



CAO's Corner

By Susan S. Muranishi
County Administrator

In late June, the Board of Supervisors approved the Final Alameda County Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16 that totals \$2.7 billion for County programs and services and supports a workforce of 9,600 full-time equivalent positions. The Final Budget closed a funding gap of \$65.1 million without significant program reductions or staff layoffs. The funding gap was the smallest the County had faced in eight years, yet there continues to be high demand for safety net services – programs that were decimated by cuts during the recent recession – and few signs that surging State revenues will result in little additional support for these programs. The improving economy boosted our revenue streams as well as the State's fiscal situation. But even with additional property tax revenue that comes from a surge in local home prices, we still faced a budget gap of significant size. Meanwhile, the County continues to provide vital services with limited resources. People at the bottom of the economic ladder appear to be falling further behind, even as the overall economy improves. In Alameda County, demand for food assistance, subsidized health care, cash aid and other support remains high. This is true even though the County's unemployment rate has fallen to 4.5 percent, about half what it was just a few years ago. This results in growing numbers of working poor who rely on public services because their wages fail to keep up with the rising cost of living. In addition, we recognize that State revenues are booming in large part due to temporary sales and income tax rate increases. Those taxes will begin expiring in the coming years – possibly as the next recession hits – so we must remain fiscally prudent and prepare for the next economic storm. More about the County Budget can be found at <http://budget.acgov.org/>.

County Steps Up Response to Drought



Alameda County is stepping up its efforts to encourage water conservation during this fourth year of severe drought, offering a new online resource to help residents respond to the drought and issuing a “call to action” to the community and 9,600 County employees to take immediate steps to curb water use. The County Board of Supervisors has directed the General Services and Public Works agencies to develop conservation plans and report on progress. In addition, the Board is urging federal and State agencies to provide the needed financial support to communities to help them meet an ambitious 25 percent water conservation target set by Governor Brown. The County has a new website, www.acgov.org/drought/, that provides information about the magnitude of California's current water shortage and the simple steps we all can take to conserve water.

Alameda County Wins Big in National Awards Program

Alameda County has been selected to receive 14 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for programs that protect the environment, enhance public safety and leverage innovative technologies to make County operations more efficient and enhance customer service. The awards were presented at NACo's Annual Meeting in July. Projects winning Achievement Awards were:

- **The Auditor Property Tax Information System, or APTIS**, a web-based solution developed by the Information Technology Department (ITD) to help the Auditor-Controller Agency more efficiently manage more than \$2 billion in property tax revenue each year.
- **READY.ACGOV.ORG**, an emergency preparedness website to help us all prepare for major disasters.

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County Cleans Up in National Awards Program

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- **“E-warrants,”** an electronic process to help law officers more efficiently submit warrants for judicial approval.
- The **“Polling Place Lease-Card System”** developed by ITD helps the Registrar of Voters secure Election Day polling places across the County.
- A **“Position Request System”** created by ITD that helps County workers more effectively coordinate budget and human resources data.
- The creation by ITD of electronic **“Probable Cause Declarations”** that streamlined the process of obtaining court approval of all arrests made by law enforcement in Alameda County.
- The County’s **“Green Child Care Program,”** led by the County General Services Agency’s Early Care and Education (ECE) Program, helps local pre-schools reduce waste and teaches children about recycling.
- **“Castro Valley Meet in the Street,”** an annual celebration created by the Community Development Agency, together with residents and local businesses, to help boost Castro Valley’s commercial district and promote civic pride.
- **The Human Exploitation & Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) Watch Community Initiatives Program** led by the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office raises awareness of human trafficking and helps stop exploitation.
- **“Learn Your Rights in California,”** or **LYRIC**, sponsored by the Public Defender’s Office, teaches youth about their constitutional rights regarding detentions, searches and arrests.
- A **“Rape Kit Backlog Elimination Project,”** led by the District Attorney’s Office, is a framework for reducing a large national backlog of untested evidence in sexual assault cases.
- The **“Local Government Electric Vehicle Fleet Demonstration Project”** in which Alameda County’s General Services Agency led a federally-funded regional partnership that purchased 90 electric vehicles (EVs) for government agencies throughout the Bay Area.
- The **“Regional Renewable Energy Procurement Project,”** or **R-REP**, also led by the General Services agency, in which Alameda County joined 18 other government agencies to procure solar energy systems for 186 publicly owned sites in four Bay Area counties.
- Alameda County Library’s **P.U.L.S.E. (Pop-Up Library Services for Everyone) Project**, which creates extended library branches for agencies serving marginalized populations - including those affected by domestic violence and homelessness.

Check out WE ARE AC!, which now features videos about 5 innovative Alameda County programs that won Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo). In all, 14 Alameda County programs came away with Achievement Awards in 2015. Stay tuned for videos about the other award winners in the coming weeks.



<http://www.acgov.org/about/weareac/>

Citizens Academy Signups

The Alameda County Citizens Academy is accepting applications for the 2015 class this fall. Formerly known as the Alameda County Leadership Academy, the Citizens Academy is a 6-session interactive program that provides insight to County services and operations and offers opportunities for civic engagement in the County. This will be the 15th year that the County has offered this free program to adults who live, work, or own a business in Alameda County. The Academy will convene bi-weekly on Wednesday evenings from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. between September 23 and December 9, 2015. The Citizens Academy includes tours of key County facilities, demonstrations of specialized equipment and hands-on exercises that illustrate how vital government services are provided to the community. Through interactive presentations involving County leaders, the Citizens Academy helps people learn about the workings of Alameda County and acquire knowledge about how to increase civic involvement. The Academy also provides a great opportunity for County officials to hear from the people they serve. Space is limited. To complete an online application, go to <http://www.acgov.org/academies/citizens/>. The application deadline is **September 3, 2015**. Participants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis, though the location of an applicant’s home or workplace may be considered in order to provide countywide representation.

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Tragedies Prompt County to Lower Flags

In late July, Alameda County lowered flags flown at County facilities to honor a Hayward police sergeant slain in the line of duty, as well as six people killed at military facilities in Tennessee.



On July 21, flags were lowered to honor six people killed in a shooting rampage at military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Scott Haggerty, President of the Board of Supervisors, requested the flags be lowered in response to an Executive Order by President Obama that flags be flown at half-staff outside the White House and all public buildings and grounds. On July 22, Haggerty ordered the flags to remain at half-staff for several more days to honor Sgt. Scott Lunger of the Hayward Police Department, who was shot to death while performing a traffic stop. "Sergeant Lunger's untimely death is a harsh reminder that our public protection employees put their lives on the line every day," Haggerty said. "On behalf of Alameda County, I wish to extend my condolences to Sergeant Lunger's friends and family."

County Links

Alameda County Government <http://www.acgov.org/government/>
Alameda County Board of Supervisors <http://www.acgov.org/board/>
Lookup/pay Property Taxes <http://www.acgov.org/propertytax/index.htm>
Awards won by Alameda County <http://www.acgov.org/awards/>
Links to Alameda County Departments and Agencies
<http://www.acgov.org/government/departments.htm>
Employment with Alameda County <http://www.acgov.org/government/employment.htm>
Alameda County forms <http://www.acgov.org/government/formscenter.htm>
Alameda County Superior Court <http://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/>

For a calendar of Alameda County events, visit the County website at <http://www.acgov.org/government/calendar.htm> Also check the websites of the members of the Board of Supervisors (listed under Board contacts on the left side of this page).