

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL
MEETING**

MAY 9, 2023

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AGENDA

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

WORK SESSION # 1

WS 23-019

From: [TJ](#)
To: [List-Mayor-Council](#)
Subject: Item WS 23-019 (Strategic Roadmap: Discussion of Updated Priorities and Projects to be Considered for the FY2024 - FY2027 City of Hayward Strategic Roadmap), 5/9/23 City Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 7:01:53 AM

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Mayor Salinas and City Council Members:

I wanted to share some feedback with regard to agenda item WS 23-019 (Strategic Roadmap: Discussion of Updated Priorities and Projects to be Considered for the FY2024 - FY2027 City of Hayward Strategic Roadmap), being discussed at today's May 9th Special City Council Meeting.

After reviewing the FY2024 Proposed Projects draft, I was encouraged that some of the proposals are quite hopeful. It is clear that our governing body wants to aim toward making Hayward a more desirable city to live and move around in, as evidenced by projects geared toward cultural programs, downtown events, artwork, social and recreational supports, and beautification. However, at the same time it frustrates me to see the other directions city leaders want to move toward with my taxpayer money. So in no particular order, these are my concerns:

- Hayward Police Department (Q2, Q3, QC2, QC3, QC5, QC8, RC6, R10)

Stop offering conciliatory and costly minor refurbishments (bathroom, artwork, etc). Stop trying to reimagine and restructure our police force under the guise of alleviating staff responsibilities, reducing costs and overtime, and promoting wellness. If you are truly hoping "to improve the quality of life for HPD employees" you can focus projects devoted to them on two important things that they have needed: RESPECT and a NEW POLICE BUILDING (R15). If our city leaders demonstrate that they put pride and care into their existing law enforcement personnel this will entice more new hires to come. Our public safety holds as high importance as that of growing an "Education City". And one must remember that it is not just about the relationships with the on-the-

ground beat officers but also the chief personnel and those doing the tireless behind-the-scenes investigative work that has brought closure to many cases over several years' duration. It is time to forego the mindset that our police need to be defunded, reformed, or reimaged. Council gave into these demands for change at a time when our police needed support the most. It is time for council to make things right for them. We don't need another City of Oakland.

- Find Ways to Reduce Unarmed Traffic Stops (QC8)

This is an absolutely counterproductive proposal, and as those council members who have been active on the Nextdoor platform are aware, many of these stops for traffic violations have led to detainment for DUI, recovery of loaded firearms and narcotics, identification of stolen vehicles or other property, and discovery of outstanding warrants. Many of the drivers resist arrest and it places our officers at great risk to go into these types of situations unarmed.

- Implementation of An Outside Complaint System Through The City Manager's Office (Instead of Through HPD) (QC11)

I am wondering if you can direct me to the minutes referencing when this proposal was "already approved by council". What was the reason behind this decision?

- St. Regis Behavioral Health Campus (H1)

There continues to be little transparency from council with regard to this project. When our group has inquired, we have been told this is completely managed by BACS, but it will clearly benefit Hayward. To that end, our residents deserve to be offered an informational session from the city and BACS to provide an overview and intentions for St. Regis, not just consent items documenting more money appropriated by Hayward to get the program up and running. I would like to see this placed as an immediate priority.

- Russell City (Q22, QC13)

I want to feel proud to live in Hayward, not to have the underpinnings of guilt and owed apologies for an act our city wasn't even responsible for

casting a negative impact on how we manage the priorities of the present day. I am in full support of honoring the Russell City descendants and embracing their history but creating task forces and establishing guaranteed basic income fall within the realm of a whim rather than an urgent need. Alameda County bears the responsibility for the displacement of the Russell City descendants 60 years ago; not Hayward. Yet our taxpayer monies continue to be poured into ongoing steering committee, resource, consultant and staff time for restitution still yet to be determined.

- People's Budget (Q13, RC4 - Strengthen Organizational Health)

This was another supply to meet a demand, and in my opinion a waste of ARPA and police vacancy funds. The federal relief monies could have gone toward community agency funding at a time when it was most needed during the covid pandemic. The inclusion criteria was too restrictive and the allocated funds too minimal. Many of the suggestions made by residents were concrete ones related to critical needs in the areas of public safety, street and lighting improvement, and infrastructure. The city appears to already be making its own efforts toward community engagement. We do not need a sustainable People's Budget, and the Community Services Commission has already had an over-reaching role in speaking for the needs of your constituency.

Instead, I would like to offer a different proposal that was raised by Mayor Salinas to our group prior to the election. He shared the desire to bring back quarterly Community Town Hall Meetings that can be informal events held in outdoor venues, which I wholeheartedly support. It would afford council the opportunity to truly connect with the needs and desires of Hayward residents who may not otherwise participate in the council meetings or feel free to express their opinions under duress or time constraints. Again referencing the Nextdoor platform, those council members who follow posts there may have noted that there is a lot of misinformation and accusation because our residents are not in touch with the issues being addressed by our city

leaders. Their voices and needs should be considered.

In closing, I will add that efforts to prioritize fireworks mitigation (QC20), reestablish Neighborhood Watch (QC4), and reform The Loop (RC1) are all favored by our HCC members. For any future work sessions on proposed projects I'd find it helpful to open public comments for input as each section of the Strategic Roadmap is reviewed and discussed.

Sincerely,

TJ

HAYWARD CONCERNED CITIZENS

From: [Sherman Lewis](#)
To: [List-Mayor-Council](#)
Cc: [Frank Ferral](#); [Dominic](#); [Ted Seitz](#)
Subject: Loop reform
Date: Saturday, May 6, 2023 2:45:32 PM

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Thanks for getting Loop Reform on your priorities agenda. As I see it, it is not a problem of finding funding, but it is a challenge for staff, for new thinking, and for public involvement.

I hope someone on Council will review Brown Act issues with your attorney. He will warn you about making decisions in secret; it is harder to clarify what is permitted.

The issue revolves around what is a decision and what is a discussion of policy. This is problematic because talk leads to decision, so it is important to distinguish. A decision is something on your agenda that exercises your authority, such as a budget, a resolution committing funds or staff time, an ordinance, a project approval. A discussion is about policy short of the specifics of a decision. The principle is to have free public discussion while avoiding a secret decision by a majority. An important way to keep it public is to make it public, such as in The Stack and the website. The danger is that fear about a Brown Act violation can stop policy discussion, which is not the purpose of the Act.

Discussion of whether the City should make Loop Reform a priority is in my opinion not a violation of the Brown Act, and therefore Councilpersons telling me what they think is not a violation of the Act. I certainly have been telling you what I think. I even disagree with myself and give you a new opinion.

It is very hard to develop policy without some back and forth. For example, the consultant will stick to the parameters of the RFQ. If the option of a low cost, fast project that solves most of the 13 dysfunctions in less than a year, followed by a more expensive project for permanent use, is not in the RFQ, Council will not be given that choice. It will not occur to staff or to consultant to give you such a choice; you will have to ask for it. A blank check to a consultant is not enough, and this is an unusual situation: very important policy on which the City has failed for ten years; for which a Specific Plan recommended two ways, where the Plan was dead on arrival, for which the solution is not clear, on which consultants generally give bad answers, for which our culture leads to bad choices.

It intrigues me also that this is not rocket science. It is a question of look, see, think. Council usually presides; on this one you need to lead. You need to understand why A Street only would be a disaster. You need to see how two lane with roundabout can work because of continual flow rather than interrupted flow caused by traffic signals. My earlier email had many more of these ideas.

I hope to be able to comment on the RFQ before it goes out.

From: "SUSAN H. GEHLKE"

Date: May 9, 2023 at 9:29:16 AM PDT

To: List-Mayor-Council@hayward-ca.gov, McAdoo@hayward-ca.gov

Subject: Emailed Public Comment - Special Hayward City Council Meeting

Dear Mayor, City Council and City Manager,

As you gather to examine the Strategic Road Map, I think it is important that you take a minute to look at not only what is driving the car, but who is behind the wheel. Over the past several years, I have observed that many of the proposals and ideas for governing the city have emanated from the Community Services Commission. I believe that not only is it beyond the scope of their positions, their ideas are based on what they perceive as being the greater needs of the whole community or at least their own agendas. If they are representing us, the community, then they should be elected officials, not appointed.

I refer you to the city Apology drafted and written by the Community Services Commission. If you reread one part of that you will see that it states "following annexation by the City of Hayward, all residents were evicted and burned out of their homes and communities without appropriate compensation in 1966." That statement is totally false at best and slanderous to the city at worst. It has been stated many times by our group that Hayward was not responsible. Russell City evictions were carried out only by Alameda County because they owned the land. The residents were compensated, and they were not burned out by Hayward. There is concrete evidence that many of those fires were accounted for as being caused by some of the residents themselves, two teenage girls, some children and a man stealing tools. Furthermore, Hayward did not annex the property until 1968, long after it had been purchased by Cabot, Cabot and Forbes.

Russell City is not the black spot on Hayward's reputation. Hayward has done that to itself. By the counsel's signature being on that Apology, you have created a terrible reputation to Hayward's history which has spread through media sources including the New York Post and NPR. Mr. Zermeno talks about our fine city, but that is not the impression that has been created throughout the country. Beyond that, more and more dollars are being spent to try to rectify a wrong that does not belong on the shoulders of this city and now you have hired a researcher who editorializes his findings with his own biases to suggest that Hayward colluded with the County. Agreed, the city benefitted by what happened. All Hayward residents ultimately benefitted.

I have never had any negative feelings toward the Russell City descendants, but I am terribly disappointed in what is becoming of this city and the way that it conducts business. We, the residents, voted for the

City Counsel (at least some of them) and we expect that you will oversee what is coming out of the Commissions and demand research and accountability for their suggestions.

One final thought, the Apology failed to mention the white residents who lived in Russell City. In a city which prides itself on its diversity, and inclusivity, you need to recognize that there is a minority race here, white people.

Sincerely,

Susan Gehlke,
Hayward Concerned Citizens

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