



Alameda County Approves Final Budget for FY 2018-19

- **Final Budget Closes \$65.9 Million Funding Gap**
- **Addresses Key Challenges Including Homelessness, Scarcity of Affordable Housing**
- **Modest Funding Increases for Innovative Programs, Infrastructure**

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors on Friday approved a \$3.2 billion Alameda County Budget for FY 2018-19 that is balanced and closes a \$65.9 million funding gap without significant reductions to services or staff.

The Final Budget includes funding increases to community service providers, allows the County to continue building its financial reserves, and supports a workforce of more than 9,700 employees. It also expands funding for initiatives addressing some of the County's most difficult challenges – including the lack of affordable housing, chronic homelessness, and maintenance and improvement of aging infrastructure. These efforts benefit from a strong regional economy and energized housing market that continue to provide much-needed revenues to the County.

For Alameda County, the new fiscal year begins with no shortage of concern about what lies ahead.

"The possibility of an economic downturn in the next few years and questions about future State and federal support mean that we should be prepared for significant additional challenges in funding services for County residents," said Susan S. Muranishi, Alameda County Administrator.

Throughout hearings and deliberations on a Final Budget, County supervisors signaled their support for the \$3.2 billion balanced spending plan recommended by Muranishi on June 12. The Final Budget reflected Muranishi's recommendations, plus the following commitments advanced by individual Board members to address priority issues:

- **Homelessness and Housing.** The Board declared a "shelter crisis" in Alameda County in order to access additional State funding to deal with the expanding numbers of homeless residents and homeless encampments in the community. The move will add \$2.5 million to the County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund and \$5 million to a new Capital Project Fund to provide housing for unsheltered residents. The Board also acted to require local cities to provide matching funds when accessing homelessness funds administered by the County.
- **Economic Development/Infrastructure.** The Board also committed \$5 million to the establishment of a new Economic Development/Infrastructure Fund for East Alameda County that will be administered by the Public Works and Community Development agencies in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors' District One.
- **Census 2020.** The Board designated \$1.5 million for activities to support a "complete count" for Alameda County in the 2020 Census, due to concerns that the County is short-changed in population-based allocations when residents are missed in the census count. Because the funds come from an existing reserve established by the Board, the action has no direct financial impact on the FY 2018-19 Final Budget.
- **Children, Youth and Families.** The Board endorsed establishment of a new "Enhancing Vision 2026" Fund to provide \$5 million annually for three years to programs supporting children, youth and families. Although not funded in the current year, the fund will provide \$1 million annually to enhance programs each supervisor's district starting in FY 2019-20.



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Though resources are limited, the strength of the local economy has allowed Alameda County to fund some modest enhancements to services and to forge ahead with innovative programs to address some of our community's most difficult challenges.

- Over the past year, the County reasserted its leadership in the areas of sustainability and environmental protection in many ways, including the installation of 1.7 megawatts of new solar panels at Santa Rita Jail. Alameda County facilities now generate more solar energy than any other local government in the country.
- A school immunization program led by the Department of Public Health spurred the largest improvement in immunization rates in local schools in the state.
- East Bay Community Energy, a County launched regional energy authority, became the official energy provider for the unincorporated County and 11 local cities in June.
- The County is spearheading numerous initiatives to address the regional housing crisis by leveraging resources generated by the Measure A1 Affordable Housing General Obligation Bond passed by voters in 2016. These include programs to assist renters, new homeowners and residents at risk of losing their homes, through numerous partnerships with cities and nonprofits.
- Construction of the Cherryland Community Center is expected to be completed in 2019. The \$22 million project will provide much needed recreation and gathering space in the Cherryland community near Hayward.
- The Health Care Services Agency continues to expand vital health services, with its "Healthy Teeth, Healthy Community" pilot program projected to provide 15,000 low-income children and youth with preventive dental care. The County is also spearheading a palliative care initiative to expand access to end of life planning services and care.

These efforts all reflect priorities outlined in long-term planning efforts by the Board of Supervisors. Earlier this year, the Board approved a new strategic plan, "Vision 2026," that outlines County priorities for advancing local communities toward a healthy, prosperous future. Details about the plan are at vision2026.acgov.org.

CONTACT

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