

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
February 18, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE IN HONOR OF THE US MILITARY TROOPS

The City Council Meeting was held in a hybrid format (in-person and via Zoom videoconference and broadcast) from the Pinole Council Chambers, 2131 Pear Street, Pinole, California. Mayor Sasai called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to order at 5:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before we begin, we would like to acknowledge the Ohlone people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We pay our respects to the Ohlone elders, past, present and future, who call this place, Ohlone Land, the land that Pinole sits upon, their home. We are proud to continue their tradition of coming together and growing as a community. We thank the Ohlone community for their stewardship and support, and we look forward to strengthening our ties as we continue our relationship of mutual respect and understanding.

3. ROLL CALL, CITY CLERK'S REPORT & STATEMENT OF CONFLICT

An official who has a conflict must, prior to consideration of the decision; (1) publicly identify in detail the financial interest that causes the conflict; (2) recuse himself/herself from discussing and voting on the matter; and (3) leave the room until after the decision has been made, Cal. Gov. Code § 87105.

A. COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT

Cameron Sasai, Mayor
Anthony Tave, Mayor Pro Tem
Norma Martinez-Rubin, Council Member*
Devin Murphy, Council Member
Maureen Toms, Council Member
* Arrived after Roll Call

B. STAFF PRESENT

Kelcey Young, City Manager
Heather Bell, City Clerk
Eric Casher, City Attorney
Roxane Stone, Deputy City Clerk
Fiona Epps, Assistant to the City Manager
Kapil Amin, Sustainability Fellow
Lilly Whalen, Community Development Director
Keith Marks, Chief Building Official

City Clerk Heather Bell announced the agenda had been posted on February 13, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. with all legally required written notices. Written comments had been received in advance of the meeting, distributed to the City Council and staff, posted on the City website and made available in the Council Chambers. A memorandum with suggested revisions had been received for Item 9D, also made available online and in the Council Chambers for public viewing.

Following an inquiry, the Council reported there were no conflicts with any items on the agenda.

4. CONVENE TO A CLOSED SESSION:

Citizens may address the Council regarding a Closed Session item prior to the Council adjourning into the Closed Session, by first providing a speaker card to the City Clerk.

A. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS

Gov. Code § 54957.6

Agency designated representatives: City Manager Kelcey Young, City Attorney Eric Casher, Human Resources Director Stacy Shell and Gregory Ramirez, IEDA Employee Organizations: AFSCME Local 1, AFSCME Local 512 and the management Compensation Plan (MCP)

B. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS

Gov. Code § 54956.8

Property: 2100 San Pablo Ave.

Agency negotiators: City Manager Kelcey Young and City Attorney Eric Casher

Negotiating party: Art Pakpour

Under negotiation: Price and Terms

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Deputy City Clerk Roxane Stone reported there were no comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

5. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION TO ANNOUNCE RESULTS OF CLOSED SESSION

At 7:13 p.m., Mayor Sasai reconvened the meeting into open session. There was no reportable action from the Closed Session.

6. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD (Public Comments)

Citizens may speak under any item not listed on the Agenda. The time limit is 3 minutes and is subject to modification by the Mayor. Individuals may not share or offer time to another speaker. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act, no action may be taken on a matter unless it is listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. The City Council may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Council meeting.

Rafael Menis, reported on the rate of COVID-19 in the community per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, with the community having stabilized at a somewhat higher level and he urged continued precautions. He also asked the City Council to consider declaring a Local State of Emergency pursuant to Section §85580 of the California Government Code, which he read into the record, as it related to the continued actions of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and the allocation of funds from the federal government to infrastructure projects. As noted in written comments he had provided to the City Council, the federal government continued not to release previously allocated funds. He asked the City of Pinole to declare a State of Emergency in order to invoke Section §35754 of the Vehicle Code to set a lower weight limit for the San Pablo Avenue Bridge due to the fundamental uncertainty of whether or not the City would be able to receive state or federal grants, or whether those grants would actually be funded due to the federal government's current policy of being able to decide whether or not to fund grants based on the President's whims.

Irma Ruport, referenced an article in the local newspaper dated February 14, 2025, regarding the new Chief of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who called for the return of monies that had been earmarked for clean energy climate projects and the potential for rescinding grants awarded by the Biden Administration. She recognized the City had hired a Grant Writer in the past year and she wanted to caution the City regarding those grants. Having worked in a government grant funding program when grants were awarded, grants were to be spent and utilized as soon as possible or they could be lost, and given the current instability she suggested things may turn for the worse. The City also recently passed Measure I, with some of the funding to go towards potholes and streets. She expressed concern as potholes became worse they could cause an accident. She reported that one accident had recently occurred in the City. She asked whether the City would be liable and asked that more priority be given to the repair of potholes as soon as possible.

Ms. Ruport also commented that Coffee with the City had in the past been Coffee with a Cop, but the former Police Chief and current City Manager changed it to Coffee with the City, held two hours on a weekday once a month. She suggested those two hours could be better spent at the Farmers Market or the Senior Center on a Saturday when people would have a greater opportunity to participate rather than during a weekday. She wanted to see a Roll Call of attendance for this event. In addition, she commented on the City's partnership with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD), and suggested an invitation be extended to the CCCFPD to all community events including Coffee with the City. She asked for a response from staff to those concerns either via telephone call or an email.

7. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

A. Mayor Report

1. Announcements

Mayor Sasai reported that he had attended the Mayors' Conference hosted by the Town of Moraga with a presentation about development in the City of San Francisco, appointments to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and East Bay Regional Communications System Agency (EBRCSA) Board. He had also met with staff for State Senator Jesse Arreguin to discuss the legislative package for this year and shared the City of Pinole's priorities.

Mayor Sasai had also met personally with Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia to discuss shared vision and priorities for this year and he planned to attend the West Contra Costa Transportation Commission (WCCTA) meeting scheduled for February 28, 2025 in the City of El Cerrito. He had also attended the Black History Month Jubilee at Pinole Valley High School and commended the educators, student leaders and families associated with the event, particularly the efforts of Michele Lamons-Raiford. He also invited the public to the reopening of the Pinole Valley Park Soccer Field on February 22, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

B. Mayoral & Council Appointments

1. Appointment of Council Subcommittee – Republic Services Agreement Review

City Manager Kelcey Young reported the City's Franchise Agreement with Republic Services would end June 30, 2025. Upon Council approval, two potential Council Subcommittee members were asked to review the contract with Republic Services while the City continued its negotiations and provided insight and input. The Subcommittee was intended to work with staff quickly over the next couple of weeks.

Council member Toms explained that she and then Council member Tave had previously been designated by the City Council to serve on a Council Subcommittee and she remained interested and available.

Mayor Pro Tem Tave was also interested in remaining on the Subcommittee, which had been formed when Council member Toms had served as Mayor. At that time, two meetings had been held with engineering staff in the early stages of the negotiations of the contract with Republic Services and those discussions were more informative in nature. Given the impending deadline, he recognized a lot of work was needed to be done quickly and he remained interested in remaining on the Subcommittee.

Mayor Sasai asked about the frequency and scope of the Subcommittee meetings, to which City Manager Young deferred to the City Attorney but understood and expected there would be a couple of meetings, more if needed.

City Attorney Casher clarified this would be an Ad-Hoc Subcommittee. The City already had a draft agreement in place that would be brought to the Subcommittee for review, possibly every two weeks, depending on the need, with the agreement ultimately to be presented to the full City Council for consideration with recommendations from the Subcommittee.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Irma Ruport, asked the City Council to consider a member of each of the City's Commissions/Committees to serve on the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee. She had been a long-time resident of Pinole and the City had been through a lot of contracts with Republic Services and she had a lot of ideas. She would appreciate allowing a member of the community to be a part of the process at the beginning to review the contract and offer any insight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

ACTION: Motion by Council member Murphy/Mayor Sasai to approve the appointment of Mayor Pro Tem Tave and Council member Toms to serve on the Republic Services Agreement Review Ad-Hoc Subcommittee.

Vote: **Passed** **5-0**
 Ayes: **Sasai, Tave, Murphy, Martinez-Rubin, Toms**
 Noes: **None**
 Abstain: **None**
 Absent: **None**

C. City Council Committee Reports & Communications

Council member Martinez-Rubin reported she had attended a WestCAT Board of Directors meeting and briefed the City Council on the approved agenda items.

Council member Toms reported she had attended the Black History Month Jubilee and expressed her appreciation to the students under the leadership of Ms. Lamons-Raiford. She also reported she planned to attend an upcoming meeting with new Senator Jesse Arreguin to discuss Pinole issues.

D. Council Requests for Future Agenda Items: None

There were no requests for Future Agenda Items.

E. City Manager Report / Department Staff

City Manager Young reported the City had to conduct an emergency procurement for the Senior Center due to severe leaks on the roof as well as having challenges with the HVAC system. Staff was currently working with City Mechanical for the HVAC work and Central Roofing for the roofing project. The HVAC work involved a not-to-exceed-amount of \$155,502. For the roofing project staff was still finalizing negotiations but the approximate project cost was \$100,000. Those projects would stop the leaks, repair the heating and cooling system and make the Senior Center far more comfortable for seniors and the community.

City Manager Young reminded everyone of the Pinole Valley Park Soccer Field Reopening on February 22, 2025, with food trucks, games and a variety of activities planned. The Mayor would also provide the first kick and everyone was asked to cheer him on.

City Manager Young also announced the City would hold a Measure I Town Hall on March 1, 2025 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Senior Center, which would offer an opportunity for the community to ask questions and discuss projects. A survey would also be provided to the community by the end of the week and residents were encouraged to participate with input on the types of projects the community would be interested in seeing moving forward. In addition, new Police Chief Melissa Klawuhn would be introduced at the City Council meeting on March 4, 2025 along with new Public Works Director Heba El-Guindy.

F. City Attorney Report: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED (Items 7D through 7F)

City Clerk Bell reported there were no comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

8. RECOGNITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNITY EVENTS

A. Proclamations

1. Japanese Day of Remembrance

The City Council read into the record a proclamation recognizing February 19, 2025, as Japanese Day of Remembrance with the proclamation to be presented by the Mayor to the Japanese American Civil Liberties League (JACL) at the Rosie the Riveter World War II National Historic Park in the City of Richmond on February 22, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. The proclamation would also be presented to those impacted by the internment camps.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Deputy City Clerk Stone reported there were no comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

B. Presentations

1. Plant Powered Pinole (Anna Smith, Pinole Resident and Business Owner)

Sustainability Fellow Kapil Amin introduced Anna Smith, Pinole resident and business owner, for Plant Powered Pinole (PPP), a citizen-led coalition for a more peaceful and sustainable Pinole, who provided a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the advocacy for more accessible plant-based options through this initiative that would provide more accessible and healthy food options to local families. The presentation also identified what vegans did and did not eat and data that supported more vegetarian options in local restaurants; what a compassionate City may look like with vegetarian options, which may increase food access across the board; and samples of menus from a few local restaurants where vegan options could be considered. The City Council was encouraged to continue to support and work collaboratively with PPP to make Pinole more compassionate, sustainable and accessible for all residents and visitors.

Ms. Smith responded to questions from the City Council and clarified the majority of the restaurant options in Pinole involved food chains. PPP would help with the visibility in offering vegan food options. She again highlighted what a “Compassionate City” would look like, with parts of Pinole qualifying for “low food access.” She acknowledged a request for the data to accurately reflect in future presentations where low food access was located in Pinole. PPP intended to provide affordable, healthy options readily available in the community including vegetarian and vegan foods, work with local small businesses to name their existing vegan options and begin to expand accessibility for healthy foods for all citizens and encourage restaurants with vegan options to gain visibility on apps that would save money in the long run.

Ms. Smith clarified, when asked, that she had only spoken to two restaurants in Old Town, the Bear Claw and East Bay Coffee about expanding their menu options, and she was in the process of preparing lists of how vegan options may be considered. She reiterated how Pinole could help in this effort and provided the details for PPP's contact and website information. She also highlighted how she had modeled the PPP initiative after the Vegan Society in the United Kingdom, with one of the approaches a postcard program where one could leave a postcard asking a business to consider adding more vegan options to a menu and an opportunity to leave any comments. Information was available on the PPP website that could be downloaded and shared with others.

The City Council thanked Ms. Smith for her presentation, useful information and consideration of the PPP initiative.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Rafael Menis, thanked Ms. Smith for the presentation. He detailed the items vegans did and did not eat, as reflected in the PowerPoint presentation and asked about the dividing line between the use of bees for honey since gathering honey did not kill the bees and bees were used for pollen and crops like almonds. He understood there was a 60 percent death rate for hives used to pollinate almonds. He asked for clarification about the dividing line between honey and almonds.

Ms. Smith explained that while she was not a dietician, climate scientist or medical doctor, in her experience and in the vegan circles in which she was involved, this was a big issue that was worth discussing. Another part of the vegan conversation she would encourage people interesting in learning more about was human labor and human harm. She cited the Human Empowerment Project, which included an ethical chocolate list and commented that gelatin comes from hooves, an animal has to die, and oftentimes bees needed their honey to survive, and sometimes their wax or comb was taken, which harmed the hive. Almond crops have large sustainability issues in terms of water and bees and many vegans did not consume almond milk for that reason and more.

Anthony Vossbrink, asked about the definition and difference between a true vegan versus a vegetarian and whether that had anything to do with the type of nutrition one gets in or out of a restaurant. He also asked for a better explanation of what was occurring at different levels of the community, such as grade schools, which involved Contra Costa County in terms of education up to Senior Centers. He understood the Pinole Senior Center diet and menu was not really that healthy compared to what was dictated by the County. He also wanted to learn more about what other cities enjoyed. As an example, the City of Berkeley's Senior Center had two separate menus; a regular lunch menu five days a week and a vegetarian lunch menu five days a week, for only \$3 each, whereas Pinole's Senior Center had two days of regular menu, a hot meal Wednesdays and Thursdays only and Fridays an ala carte menu consisting of a cold, frozen to go menu, none of which were vegetarian other than possibly one day a month where a vegetable or vegetable soup may be offered. He suggested Fridays be designated for a full vegetarian menu for seniors as well as making educational materials available. He otherwise asked why the Senior Center only offered hot meals two days a week and why it had become difficult to make a reservation for a vegetarian menu.

Ms. Smith explained the differences between a vegetarian and a vegan was that vegetarians did not eat meat, the flesh of animals, whereas vegans did not eat anything that was made of or came from an animal. In terms of getting a well-rounded nutritional meal, a well-rounded cook learned tricks and she recommended little things that could make a meal well-rounded including the use of plant proteins such as beans; nuts, anything in the legume family; mushrooms, things made of beans like tofu and tempeh; things made of peas like lima beans, dark leafy greens and cooked in a cast iron pan where one could get iron back in the body; or use of an iron fish in pots of soups as examples. She noted, however, that if one wanted to go vegan they must take vitamin B-12 daily for immunity. In response to the issue with systematic meals, she could see the City or activists taking on this issue in the future and commented that subsidies, which included how animal products tended to be what was provided was a larger shift for a lot of people, particularly financially and from a planning perspective. She agreed with the comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

Mr. Amin reported PPP would be incorporated into the City's Single-Use Plastics outreach effort.

2. Clean California Community Designation (Cecile Carson, EdD Keep California Beautiful Executive Team Leader and Gabi Polo, Keep America Beautiful, Western Region and Strategic Partnership Sr. Director)

Mr. Amin introduced Cecile Carson, EdD Keep California Beautiful Executive Team Leader and Gabi Polo, Keep America Beautiful, Western Region and Strategic Partnership Sr. Director who provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Clean California Community Designation, which recognized communities committed to environmental stewardship, beautification and sustainable waste management and which presentation included an overview of the power of Clean and Beautiful Communities, the Community Designation Checklist, designation benefits, steps to community designation and the resources for pledged communities. The City Council was encouraged to join and take the pledge to become designated as a Clean California Community as had other communities in the State of California.

Responding to questions from the City Council, Ms. Carson and Ms. Polo clarified the following:

- Keep America Beautiful was a national non-profit with a mission to inspire and educate people to take action daily to beautify and improve the community and community environment with different grant programs offered to a network of affiliates across the nation and other cities and communities. One of the grant opportunities involved a grant to eliminate and reduce waste, with grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 to tackle that issue along with grants involving beautification and recycling. The grant cycle was currently open and by pledging to pursue the designation program, priority review of a grant application was provided with a greater chance of obtaining grant funding if the City were to apply. (Mayor Sasai)
- Highlighted again the criteria required to be met to become designated, the eight to nine criteria points the City may have already met or was in the process of meeting and how the City could meet the remaining criteria. (Mayor Sasai)

- Once the City received its Clean California Community Designation, a large or smaller sign promoting the designation would be provided that could be added to existing signs or infrastructure in the community. Additional signage may be procured directly from the vendor if the City desired more signs to post. (Mayor Sasai)
- Confirmed the Clean California Community Designation initiative was led by Caltrans. Acknowledged longtime concerns with litter on freeway on- and off-ramps and the need for Caltrans to address this issue. (Martinez-Rubin)
- The signage to be provided as part of the designation as a Clean California Community would be provided by Keep California Beautiful along with installation instructions, with the City to decide placement. Keep California Beautiful may facilitate an introduction to the Caltrans District staff regarding whether signage could be placed on the freeway on- or off-ramps, although their main communication and contact was with Caltrans staff in a specific department and headquarters. There would need to be identification of whether the property was Caltrans-maintained or not in terms of where placement may occur. (Murphy)

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Anthony Vossbrink, asked whether Keep California Beautiful could assist the City of Pinole directly or indirectly to obtain new green recyclable trash bins given the continued need for replacement. The desire was that these recyclable trash bins be placed in those areas of the City that had been neglected and ignored on an ongoing basis. While new recyclable trash bins had been promised in the past, that had not occurred and while some businesses had complied with recycling requirements, the City must comply 100 percent. He challenged the presenters and Caltrans to assist the City in taking care of recyclable litter in the community and he offered examples of problem areas in the community including: the dog park, barbeque grove, the tiny tot's playground, Pinole Valley and other parts of the City. He urged that all recyclable bins be upgraded and suggested it would take little staff time and cost to do so.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

Mayor Sasai thanked the presenters for the presentation. He looked forward to continued conversations.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters under the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and noncontroversial. These items will be enacted by one motion and without discussion. If, however, any interested party or Council member(s) wishes to comment on an item, they may do so before action is taken on the Consent Calendar. Following comments, if a Council member wishes to discuss an item, it will be removed from the Consent Calendar and taken up in order after adoption of the Consent Calendar.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on February 4, 2025.

- B. Receive the February 1, 2025 – February 14, 2025 – List of Warrants in the Amount of \$1,046,685.77 and the February 14, 2025, Payroll in the Amount of \$526,206.10.
- C. Receive and File an Update on Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Building Energy Ordinances and Reach Codes. **Action: Receive and File an Update (Lilly Whalen, Kapil Amin)**
- D. Approve Letter to State Legislators Urging Caltrans to Address Litter Along I-80. **Action: Approve Letter per Staff recommendation (Kelcey Young)**
- E. First Amendment to the Consulting Services Agreement with West Yost for Additional Services Associated with Storm Drain Master Plan. **Action: Adopt Resolution per Staff Recommendation (Faby Guillen)**
- F. Placement of Liens for Delinquent Unpaid Waste Collection Charges Falling Delinquent Between September and December 2024, Considered at an Administrative Hearing on February 6, 2025. **Action: Adopt Resolution per Staff Recommendation (Roxane Stone)**
- G. Precision IT Contract Amendment. **Action: Adopt Resolution per Staff Recommendation (Fiona Epps)**
- H. Approve Draft Pipeline License Agreement with BNSF Railway Company. **Action: Adopt Resolution per Staff Recommendation (Faby Guillen)**

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Rafael Menis provided the following comments on the Consent Calendar:

- Item 9C, Page 57 of 137 of the agenda packet, Review and Analysis, For New Construction, BE-1a, Adopt a single margin source energy score or more stringent ordinance in 2024 to avoid new natural gas construction, referencing the last sentence of the paragraph which read: *Furthermore, after consultation with the Planning department it was determined that no new residential and non-residential new construction projects are in the pipeline through 2025, deeming efforts for a new construction reach code futile*, and commented on his understanding the Kmart project was in the pipeline by that point and he asked for clarification.
- Item 9E, asked whether the funds allocated to West Yost were the funds that were assigned for the on-call supervisor or whether they were from a separate pot of funds.
- Item 9G, asked whether the fiscal impact was \$34,000 per month or \$30,100 per month, since both numbers were referenced in different places in the staff report and the resolution and should be clarified.
- Item 9H, asked whether \$89,000 was a typical cost for just getting access rights to the railroad right-of-way (ROW); Page 107 of 137 of the agenda packet, 4. Use of Premises, which read: *Licensee shall use the Premises solely for construction, maintenance, and*

use of the Pipeline in accordance with the Drawings and Specifications. The Pipeline shall carry sanitary sewer, and Licensee shall not use the Pipeline to carry any other material or use the Premises for any other purpose.

Licensee is expressly prohibited from using or allowing any telecommunication facilities or equipment within the Premises, or using or allowing the use of the Premises for any other purpose, and asked whether it was typical to include telecommunication and sewage lines, why it had been structured that way and whether the City had received any answers to those questions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

Mayor Sasai asked the City Manager to have the appropriate staff get back to Mr. Menis with responses to his questions in writing. He added that staff could be contacted prior to a meeting as well to ask any questions about any agenda item.

City Manager Young asked that Mr. Menis reach out to staff on those specific questions to allow staff to get back to him.

City Clerk Bell reported that staff's contact information had been included with each staff report to allow members of the public to reach out to staff in advance to respond to questions.

Speaking to Consent Calendar Item 9G, Assistant to the City Manager Fiona Epps, reported she had prepared Item 9G and identified an error on the resolution for the dollar amount that was included, and which should be amended to read: **\$34,000**. If the City Council approved the resolution, the resolution would be updated to match the amount of the contract in the staff report.

Mayor Sasai spoke to Item 9D, and thanked Council member Toms for taking the initiative regarding the letter to State legislators urging Caltrans to address litter along I-80. He found it was a great letter and he hoped the representatives at the state level would be able to secure the K-rails for the City.

City Clerk Bell reported Item 9A would be removed from the Consent Calendar for additional review to be added to the March 4, 2025 City Council meeting agenda.

ACTION: Motion by Council members Toms/Murphy to adopt Consent Calendar Items 9B through 9H, subject to modifications to the letter on the dais for Item 9D, corrections to Item 9G, as identified by staff, and with Item 9A to be added to the March 4, 2025 City Council meeting agenda.

Vote:	Passed	5-0
	Ayes:	Sasai, Tave, Martinez-Rubin, Murphy, Toms
	Noes:	None
	Abstain:	None
	Absent:	None

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

11. OLD BUSINESS: None

12. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of the Pinole Accessible Living Program, or “PAL Program” Which Will Provide Educational Workshops and Permit Fee Waivers for Qualifying Home Modifications that Improve Accessibility, Safety, and Comfort for Extremely Low, Very Low, Low and Moderate-Income Households, As Well As for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Implementation of Program 9 of the Housing Element).
Action: Adopt Resolution per Staff Recommendation (David Hanham, Keith Marks, Lilly Whalen)

Community Development Director Lilly Whalen provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Pinole Accessible Living Program, or “PAL Program,” designed to help homeowners improve accessibility, safety, and energy efficiency, with a focus on Extremely Low to Moderate Income households, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, and which implemented Housing Element Program 9, ensuring Pinole’s housing remained accessible and livable. Program 9 of the Pinole Housing Element; why the program was necessary; the program components; permit fee waiver: eligibility and application; example fee waiver: accessibility – focused home remodel and educational workshops were all highlighted.

Community Development Director Whalen recommended the City Council adopt the resolution in Attachment A to the February 18, 2025 staff report, approving the establishment of the Pinole Accessible Living Program or “PAL Program.” She identified the launch time, budget and funding and ongoing monitoring and adjustments to the funding and program scope, as needed.

Responding to questions from the City Council, Community Development Director Whalen and Chief Building Official Keith Marks clarified the following:

- One of the workshops could explain the process of getting a licensed contractor for particular work. Self-certification for the PAL Program was for eligible persons in the PAL Program and could be seniors or those with disabilities who required modification and who would do self-certification to ensure they qualified for the program. One of the workshop topics could be how to hire contractors and go through the permitting process. Participants must meet at least one of the three criteria to participate in the PAL Program, with self-certification having been modeled after the Pinole Perks program where participants must certify their qualification as a Moderate Income, Low Income or Very Low-Income household for the purposes of eligibility in the program. (Martinez-Rubin)
- Contractors would not be involved with the eligibility income. (Martinez-Rubin)

The City Council thanked staff for their work and for filling this need in the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Rafael Menis, commented that under the fiscal impact for this item, staff had recommended the establishment of an initial fund amount of \$20,000, with waivers granted on a first-come-first-serve basis and with a maximum limit of \$2,500 per household per year, which was sufficient to fund nine and a bit of households. Based on the uptick of the Peers Program, he asked whether the City was of the opinion that would allow sufficient funds to meet expected demand, and whether

there would be enough people aware of the program to potentially reach ten or more people given the City's extended outreach to one of its other grant programs linked to the Peers Program. Mr. Menis referenced the permitting requirements for some energy efficiency upgrades, as reflected on Page 136 of 137 of the agenda packet. He asked the level of modification that would trigger the permit requirement and whether there was some way to make the permit requirements more broadly known to the community given that the replacement of a water heater, a window, or a door for example may require a permit, and more clarity around what energy efficiency upgrades required a permit and the cost of those permits would be helpful.

Mayor Sasai encouraged Mr. Menis to reach out to staff for a response.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

ACTION: Motion by Council members Murphy/Toms to approve a resolution approving the Pinole Accessible Living (PAL) Program to provide educational workshops and permit fee waivers for qualifying home modifications that improve accessibility, safety and comfort for Extremely Low, Very Low, Low, and Moderate-Income households, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Vote:	Passed	5-0
	Ayes:	Sasai, Tave, Martinez-Rubin, Murphy, Toms
	Noes:	None
	Abstain:	None
	Absent:	None

13. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD (Continued from Item 6) (Public Comments)

Only open to members of the public who did not speak under the first Citizens to be Heard, Agenda Item 6.

Citizens may speak under any item not listed on the Agenda. *The time limit is 3 minutes and is subject to modification by the Mayor. Individuals may not share or offer time to another speaker. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act, no action may be taken on a matter unless it is listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. The City Council may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Council meeting.*

Deputy City Clerk Stone reported there were no comments from the public.

14. ADJOURNMENT to the Regular Meeting of March 4, 2025 in Remembrance of Amber Swartz.

At 8:53 p.m., Mayor Sasai adjourned the meeting to the Regular City Council Meeting of March 4, 2025 in Remembrance of Amber Swartz.

Submitted by:



Heather Bell, CMC

City Clerk

Approved by City Council: March 4, 2025

