



## APD Chief Updates Council

**Ekene Ikeme**

Alameda Police Chief Nishant Joshi informed councilmembers and the public of policies his department is implementing to make Alameda Police Department (APD) more efficient at the Sept. 21 City Council meeting.

Joshi's presentation was a 90-day update of his tenure as chief of police. He was sworn in on June 7.

Joshi began his presentation by informing council that he promoted several employees to sergeant and lieutenant to ensure a high-ranking employee was on shift seven days a week and almost 24 hours a day. When Joshi took over several key leadership positions were vacant, causing persons of lower ranks to temporarily fill higher ranked assignments.

"Our leadership team saw this as a risk management concern and made the appropriate adjustment," said Joshi.

Joshi also reorganized the department's executive team into three sections: Bureau of Operations (BOO), Bureau of Services (BOS) and the newly formed Office of the Chief of Police (OCOP). Each section will be given several tasks to implement within 120 days. One of the BOO's tasks include implementing its Equity First (fairness, integrity, respect, service and teamwork) initiative. One of the BOS' tasks include a more detailed focus on employee wellness. The OCOP will apply strategies from the police reform racial equity steering committee final report.

Joshi said the department adjusted officer beats to better meet the needs of residents. Joshi learned that there were many beats that accounted for less than 10 percent of calls for service, while one beat accounted for almost 50 percent of the calls for service.

"We realigned our beat boundaries to create a more equitable service to all beats and this was done based on volume of calls for service," said Joshi.

Joshi also plans to hire 19 to 20 additional officers by May 2022.

Joshi also said APD was experiencing significant staffing deficits, with the biggest deficit at the officer rank at 20 vacancies, when he began his tenure. Currently, many of the proposed hires are completing field or police academy training. The department also hired seven new field training officers, bringing the overall total to 13, to train new officers for success opposed to evaluating failures. APD also hired a new field training officer coordinator.

Several residents spoke during the public comment portion. Alexia Archa said she was concerned that more officers would be hired and patrolling Alameda.

"How many times have we been advocating for less police interaction with the public and here it seems the chief wants to bolster the force even more and possibly at the expense of the greater Alameda community," said Archa.

A few commenters were upset Joshi did not mention Mario Gonzalez' death investigation in his presentation. Joshi later said Mario Gonzalez' death investigation is being conducted by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office and Coroner's Office and APD is not involved. Gonzalez was killed after a confrontation with Alameda police officers on April 19. Other Commenters were concerned the presentation did not address officer bias, racism or accountability.

Joshi finished his presentation by revealing Alameda crime statistics from July 31, 2020, to July 31, 2021. Total crime in Alameda is down 4 percent year-over-year, but level one crime (murder, auto theft, robbery, theft over \$400, etc.) is up 3.7 percent. The leading categories are assault, which is up 215 percent (from 26 to 82) and rape, which is up 133 percent (from 6 to 14). Level 2 crime (forgery, vandalism, DUI, etc.) is down 15 percent.

Joshi took over as police chief from interim chief Randy Fenn. Fenn was hired after Paul Roller resigned on Aug. 28, 2020, amid controversy after the Mali Watkins arrest.

## Council Approves *The Road Home: A 5 Year Plan to Prevent and Respond to Homelessness*



Photo Karin Kim Jensen

An unsheltered person in front of the Main Library across from City Hall.

**Karin Kim Jensen**

At its October 5th meeting, City Council approved *The Road Home: A 5 Year Plan to Prevent and Respond to Homelessness in Alameda*. The City contracted with Homebase, a nationally recognized homelessness expert, to develop this strategic plan in response to the rising number of unsheltered in the City.

**Background**

In 2019, there were 231 Alamedans experiencing homelessness, up 13% from 2017. Of these, 132 were unsheltered. There was no count in 2020 due to the pandemic. However, the number is likely higher due to COVID-19 and other stressors of the last two years. As Mayor Ashcraft remarked, "Anecdotally, we see encampments where we hadn't seen them before."

Still, with fewer than 300 people experiencing homelessness and only half unsheltered on any given day, the City believes that the scale of its problem is solvable.

**The Strategic Plan**

The strategic plan is a roadmap to prevent and reduce first-time

homelessness, shorten the time of remaining homeless and decrease returns to homelessness. The plan has three goals; each contains three implementation strategies:

**Goal 1: Secure a housing future for all Alamedans**

**Strategy 1.1:** Assess and use available public and private land for housing.

**Strategy 1.2:** Protect and expand affordable housing through local policy.

**Strategy 1.3:** Coordinate housing solutions with the County and neighboring cities.

**Goal 2: Increase access to homeless emergency response services**

**Strategy 2.1:** Develop flexible resources for diversion, prevention, and housing retention. (Diversion targets those trying to gain entry into a shelter; prevention targets people at imminent risk of homelessness.)

**Strategy 2.2:** Provide low-barrier, temporary housing solutions.

**Strategy 2.3:** Expand outreach and supportive services to unsheltered households.

**Goal 3: Mobilize the citywide response to homelessness**

**Strategy 3.1:** Engage the community on the regional crisis of homelessness.

**Strategy 3.2:** Strengthen the Homeless Response System infrastructure.

**Strategy 3.3:** Ensure ongoing supportive services funding for assisted households, such as for health care and substance use, to prevent returning to homelessness.

The plan contains 51 action steps and a timeframe for each strategy, responsible parties, stakeholders, and potential funding sources. Specified metrics will measure progress and success.

**Public Comment**

Eight public speakers and one correspondent shared their comments. While speakers generally supported the plan, most expressed concern that proposed service sites are primarily in the West End and Alameda Point. One speaker noted that only one is east of Webster Street of ten potential properties considered for the program.

**COUNCIL: Page 9**

## Bills Address Underserved Housing and Banking

**Sun Staff Reports**

East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) is celebrating the passage of a priority bill, AB 1304: Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing in Housing Element Inventory of Land. AB 1304 requires each city and county to analyze patterns of segregation and develops policies and actions to affirmatively further fair housing both in its housing funding and zoning activities.

EBHO believes that every person should have a safe, quality, affordable home in a thriving community. The newly passed bill helps create accountability required to rectify racial and economic inequity in land use.

The consortium also praises the passage of AB 1177, The California Public Banking Option Act, which provides a stable, accessible banking option for underserved communities by

creating a public retail banking option for every California worker.

Nearly half of Black and Latino households are unbanked or underbanked, lacking access to basic financial services, like checking and savings accounts, that are critical to financial stability. The passage of the bill helps close the financial services gap, bolsters the economy, and supports an equitable economic recovery.

## Newsom Bans Gas Blowers and Mowers

**Sun Staff Reports**

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1346 into law last Saturday. The new law will ban the sale of small gas-powered off-road engines used in lawn mowers, leaf blowers and other garden equipment by Jan. 1, 2024. The law also calls for new portable gas-powered generators to be zero-emission by 2028.

Proponents of the bill say that these engines produce a similar amount of smog-causing pollution as compact passenger cars. They

point out that Californians use 16.7 million of these small engines on mowers and leaf blowers, some three million more than the number of compact cars on the road today. California points out that a gas-powered leaf blower running for one-hour spews as many pollutants as a 2017 Toyota Camry does on a 1,100-mile road trip.

Alameda City Council was already considering a ban on leaf blowers ("Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers on City Council Agenda" April 6).



Pixabay.com

AB1346 bans gas-powered lawn equipment.



City of Alameda

The City of Alameda is hosting a celebration of the new art installation in Jean Sweeney Open Space funded by the Alameda Public Art Commission (PAC) Public Art Fund. Artist Norman Moore has created a pair of mosaic-covered columns, titled Gateway to California, that were installed this past spring. The columns symbolize Alameda's role as a gateway for gold prospectors and the transcontinental railroad. Join the artist, PAC members, and City Staff for live music, a dance performance, and an Artist Q&A.

The event will be held on Friday, Oct. 22 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the west end of the park, near the Eighth Street entrance. All are welcome; wearing a mask is recommended by CDC guidelines for crowded outdoor settings.

## Colonial Revival Eclipses Queen Anne

The Colonial Revival style, which began in Philadelphia in 1876, blossomed into a movement and continued into the 20th century. The style was echoed there 22 years later with the 1898 restoration of Independence Hall. By then the style had taken root in Alameda, as evidenced by the beauty on Paru Street. Read more about the Colonial Revival style on page 12.



Photo Google Earth

PRSRRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
OAKLAND, CA  
PERMIT #789

## INSIDE

**HOMETOWN NEWS**  
Fire Page 2  
Police Blotter Page 5  
All the doings of Island safety & law personnel

**LOCAL ARTIST**  
Liz Harvey Page 3  
International artist displays her work on Island.

**CELEBRATE WITH BEER**  
Business goal Page 10  
Alameda Backyard Growers hits 10 years of service mark.

**ALAMEDA HISTORY**  
Colonila Revival Page 12  
Architect took "classic box" to new heights.

**CONTENTS**

**FIRE WIRE..... 2**

**THE CITY PAGE ..... 3**

**OPINION ..... 4**

**POLICE BLOTTER..... 5**

**CLASSIFIED ..... 6**

**FUN IN THE SUN .... 11**

**ALAMEDA HISTORY .. 12**

Alameda Sun is a publication of Stellar Media Group, Inc. 3215J Encinal Ave. Alameda, CA 94501

**Locally Owned, Community Oriented**

News: (510) 263-1470  
Ads: (510) 263-1471  
Fax: (510) 263-1473

Visit us Online at [www.AlamedaSun.com](http://www.AlamedaSun.com)  
Like or Friend us on Facebook  
Follow us on Twitter at Alameda\_Sun

**Alameda Sun Almanac**

Date	Rise	Set
Today	7:16	18:34
Oct. 15	7:17	18:33
Oct. 16	7:18	18:31
Oct. 17	7:19	18:30
Oct. 18	7:20	18:28
Oct. 19	7:21	18:27
Oct. 20	7:22	18:26

Alameda Sun  
3215J Encinal Ave.  
Alameda, CA 94501