center from 12pm to 1:30pm. Find the latest information at El-cerrito.org/Earthday. To organize a work party, sign up for a work party, or to get involved in helping at the event, please reach out to earthday@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

**2023 Patch Paving and Slurry Seal Project**

In mid-April, the City’s annual patch paving and slurry seal project will kick-off. Sixteen street segments have been selected for this year’s program which will receive patch paving and pothole repairs and a new coat of slurry seal. This treatment is a proven pavement maintenance treatment that will prolong the life of the City’s infrastructure. A map of streets included in the project is included at right and a table lists the streets below.

Residents on these streets will typically experience 5-to-10-minute delays when crews are working on patch paving and other minor preparatory work. More substantial delays, up to half a day, will be experienced during the slurry seal operation; residents are encouraged to park vehicles in driveways or on side streets. Keep an eye out for notices at your door or posted on parking barricades,
that will contain more specific information, including dates and contact information for the City’s Contractor, Resident Engineer, and Project Manager.

The project should be completed by the end of May; your patience is appreciated as the Public Works Department works to complete this important work. For more information, please contact Public Works Engineering at encroachmentpermit@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

2023 Patch Paving and Slurry Seal Project – Streets Included:

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Storm Update from Public Works

It has been a busy rainy season for the City’s Public Works Department, preparing for storms, responding to issues at all hours of the day and night, and quickly making streets, sidewalks, and paths safe for travel.

On March 14, the City experienced wind gusts of over 46 miles per hour (mph) and heavy rain, which resulted in several downed trees, including a tree that fell on Eureka Ave. onto the field at Fairmount School. This was followed by heavier winds, up to 72 mph, and intense rain on March 21. The storm on March 21 caused more than 25 public tree failures, including trees on streets, in parks, and in the Hillside Natural Area.
The Public Works Department, in coordination with contractors, the Police Dept., Fire Dept., School District, PG&E, and others, worked quickly during and after these storms to make the public right-of-way safe for travel (and/or to temporarily close sidewalks, trails, and roads that were unsafe). This quick return to “normal” conditions on our roads, in our parks, and elsewhere, is thanks to the incredible and hardworking team in the Maintenance section of the Public Works Department.

Cleanup work following these storms is continuing to occur. Please communicate any issues you observe to Public Works Maintenance at (510) 215-4369 or maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

**Registration Deadline for the Citywide Garage Sale is Today, April 14**

The City will be hosting the 2023 Spring Citywide Garage Sale on **Saturday, May 13 from 9am to 3pm**. The City coordinates host locations to create a map, and hosts pay a non-refundable registration fee that covers the cost of creating the citywide map and publishing newspaper ads. The map of garage sale locations will be available a week prior to the event at el-cerrito.org/garagesale.

If a resident, business, or community group is interested in being a host, they should complete the **registration form** by today, **Friday, April 14**, so that their location will be included on the map. Alternatively, online registration is now also available on the **City’s website**. For more information, please contact the City’s Waste Prevention Specialist, Laurenteen Brazil, via e-mail at lbrazil@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or call (510) 215-4350.

**Arbor Week Tree Walk in Canyon Trail Park**

No Foolin’! On Saturday April 1st, twenty-one people joined City Arborist Stephen Prée on a walk and talk about the native and exotic trees in Canyon Trail Park. This event was co-sponsored and organized by the City’s **Urban Forest Committee** and El Cerrito Trail Trekkers. Topics included differentiating native species from invasive ones and habitat and natural area management strategies. This event was postponed from March 12, due to rain. For more information on the City’s Tree Programs, please contact Environmental Programs Manager / City Arborist, Stephen Prée, at spree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.
Recycling and Garbage Cart Colors Change This Summer

This Summer, the City of El Cerrito will be changing cart colors for garbage and recycling containers, to make it easier for customers to sort materials and in compliance with State Law, Senate Bill 1383.

Residents and businesses should set out old containers on their usual collection day; the old containers will be recycled. The City will be providing detailed information ahead of the planned rollout, and information can also be found on the City's website at el-cerrito.org/curbside.

For more information, community members can contact El Cerrito Operations + Environmental Services at: (510) 215-4350 or green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Welcome to New Senior Program Manager Karineh Samkian

The Public Works Department is pleased to introduce the City’s new (Part-time) Senior Program Manager, Karineh Samkian, who joined the Public Works Department last month. Karineh comes to the City from a previous role with the City of San Pablo, where she served in the Public Works Department for nearly 20 years, most recently as an Environmental Program Analyst. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Occidental College and a Master’s degree in Environmental Management from Duke University. In her position with the City of El Cerrito, Karineh will be focusing on moving a number of key projects forward for the Public Works Department, including expediting and streamlining the procurement of services and equipment, planning for enhanced maintenance and management of City facilities, and supporting the City’s solid waste and environmental programs. Please join the Public Works Department in welcoming Karineh Samkian to the City of El Cerrito team!

RECREATION

Swim Center Activity Pool Construction

Due to a large number of rainy days, we anticipate that the Activity Pool reopening will be delayed. We are hopeful to open the Activity Pool for rECswim and other programs by late-April or early-May. We will keep our website updated with any new information and dates, please visit www.el-cerrito.org/familyswim.

Also, as a result of this past storm/atmospheric river, a tree in our Splash Park was uprooted, taking out one of our fences. Because of this, the opening of our Splash Park for the season will be delayed until we can make sure the area is clean, safe, and our fence is repaired. Make sure to check this website for the most up to date information. We will keep our website updated with any new information and dates, please check www.el-cerrito.org/splashpark.
Summer rECguide & Activity Registration
Save the date: Summer registration for youth, adult, and senior programs as well as swim lessons opens ONLINE at 9:00am on Tuesday, May 2 for El Cerrito Residents and Wednesday, May 3rd for Non-Residents. All programs require advance online registration including payment of fees (except for drop-in programs). The rECguide with program details, schedules, and fees will be available online at www.el-cerrito.org/recguide as well as mailed to residents and neighbors in late April. To register for a program, visit www.el-cerrito.org/onlinereg.

2023-24 Afterschool Childcare at Harding, Fairmont, and Madera
The Recreation Department runs safe, structured, and nurturing recreation programs at Fairmont, Harding, and Madera Elementary Schools. Registration for the 2023-24 school year is now open ONLINE ONLY as of April 11. Registration is a multiple step process, and more details are available using the link below. To register and pay the registration fee, you will need an account with the Recreation Department. If you do not have an account, you will need to create one using our online registration system at www.el-cerrito.org/onlinereg. Early registration is strongly encouraged as space is limited. For How To’s, 23-24 Childcare Afterschool Program Fee Schedule, Parent Handbook, and more, visit: www.el-cerrito.org/childcare. The Afterschool Childcare program is scheduled to begin August 21, 2023 (the second week of school) and will run Monday-Friday immediately following school dismissal.

Employment Opportunities with the Recreation Department
The El Cerrito Recreation Department is currently hiring multiple part-time positions including Childcare Teacher, Childcare Aide, Gymnastics Coach, Lifeguard, and Water Aerobics Instructor. If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Recreation team, please have them check out our open positions at: https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/elcerrito.

We Want Your Feedback!
Did you know that you can provide feedback, suggest new programs, compliment instructors, or let us know where there is room for improvement using our feedback survey? Now available is an online survey that allows the public to share their thoughts on all recreation experiences. To provide your feedback on the Recreation Department, click here. Your comments help shape our future programs and planning!
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The City is pleased to offer the following employment opportunities:

- Associate Engineer
- Budget/Financial Services Manager
- Engineering Technician
- Management Assistant
- Police Officer – Lateral and Academy Graduate
- Police Officer – Recruit
- Senior Accountant
- Senior Planner
- Assistant Gymnastic Coach (Recreation Program Leader) – Part-Time
- Childcare Teacher – Part-Time
- Lifeguard & Senior Lifeguard – Part-Time
- Summer Camp Counselor (Childcare Aide) – Part-Time
- Swim Window Attendant (Seasonal)
- Water Aerobics Instructor (Aquatics Specialist I) – Part-Time
- Water Aerobics Instructor (Aquatics Specialist II) – Part-Time

For more information about the positions and how to apply, please visit: www.el-cerrito.org/jobs.

ATTACHMENTS/FLYERS

- Budget Town Hall Flyer – April 22, 2023
- Emergency Supply Sale
BUDGET TOWN HALL

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Join to learn about the City budget and provide your input.

Saturday
April 22
10am - 12pm
City Council Chambers
El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Ave
Or, join the meeting virtually at el-cerrito.org/BudgetTownHall

Topic of Discussion:
Fiscal Year 2023–24 City Budget

Find out more information at el-cerrito.org/BudgetProcess
EL CERRITO & KENSINGTON
EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS
EMERGENCY SUPPLY SALE
WATER STORAGE & FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

DO YOU HAVE 1 MONTH’S WORTH OF WATER STORAGE?
When an earthquake hits, one of the most important things to have on hand will be drinking water. EBMUD say they expect to have most residential service restored within a month of a major quake. Prepare to have 1 gallon of potable water and 1 gallon of sanitation water per person per day.

GET PREPARED IN TWO EASY STEPS:

1. PLACE ORDER BEFORE NOON APRIL 27TH
   To get started, visit www.kensingtonfire.org/supplysale
   (or, scan the QR Code on this page with your mobile device)
   We partner with Lamorinda CERT organization for these sales. You must order by noon, Thursday April 27th. In order to correctly route your order for pickup please note “El Cerrito CERT” on the checkout page. An email will be sent confirming your purchase.

2. ORDER PICKUP EL CERRITO CORPORATE YARD
   7450 SCHMIDT LANE, EL CERRITO
   FRI, MAY 5TH, 2023  4:30 PM - 7:30 PM
   SAT, MAY 6TH, 2023  9:00 AM - NOON
   We are an all-volunteer organization and schedule pickup dates in cooperation with the fire district, city of El Cerrito, and when we can get our volunteers together.
   All products must be picked up on the pickup dates.