



# EL CERRITO COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume Sixteen: Number 5 May 2022

We invited Mayor Todd Gloria and County Supervisors Joel Anderson and Nathan Fletcher to our meeting, but they already have other commitments, so offered an alternate date. We are hoping the ECCC June 16th meeting will be good for them, as well as Sean Elo-Rivera, SDHC, FHC and PATH who are all involved in the project.

## WE ARE MEETING VIA ZOOM AT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6192863890>

Meeting ID: 619 286 3890

By Phone & One tap mobile  
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Meeting ID 6192863890#

Celebrate Memorial Day May 30th



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### CRITICAL MEETING

**El Cerrito Community Council Meeting  
MAY 19, 2022, 7:00 - 9:00 PM**

**GET UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION,  
PROVIDE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS  
AND VOTE ON THE**

**NEW HOMELESS HOUSING AND  
TREATMENT CENTER USE**

**FOR THE  
FAMILY HEALTH CENTER BUILDING**

Family Health Centers' (FHC) changed use and increased number of units for its 10 story building on El Cajon Blvd in our neighborhood to a homeless housing with drug, alcohol and mental health treatment facility is a HUGE change from 142 units of various levels of low income housing including work force levels with anticipated residents to include students and young professionals FHC told us about in late 2020 & early 2021.

Reports were presented stating that El Cerrito knows about and approves of this homeless housing with treatment services use at funding approval meetings of the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) and San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

Because El Cerrito did not know about and did not approve this change in use we need to correct the record, it is very important you attend, ask your questions, provide your comments and VOTE.

### **JOIN THE COLLEGE AREA PLANNING BOARD AND THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT ON**

**WEDNESDAY MAY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 5:30 PM, FOR A COLLEGE AREA PLAN UPDATE MEETING**

**Yes, another important meeting for El Cerrito.**

You have to register to be able to attend the College Area Community Plan Update meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup> meeting - see

<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/cpu/college-area>

The last College Area Plan Update meeting was held on February 26th, when the City Planning Department (Planning) introduced the two plans (Plans) upzoning all single residential zoning in El Cerrito from College Avenue to 54th Street / Collwood Blvd, east to west, and from El Cajon Blvd to Adams Avenue, south to north, to various levels of multi-family housing ranging from 2 - 7 stories with 8 stories along El Cajon Blvd depending on the plan. Many other single residential zones in other College Area neighborhoods were similarly upzoned.

The 2 Plans came out of the blue and took everyone in the College Area community by surprise, including the sub-committee (Committee) that has been working with Planning for two years and continuously made preservation of single residential neighborhoods a priority.

The Committee furnished the following priorities:

**PROTECT THE INTEGRITY AND STABILITY OF OUR SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS**

- Maintains extensive, mature urban canopy consistent with goals of Climate Action Plan
- Single-family neighborhoods are already essentially upzoned and experiencing increased density with San Diego's ADU code, SB9 implementation lot split and duplex code, and possible addition of SB10 implementation (per Mayor Gloria)

**MEET THE COLLEGE AREA'S FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS BY ADDING RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DENSITY ON THE MAJOR CORRIDORS AND AT THE THREE MAIN INTERSECTIONS/NODES.**

Planning then put out a survey in which the only options were the two Plans presented on February 26th. The survey deadline was May 1<sup>st</sup>.

There is a large faction of dedicated neighbors in El Cerrito, some of whom are members of Neighbors For A Better San Diego, [Neighbors For A Better San Diego](#), that put together and circulated the instructions on how to take the survey so your perspective could be voiced without being limited by the two bad choices.

That same group found that the Plans used population increase estimates from outdated material and that the new numbers on population estimates are far below those used in the Plans, so have asked Planning to revise the Plans with the NEW information and to add Committee input.

We are all interested in what comes next.

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**GET OUT TO SUPPORT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES  
MAY - AUGUST**

SDSU students are on summer break during most of May, June, July and August, so it is a great time to get out to the restaurants and shopping in the neighborhood. There are many new eating and drinking locations and old favorites, all getting rave reviews. This is perfect timing to visit all of the eateries right next to the campus.

With all the summer season activities, you probably do not want to cook much, so come back to our neighborhood to eat and support our local businesses at the same time.

With less traffic in the area, now is a great time if you have been thinking you would like to shop at Trader Joe's and try the restaurants in the complex on College Avenue. There is a parking garage behind the building, free for the time you will spend shopping and dining. The parking garage is a multi-level structure with elevators big enough for you and your cart plus another, so it really is an easy trip.

There are many businesses you really should try on the El Cerrito Corridor of El Cajon Blvd. We recommend all of the eateries: Alforon Mediterranean, The Alcove, Scrimshaw Coffee, Smashburger, Pesto Italian Craft Kitchen, Tea Station, Crab Pub, RB Sushi, The Living Room, Crispy Donuts, Sang Dao and all of the rest. Hope we see you out and about indulging in the neighborhood soon!



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Reminder, it costs the ECCC Board for the website, hosting platform, P.O. Box and other operational needs. We are also hoping to be able to have in person meetings soon.

So we are asking for donations to cover these costs. Donations large or small can be made to the P.O. Box. Even small donations added together make a big difference. We appreciate your support of the ECCC community and the newsletter with your donations.

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**CRAWFORD HIGH SCHOOL HAS APPLIED FOR AN AIR POLLUTION EQUIPMENT PERMIT FOR INSTALLATION OF AN EMERGENCY STANDBY ENGINE**

Residents near Crawford High School have received Notice from the Air Pollution Control Division of San Diego County of an Application for an Air Pollution Equipment Permit for a California Certified Emergency Standby Engine. You can review the County website for general information and a listing of permit applications. The application number for the Crawford application is APCD2202-APP-007169, but we have not been able to access the documents. We will be following up to inform you on this permit application. <https://www.sdapcd.org/content/sdapcd/permits/permit-applications.html>

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**SAN DIEGO IS A MEDITERRAIN COASTAL CLIMATE**

The following information on how to plant for our region, conserve water, create habitat, etc. is from Home with Dean Sharp, a KFI AM 640 radio program, on each Saturday 6-8:00 am & Sunday 9-11:00 am.

Dean's program is about home improvements of all sorts and includes gardening and landscaping - <https://kfiam640.iheart.com/featured/home-with-dean-sharp/>

The following guidelines are great for all of us as we plant our gardens with consideration of water conservation and climate.

## **Twelve ESSENTIAL gardening truths ...**

### **1. Plants fight drought (and climate change). They don't contribute to it.**

- Through transpiration plants cool the air around them
- Plant roots hold moisture in the soil and prevent runoff to the sea
- Plants create their own micro-climates

### **2. San Diego County is NOT a desert.**

- But if we keep on this way we're going to get there.
- So Cal is a Mediterranean climate or more specifically a Coastal Sage and Chaparral environment.
- So Cal also has numerous micro-climates

### **3. Water belongs in one place ... at the roots of our plants. Not in the air. Not in all the soil.**

- Water should be delivered as close to plant roots as possible.
- Water can evaporate in the air.
- Water can be blown away by the wind
- Water can run off on the surface
- Water can evaporate on the surface before soaking in.
- Traditional sprinklers lose 25-50% of their water due to these factors

### **4. Southern Californians should water at night.**

- See 3 above

### **5. Tree roots grow toward the water you give them.**

- Very few tree species have "surface roots."
- Roots go to the water given them.
- Plant trees with bottom-of-root-ball irrigation and deny them surface water to train roots to grow down, not out.

6. Anyone NOT using mostly micro-drip irrigation is doing a great disservice to their budget, their plants, their city, and the environment.

- Drip irrigation is inexpensive
- Drip irrigation is simple to install and maintain
- Drip irrigation doesn't need trenching.
- Drip irrigation can reduce water consumption by 50% or more.

### **7. Anyone paving over their gardens or using artificial turf (same thing) for anything other than a sports court is doing a great disservice to the environment.**

- Paved or plastic areas create heat islands
- Paved or plastic areas kills top soil.
- Paved or plastic areas destroys habitat.

### **8. We should be creating more than gardens. We could be creating habitat.**

- National Wildlife Federation defines habitat as
  - FOOD
  - WATER
  - COVER
  - HOME for YOUNG
  - SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES
- Habitat starts with
  - Microbes in top soil (a handful should contain more microbes than all the humans that have ever lived)
  - Plants
  - Moisture
  - Insect life

### **9. Any plant that isn't native to California is an exotic.**

That includes citrus, palms, eucalyptus, and eastern grasses. Some exotics thrive here, but any plant not accustomed to our environment should be planted with care and in limited quantity. Native insect life has no use for 95% of exotic plants. Exotics (like eastern grass lawns) place undo demand on regional resources.

### **10. Trees are the single most important structures on any piece of property (including your house).**

Understand them and learn to care for them properly.

Trees create their own micro-environments.

Trees lower temperatures

Trees capture carbon!!!!

Trees make oxygen.

Trees are the most powerful terraforming factories known to man.

### **11. Rich organic soil belongs on your property, not somewhere else.**

Good soil COUNTS EVERYWHERE.

### **12. Urban gardening makes a difference.**

- Newly planted, young trees only require between 10-20 gallons of water every week to maintain whereas lawns require approximately 62 gallons for every 10-square-foot patch weekly.
- Melbourne Australia is planting 3000 trees per year to cool the entire region by 4° by 2050. And it's working!
- The science is in ... studies in the Amazon prove that large-scale deforestation reduces rainfall in some areas by up to 30%, and reliable rainfall in continental interiors of Africa, Australia and elsewhere, appears to depend on maintaining relatively intact and continuous forest cover from the coast.

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**Send donation to: ECCC, P.O. Box 151268 ♦ San Diego, CA 92175-1268**