



City Mulls Estuary Bike Bridge Grant

Ekene Ikeme

The City of Alameda entered the next phase in its quest for a bicycle-pedestrian bridge across the Oakland Estuary after receiving a \$1.55 million grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC).

The grant was approved on Jan. 28. City Council planned to authorize City Manager Eric Levitt to accept the grant funds at its May 26 meeting.

The city will use the acquired funds to complete a project initiation document (PID). The PID will define potential build alternatives and landing locations; prepare detailed cost estimates and schedules, among other things.

City staff will hire a consultant to develop the PID, according to a city memorandum. The report will be completed within 18 months, then brought to the City Council for approval. Staff plans to include City of Oakland staff in the process.

The ACTC approved Alameda's request for \$1.55 million after receiving a letter from Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft. In the letter to ACTC director Tess Lengyel on Nov. 19, 2020, Ashcraft expressed her support for the previously approved Oakland Alameda Access Project (OAAP) ("Mayor Weighs in on Caltrans Project," Oct. 27, 2020). The project plans to improve traffic congestion, and bicyclists and pedestrian safety by improving roadways in Oakland Chinatown and widening the maintenance walkway in Webster Tube. However, Ashcraft expressed that ACTC, and the city should do more.

"A bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Estuary between Alameda and Oakland provides that permanent long-term solution to improve bicycle

and pedestrian access, reduce traffic in Chinatown, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions regionally," wrote Ashcraft.

Ashcraft asked for \$1.4 million for the project study report, similar to a PID, but Levitt asked for \$1.55 million in a letter to Lengyel on Dec. 22, 2020. ACTC approved the grant and added the project to the 2020 Countywide Transportation Plan's 10-Year Priority Projects and Programs List.

Funds for the PID will be allocated from a portion of the funds allotted for the OAAP after Measure BB was approved in the November 2014 election.

The PID process comes after ACTC, in conjunction with the cities of Alameda and Oakland, released the Detailed Feasibility and Travel Demand Analysis for the Estuary Crossing. The report deemed a lift bridge meeting the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) requirements was feasible for the bicycle-pedestrian bridge. In 2009, city officials stated the bridge option would only move forward if "major USCG navigational clearance issues could be addressed," according to the memorandum. USCG standards call for a 600-foot span between piers that can be raised to 175 feet.

The report also expects 5,000 to 6,000 bicyclist and pedestrian trips would cross the bridge each weekday.

The study anticipates the total cost to design, engineer and build the bridge to be just under \$200 million, with annual costs to operate and maintain the bridge around \$3.5 million per year.

For more information, visit <https://www.alameda.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building-and-Transportation/Transportation>.

City Creating Emergency Response Pilot Program

Police auditor, staff and support services also in budget

Dennis Evanosky

Part one of three

Two line items on the city's 2021-22 budget signal that the city will indeed change how the Alameda Police Department (APD) responds to calls for service.

The first reads: "Mental Health Response Pilot Program and the second "NEW: Police Auditor, Support Services, Staffing."

If the budget is approved, the city will be spending \$1 million a year to implement the pilot program and \$300,000 a year for the police auditor, support service and staff.

City Council has instructed City Manager Eric Levitt to present this pilot program at its Tuesday, June 15 meeting.

The cities of Oakland and San Francisco have a head start on Alameda. They have been drawing up plans that Levitt and his staff might look to for ideas on how to craft one for Alameda.

In 2016, President Barack Obama's Department of Justice (DOJ) formed the Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommending reforms in five areas: use of force, bias, community policing, hiring and personnel reforms (14 findings and 32 recommendations).

The City and County of San Francisco responded to Obama's DOJ report with a program called

the Collaborative Reform Initiative (CRI). Mayor London Breed has introduced plans for a Police Reform Roadmap that includes four priorities as part of CRI:

- End the use of police in response to non-criminal activity
- Address police bias and strengthen accountability
- Demilitarize the police
- Promote economic justice

CRI also involves the San Francisco Police Department, which has drawn up a Racial Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.

San Francisco also added a new way it answers crisis calls. National Public Radio (NPR) reported, in November 2020, San Francisco began dispatching "unarmed mobile teams comprised of paramedics, mental health professionals and peer support counselors.

Oakland is calling its plan MACRO, which stands for

Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland. Oakland's program is unique because it will use the fire department, rather than the police department, to respond to nonviolent, mental health calls. But the teams will be made up of civilians, not sworn firefighters.

NPR covered this new idea and stated that civilian teams would deescalate problems by connecting people involved in what it termed "crisis calls" to services that would not include a jail, a psychiatric ward or a hospital.

In the next installment the *Alameda Sun* will look at how the 31-year-old Crisis Assistance Helping out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) program in Eugene Ore., and the recommendations of Alameda's Police Reform and Equity Steering Committee might come into play with Levitt's task.

Memorial Day Service

Sun Staff Reports

A Veterans Memorial Day ceremony will be held at 11 a.m., Monday May 31, at Veterans Memorial Park at the intersection of Doolittle and Island drives. See story below.

Because of COVID-19, this year's event will be a smaller ceremony than local veterans' groups have hosted in the past, but they

want to honor these heroes who have sacrificed all for their country.

Organizers ask that those who plan to attend respect COVID-19 protocols by wearing masks and maintaining social distancing where necessary.

Vietnam Veterans Of America, Chapter 400 will livestream the event on their Facebook page.



Change of Command for USCG's Stratton

U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Elyse Coler

Capt. Bob Little (left) and Capt. Stephen Adler (right) salute each other during the Coast Guard Cutter *Stratton's* (WMSL 752) change-of-command ceremony held aboard *Stratton* while anchored in the San Francisco Bay last Friday, May 21. Vice Adm. Linda L. Fagan, commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area and Defense Forces West, presided over the at-sea ceremony in which Adler relieved Little as *Stratton's* commanding officer.

Drive-Thru Barbecue Event Slated for June 12

Tickets available now; will sell out

Sun Staff Reports

Longtime Alamedans probably know Kiwanis Club of Alameda was unable to host the 22nd annual "lively, dynamic, vibrant and just plain fun" Chili Cook-Off in 2021 due to COVID-19. All proceeds from those annual chili events were given to local non-profit organizations. Those organizations need help now more than ever.

As some venues are slowly opening, the Kiwanis Club of Alameda decided to have a Drive-thru Barbecue and Virtual Entertainment fundraiser. The "Back to Summer BBQ" will be catered by Back Forty Texas BBQ. It's Texas style with enough food to fill you all the way up. After dinner,

enjoy some free virtual entertainment.

The meal will include three different mix-and-match barbecued meats. Sides and desserts are included. Special pricing is available for two. Also a vegetarian option is available.

Dinners are \$50 for individuals or \$90 for dinner for 2. The vegetarian option, a plant-based burger, is \$35. Donors who are not local but want to support the barbecue can purchase and donate a meal for delivery to a local shelter.

Tickets are on sale now through June 6, at midnight at www.eventbrite.com/e/drive-thru-bbq-virtual-entertainment-tickets-154088437665.

Memorial Day: History of Veterans Park



Arnold Dos Santos was among those who formally dedicated Alameda's Veterans Memorial Park back in 1998.

Photos & story

by Patricia Bowen

Through the efforts of Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 400 (VVA400), the vision of Veterans Park became reality on Memorial Day 1998, with approximately 900 in attendance.

Previously, in 1983, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Chapter 9919 and the American Legion Post 9 had placed a flagpole and plaque there commemorating the Alameda Vietnam veterans who lost their lives.

In the mid-1990s, Marine veteran Arnold Dos Santos discovered that the Community at Harbor Bay Association had planned to re-landscape the site to incorporate the usage of non-potable water during droughts. He

approached the Association manager, Tom Jordan, with the idea of transforming the site into a Veterans Memorial Park.

With Jordan's full support, they both approached the Board of Directors with the concept and a promise of \$5,000. When resistance

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Barn owls "who" might be found in Alameda.

8	5	4	9
6	2	7	3
9	7	2	5
5	8	6	1
1	4	3	8

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Sharpen your pencils for that newspaper tradition.



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May 30	5:50	20:23
May 31	5:49	20:24
April 1	5:49	20:25
April 2	5:49	20:26

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