

**City of Alameda, California
SOCIAL SERVICE HUMAN RELATIONS BOARD
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2022
APPROVED MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Sarah Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: President Sarah Lewis, Vice President Scott Means, Board members Dianne Yamashiro-Omi, Samantha Green, Michelle Buchholz, Bernie Wolf, and Gerald Bryant.

City staff: Rochelle Wheeler, Walker Toma, Marcie Johnson, Lois Butler, and Eric Fonstein

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-A Review and Approve September 22, 2022 Draft Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of September 22, 2022 was made by Board member Green and seconded by Board member Buchholz. Ayes: President Lewis, Vice President Means, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Green, Wolf, Bryant, and Buchholz. Motion passed 7-0.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

President Lewis proposed changing the order of the agenda, given there were staff presentations for items 5-B and 5-C, but no presentation for 5-A. She recommended hearing 5-B and 5-C first, and then returning to 5-A so that presenters did not have to stay for item 5-A. A motion to change the order was made by Board member Yamashiro-Omi and seconded by Vice President Means. Ayes: President Lewis, Vice President Means, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Green, Wolf, Bryant, and Buchholz. Motion passed 7-0.

5-B Review and Comment on the Draft Alameda Active Transportation Plan

President Lewis introduced staff member, Rochelle Wheeler, Senior Transportation Coordinator.

Ms. Wheeler presented the Alameda Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The following is a summary of the key segments:

- “Active transportation” refers to all active modes of transportation including walking and bicycling, as well as using wheelchairs and mobility scooters, push and electric scooters, electric bikes, skateboards and shared mobility options.
- ATP is a combination of the City’s Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Plan
- The project was initiated in late 2019 and the final draft will be presented to City Council in December 2022.
- City staff has conducted several community outreach workshops, engaging members of the public. The following are some of the key takeaways:
 - People want to walk and bike more themselves, and to have their kids safely walk/bike to school.
 - Safety and comfort are priorities; speeding is a concern.
 - Existing bike routes do not feel comfortable for most bicyclists.
 - Over 80% of City residents think Alameda should do more to make it safer to walk across busy streets, and over 70% think Alameda should do more to make it safer for people to bicycle.
- The vision for Alameda is to be a city where people of all ages, abilities, income levels and backgrounds can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk, bike, and roll to their destinations and to transit. This will result in reduced automobile congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.
- The ATP includes 31 programs/projects which have been set out, to support and supplement infrastructure (bike racks, trail maintenance, guidance documents, e-bike incentives, budget for crossing guards, etc.)
- 2030 Infrastructure Plan outlines 30 specific capital improvement projects needed over the next eight years to support meeting the vision and goals of this and other City plans. These projects include implanting the 2030 Backbone Low Stress Bicycle Network.

Ms. Wheeler, thanked the Board for their time and offered to answer any clarifying questions.

- Board member Wolf asked about the proposed estuary bike bridge, and how much is focused on healthy lifestyle versus easing traffic congestion. Ms. Wheeler answered: it will reduce congestion, as well as, increases safety and physical health. The reduction in vehicle miles reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions.

- Board member Bryant asked if the ATP has accounted for new residential development. Ms. Wheeler answered: yes, this is partially why the ATP has been established. It incorporates the General Plan which provides opportunity to bike and walk places, reducing the automobile traffic.
- Board member Bryant followed up by asking how public transit fits into the overall plan. Ms. Wheeler clarified that the plan focuses on “active transportation” and the options for individuals to access public transit. It will support public transit with safe, comfortable access to get to major destinations like public transit stops.

President Lewis asked if there were any public comments. There were no public comments. President Lewis then opened the item for discussion among the Board members.

- Vice President Means applauded the ATP for including the estuary bike bridge. It would be a safer way to get off of the island from the west end district, which currently requires the use of an underground tunnel.
- Board member Yamashiro-Omi asked if anyone discussed social barriers, during any of the community outreach workshops (e.g. purchasing a bicycle). Ms. Wheeler answered: one of the programs, include bringing mobile bike repair to the west end/lower income communities.
- Board member Bryant shared his concern about limiting traffic lanes on Highway 61, if we were to experience a natural disaster, as well as the potential for transit bottlenecks. Ms. Wheeler shared her insight on current evacuation plans, during a natural disaster, most of which do not require individuals to leave the island.
- Board member Buchholz wanted to know about the interaction with the City of Oakland, and the connecting bike lanes. Ms. Wheeler answered: Alameda continues to coordinate with the City of Oakland, as the project requires the use of land/planning from both cities.

President Lewis thanked Ms. Wheeler for her thorough presentation.

5-C Presentation of City's Guaranteed Income Pilot Program

Staff members Fonstein and Toma presented the Guaranteed Income (GI) Pilot Program. The following is a summary of discussion points and questions:

- Following direction from Council, staff conducted research on basic income programs. Basic income programs provide a flat monthly cash payment to a defined population of residents.

- Guaranteed Income (GI) is an income program that provides cash payments to a defined population.
- Payments are unconditional (i.e. does not require the recipient to be working), and unrestricted (i.e. allows the recipient the autonomy and judgement of how best to use the funds to meet their unique needs).
- Research indicates that GI programs increase expenditures on education and training, improve food security, and improve measures of well-being among the recipients.
- Currently, the State of California is providing \$35 million in general funds over five years to support GI program demonstrations around the State.
- Key elements of the program include:
 - Number of recipients: typically over 110 recipients,
 - Monthly case payment amount: ranges from \$400 to \$1300 per month,
 - Duration of pilot program: common range of pilot program is between 12-36 months, and
 - Recipient population: e.g. former foster care youth, pregnant or perinatal women and low income individuals or families.
- Based on research and interviews with peer cities, best practices for limiting potential negative impacts on recipients' economic situations due to participation in the pilot program include:
 - Securing income exemptions from State programs such as CalWORKS as well as for housing assistance benefits
 - The creation of "Benefit Conservation" fund that would provide compensation to recipients *if* they become ineligible for benefits due to receiving payments,
 - Recipients in the pilot program should be fully aware that their participation in the program may result in reduced safety net benefits, and
 - Program design should ensure transparency and encourage participants to do their own due diligence prior to program enrollment.
- Pilot programs often involve collaboration between multiple organizations: implementing partner, research partner and financial partner.

- In May of this year, City Council appropriated \$4.6 million to the pilot program: payments of \$1,000 a month, for 24 months, to 150 low income households.
- GI pilot program is targeted to launch (first payment received by participant) in the spring or summer of 2023.

President Lewis asked if there were any public comments. There were no public comments. President Lewis opened the floor for clarifying questions/comments.

- Board member Buchholz asked who the City has partnered with for the research component. Staff member Toma answered: staff interviewed three potential candidates and the recommended candidate will be presented to City Council in November.
- Board member Yamashiro-Omi asked if there is an expectation that the recipient will be able to maintain or sustain the increased funding beyond the two years. Staff member Toma answered: he does not believe that is the expectation of the program outcome. However, research from other programs has indicated that there have been increases in full-time employment and/or income.
- Board member Bryant asked for clarification on the recipient population (single subset or multiple subsets combined). Staff member Toma answered: per City Council direction, the program was designed for low income.
- Alameda residents. The actual income threshold, has not been determined.
- Board member Buchholz asked if the program will be randomized and if there will be a control group to evaluation the impact. Staff member Fonstein answered: staff will be working with a research partner to develop a tool for selecting recipients from the application pool.
- Board member Buchholz also wanted to know if the funds would be taxed. Staff member Toma answered: funds will be issued as a “gift” and are below the IRS threshold, so will they will not be taxed. However certain programs will still require income exemptions.
- President Lewis stated, she is also curious about the selection process and control group studies. She has asked for an update following the City Council meeting.
- Board member Green wanted to know some of the monthly cash payments and corresponding income thresholds for other cities in the Bay Area, and

where Alameda lands in comparison. Staff member Toma answered: the average monthly cash payments, range from \$500-\$1,000 (e.g. \$1,000 for an Art program in San Francisco, \$500 for a program in Oakland).

- Board member Bryant wanted to know the long term goal for the program. Staff member Toma answered: it is unlikely that the program continues for multiple years, due to the specific fund source (ARPA). Staff hopes that the success of the program, would inform future policy at the state and federal level.

President Lewis thanked staff members for their presentation.

5-A Continued Discussion of the 2022 Community Needs Assessment (CNA); Presentation and Status Report by CERES Policy Research on Focus Groups

President Lewis stated that there would not be a presentation made and requested that Staff member Fonstein provide the Board with an update.

Staff member Fonstein informed the Board that the City has terminated the contract/services with CERES Policy Research to conduct focus groups to support the CNA. Due to their lack of ability to perform the agreed scope of work and inability to meet the December 10, CDBG needs statement. Alternatively, staff is recommending that the Board utilizes communication from nonprofit organizations, as done in past years.

President Lewis asked if there were any public comments. There were no public comments. President Lewis then opened the item for discussion among the Board members.

Board member Yamashiro-Omi said that this required us to rethink the community engagement component of the CNA, highlighting that focus groups may be problematic.

Board member Wolf said that perhaps more emphasis on organizations that work with people in need, such as Alameda Friendly Visitors or Big Brother/Big Sisters. Leveraging the community relationship to understand the needs of residents.

Board member Green seconded the idea of reaching out to public service providers. Adding that they may need to make it broader than past years.

Board member Yamashiro-Omi suggested reaching out Claudia Medina, a former member of SSHRB and a current member or AUSD's Roundtables.

Vice President Means suggested this is a reasonable approach to get community based organizations to speak to SSHRB.

Board member Bryant suggested canvassing specific areas/neighborhoods to obtain survey data.

Board member Yamashiro-Omi mentioned that canvassing might be time consuming and also involve concerns and apprehension about exposure to COVID. She said that Ceres did not have the trust or the established relations to community groups, which was a reason why it took them so long to get community feedback.

Board member Green stated focus groups may be more effective in the future.

Staff member Butler stated that the focus should be producing a good assessment, not focusing on short term time considerations.

President Lewis said we have a great data book with comprehensive panels to report on the needs they've seen. The next step is to identify what we want the CNA to look like long term, with effective community engagement for 2023.

Board member Buchholz commented that it will be worth the time and effort if done correctly. Even if it was delayed, the data would be correct.

President Lewis shared she would like to see more community engagement, a crucial piece of SSHRB's charter.

5-D Discussion of 2023 Work Plan for the Social Service Human Relations Board

President Lewis proposed tabling the discussion to December's special meeting.

A motion to table Item 5-D to the December special meeting was made by Board member Wolf and seconded by Vice President Means. Ayes: President Lewis, Vice President Means, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Green, Wolf, Bryant, and Buchholz. Motion passed 7-0.

5-E Workgroup Reports

- Domestic Violence Task Force – next meeting November 10.
- Alamedans Together Against Hate (Yamashiro-Omi) – Board member Omi reminded the group that she and Vice President Means had gathered reference materials from other cities to possibly use as models for how to move forward, once the Needs Assessment is completed. Board member Bryant volunteered to help out.
- Infrastructure Workgroup (Lewis, Means)

5-F Vision Zero Committee Meeting Report

Vice President Means had nothing to add.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

6-A Status Report on Homeless Services

Staff member Johnson provided the following status on the City of Alameda's Homeless Services:

- Homeless Outreach Team reports are going well. The Village of Love (VOL) is coordinating with social service providers and are extremely responsive to requests for outreach support.
- Emergency Supportive Housing staff have begun working. Staff is coordinating closely with VOL to furnish and move unhoused individuals and families referred by the Coordinated Outreach Team into Emergency Supportive Housing. Furniture deliveries will begin on Monday, October 31. Items purchased for the homes include towels, blankets, sheets, dishes, glasses, mugs, flatware, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, welcome mats, beds, dining sets, couches, desks, and chairs. Upon opening the three homes, Alameda will have up to 19 beds to accommodate unhoused individuals and families in time for the holiday season and inclement weather months. The Community Development Department is excited to bring the City Council's vision of supporting the most vulnerable in our community with stable and safe housing to fruition. Staff expects to have individuals and/or families move in by the beginning of November.
- City Council approved additional funding needed to complete the Dignity Village construction and approved a five-year Service Provider Agreement for Five Keys Schools and Programs to offer supportive services. Construction on the project will commence next week. The City, Five Keys Schools and Programs, and Dignity Moves hosted a construction commencement event on Tuesday, October 25. Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, Senator Nancy Skinner, and Assembly Member Mia Bonta were present along with representatives from the contractor, architect teams and the larger community. SSHRB member Gerald Bryant was present. The event was positive and focused around the need for the development of the 47-bed interim supportive housing to serve the homeless, chronically homeless, and homeless or at risk of homeless youth. The project will open in March 2023.

- The resident interest meeting for Dignity Village was hosted by VOL on October 26. There were over 29 individuals present along with City staff, Five Keys staff, and Building Futures with Children and Families staff. Residents had questions about the physical living spaces, costs (there will be no rent required), whether couples will be able to co-habitat and whether or not pets were allowed (pets will be allowed). Steve Good, Executive Director and President of Five Keys became emotional during the meeting due to the number of people in need, the age of the group, and the need. VOL did an excellent job of driving traffic to the meeting. The available resource plus the work VOL has been doing since 2020 has positioned us well to engage and meet the needs of the unhoused.
- The community interest meeting for Dignity Village will occur on Tuesday, November 8 from 6 to 7 pm. The meeting will be offered in a hybrid format and advance registration is required.
- Staff will bring Winter Warming shelter to Council next on November 15. We are asking for a non-congregate hotel option and working to see if an additional congregate shelter at Christ Church can be staffed as well.

6-B Cancellation of the regular November 24 and December 22 meetings and the scheduled special meeting for Thursday, December 1, 2022

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

None.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

President Lewis adjourned the meeting at 8:56 p.m.