



From the President

JEFFREY WRIGHT

AUGUST 13, 2021, marked my eighth anniversary as a member of the Contra Costa County Planning Commission. During my time of service, I have weighed in on a variety of project types. Home additions, small developments, cell towers, solar farms, cannabis operations, warehouse facilities, large scale developments for single family homes, apartment complexes and mixed-use projects. The larger the project, the more involved it is. I have reviewed voluminous environmental impact reports, staff reports and heard testimony for, as well as against projects. It takes a considerable amount of time, money, and resources to move most development projects forward.

I was recently talking to the developer of a project in El Cerrito at 10290 San Pablo Avenue, which is outside of my planning commission authority and purview, about the development process and the cost involved. The existing building will eventually be demolished and replaced with a 54-unit apartment building. Thus far, not one shovel full

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\$16.37 per Hour

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2022, the minimum wage will be \$16.37 per hour for all El Cerrito workers. This represents a 4.9% increase from the previous rate of \$15.61.

Minimum wage history	
2019	\$15.00
2020	\$15.37
2021	\$15.61

Employers must post the official El Cerrito Wage Bulletin which informs employees of the current rate and explains their rights. You can get a copy from the City or the Chamber. See el-cerrito.org/wages for more information on employer responsibilities.



John C. Stashik

An Economic Development Work Plan

BY RACHEL LIGHTFOOT MELBY

EL CERRITO'S Economic Development Committee (EDC) recently presented their work plan to the City Council and was met with praise and encouragement. Before diving into what the EDC is focused on, here's a quick overview of who we are and what we do.

Currently, there are eight citizen volunteers appointed to the committee by the City Council. The members have relevant day jobs ranging from marketers to lawyers to software engineers, and they're all passionate about making El Cerrito a more attractive place to spend their hard-earned money locally. Shameless plug: we're trying to grow to 15 members in the next year. Interested?

Please join us on Monday, December 20th, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. For login information go to el-cerrito.org/EDC. Can't make it? The EDC meets every third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. We'd love to have you.

What does the EDC do?

- Advises the City Council on economic development matters.
- Makes recommendations on the annual economic development work plan.
- Provides input to other City boards/commissions and encourages community involvement in economic development.
- Works closely with the City staff liaison and the Chamber of Commerce.

So what's on the docket?

The EDC has honed in on four tangible initiatives for this fiscal year:



1. A "Why El Cerrito" website geared for business owners and entrepreneurs. Thanks to member Jonathan Zazove, the site will be packed with EC census data and other attractive stats like median household income and walkscores that position the City as the best place to open your business. The best part? It's all true!

2. Partnering with commercial real estate developers to help market their commercial spaces. Without proactive outreach, these new spaces run the risk of remaining vacant or, worse, filled with more big-box, cookie-cutter retail. Vice-Chair

Rachel Melby believes if we want niche offers, we need to go out and get 'em. Hopefully, by fostering good relations between the city and the property owners, we'll surface some unique opportunities for the right small-business tenants.

■ See *EDC Plan*, page 5





Past Prez Palaver

JOHN C. STASHIK

SIL ADDIEGO was Chamber president in 1984. Do the math and it is clear that this long time member has served on our Board of Directors for at least 40 years. That is what you call real commitment.



For the first time since I've been around, Sil's name will not appear on the ballot for re-election. The

self-described "old school" Realtor at Coldwell Banker Bartels, ever dapper Mr. Addiego has decided to pass his director's torch to another member.

Thank you for your many years of dedicated service to this organization, Sil.

Community Development reports that the former New MD & Urgent Care building on Moeser near San Pablo (10612 San Pablo) is to become an **urgent care veterinary clinic**.

CommDev also says an application was submitted for construction of **54 new rental units** (including four live/work) at Eureka and San Pablo. That's the old Parella building; this Chamber was the final tenant there. I will buy any

and all a celebratory beverage when that old eyesore comes tumbling down.

Also, the Wang development at Alameda and San Pablo received the Planning Commission's blessing so that **90-unit apartment project** can move forward, breaking ground next year.

Feline B&B next door to **Abbey Pet Hospital** on San Pablo near Madison in El Cerrito will be closing in January. This will permit expansion of Abbey's veterinary facilities according to **Dr. Matt Judd**. (abbeypethospital.com)

So where can board your cat? Try **Mau House Cat Hotel**, cage free, with plenty of room to play, at 2829 Macdonald Ave. in Richmond. More info: mauhousecat.com.

Coming soon to the San Pablo Avenue side of Safeway is **The Joint Chiropractic**. Offices nationwide; they're franchises. Walk-ins, evenings and weekends, no insurance needed; that's what they advertise.

Safeway announced last month that their large store at Duboce and Market in San Francisco would be closing at 9 p.m. instead of running 24 hours. Reason: **excessive theft**. There are consequences to not arresting and prosecuting criminals. Let's hope that doesn't happen in El Cerrito; we don't need abandoned stores.

■ See Past Prez Palaver, page 5

Chris Treadway

March 3, 1955 – November 11, 2021



Chris Treadway was a name familiar to me long before I actually met him. His byline ran in the *West County Times* and *El Cerrito Journal* among other newspapers. I was a regular reader.

We probably first actually met in person at a Chamber meeting. We both had an interest in local history. We both worked at newspapers, Chris as a reporter and editor, and myself in the composing room.

Chris was a valuable resource for *Byline* articles long before he became a regular writer for this publication. When I needed information about anything El Cerrito, he was my go to source. He generously shared his collection of memorabilia and historic photographs.

For the past three years, his feature articles regularly appeared here. I'd come up with an idea, call Chris, and as busy as he was on his "real job," he turn around a story and photos in just days.

As for local history, he'd often send me old photos asking my thoughts about locations. I'd study them and usually come up with accurate captions. Then he'd post them on Facebook or Twitter and let the public guess the whereabouts. His *Lost Mastheads* page on Facebook had a huge following.

El Cerrito Historical Society membership was right up his alley. Our city's gambling past was a fascination.

When the Chamber office was purging old documents, he'd stay there for hours pouring through scrapbooks and photos. He did much research on local history for our city centennial as well.

He was writing a book about old El Cerrito. Some people will pick up where he left off and publish it. It'll be good.

When he could no longer write for the *Byline* due to terminal cancer, everyone knew what was coming. His passing really hits all who knew him hard.

Truly, one of the nicest people I've ever met. He left us way too early.

On November 2nd, the El Cerrito City Council approved the proclamation printed on the following page. The actual document was to be presented to Chris by Mayor Fadelli on November 12th. He died the day before.

A memorial service will be held at St. Jerome's church, 308 Carmel Ave., El Cerrito, on December 12th at 1:30 p.m.

—JCS



Part of the team that keeps El Cerrito running are these hard working folks. They got a chance to have some fun last month at the Chamber's holiday lighting party held at Elevation 66. Mayor Paul Fadelli, City Manager Karen Pinkos, and Community Development Director Melanie Mintz, mug for a selfie.



EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL

PROCLAMATION

Recognizing Chris Treadway

For His Decades of Journalism and Memorializing the City of El Cerrito

WHEREAS, Chris Treadway began his professional journalistic career in the East Bay 35 years ago, as a reporter, editor and columnist for the El Cerrito Journal, The Montclarion, and the Berkeley Voice from 1986 to 2002; and

WHEREAS, as a reporter for the Contra Costa Times, West County Times, and East Bay Times from 2002 to 2018, and an editor for the West County Times from 2012 to 2015, a major focus of Chris' work was the City of El Cerrito; and

WHEREAS, Chris wrote a popular column, "Our Neighbors," for the West County Times from 2005 to 2016 where many articles focused on El Cerrito community groups and issues facing El Cerrito which did much to boost community knowledge and involvement here; and

WHEREAS, Chris Treadway first began his journalistic career at an early age in the Bay Area attending public schools in Oakland, publishing his first newspaper while he was still in the fourth grade, graduating from Skyline High School in 1973, and earning a degree in journalism at San Francisco State University in 1989; and

WHEREAS, Chris' service as a Board Member and Vice President of the El Cerrito Historical Society has helped broaden historical knowledge of El Cerrito for residents by co-administrating the society's Facebook page and increasing its social media presence; and

WHEREAS, Chris has assembled a collection of El Cerrito historical documents and ephemera of permanent interest to historians, and has researched and written in-depth articles about our City's history for the El Cerrito Historical Society's publications *Spark* and the *Forge*; and

WHEREAS, Chris has accumulated and publicized much information pertaining to the history of El Cerrito and has been working on a much anticipated book on the city's history for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, to the Richmond Museum of History and Culture, Chris has donated the archives he acquired of George Johnson, a remarkable Richmond man who was the state's oldest living resident and last World War I veteran when he died at age of 112; and

WHEREAS, more than a decade ago, Chris created a Facebook page called "Lost Mastheads" that has more than 2,000 followers and deals with the East Bay, including significant content about El Cerrito's history; and

WHEREAS, Chris Treadway has given presentations hosted by the Rotary Club of El Cerrito on the topic of El Cerrito and its gambling era and was in charge of promoting the City's July 4th celebration for several years as a member of the Club; and

WHEREAS, Chris Treadway has profiled many local businesses and merchants for the Chamber of Commerce's Byline newsletter; and

WHEREAS, Chris Treadway and his wife Diana have lived in El Cerrito since 1985, and since 1991 with their son Henry who graduated with honors from El Cerrito High School, earned the rank of Eagle Scout through the Boy Scouts of America, and attended the University of California Berkeley before his passing in 2012.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby salute Chris Treadway for his efforts and writings over the past many decades that have commemorated our City, questioned our elected officials, and educated our residents in ways that have made us all proud to be El Cerritans.

Dated: November 2, 2021

/s/ Paul Fadelli, Mayor



Terry Kotsatos: Guiding People to Achieve Their Financial Goals Since 1995

STORY AND PHOTO BY CATALINA HU

ON A SUNNY late afternoon in November, I arrived at the two-story building with curvy picturesque windows on the corner of Solano Ave. and Key Route Blvd. in Albany. I had an appointment with Terry Kotsatos, a certified financial advisor. I rang the call box of Edward Jones' building. Upon entering the office on the second floor, I immediately felt a sense of tranquility. The sight of an open ceiling, soft orange



glow of sunlight, a large beautiful potted snake plant, a large wall waterfall, natural wood floor, and the dark olive green wall; together, I felt a sense of inner Zen that I didn't realize I had.

Tami Prince, the senior branch office administrator, greeted me and invited me to have a seat in the waiting area that resembled a cozy modern living room. I learned that Tami has been with Edward Jones for over 20 years and worked with Terry since 2010. I asked her about the beautiful office. It turned out they had moved into the current space in October 2019, just a few months before the pandemic. Their previous location was in El Cerrito near the Del Norte BART Station for nearly 20 years.

Terry greeted me with a warm smile as he introduced himself. "What does a financial advisor do, exactly?" I asked. I am sure he has answered it many times before, and I felt a little guilty to ask. First, he explained the difference between "financial advisor" and "certified financial planner."

A financial advisor is a broader term for professionals who help people manage their money. A certified financial planner specializes in investment management, estate planning, retirement planning and more. Certified financial planners are financial advisors but not all financial advisors are certified financial planners.

Terry specializes in complex financial planning. Depending on the clients' goals, whether it is early retirement, establishing an education fund, buying a home, or all of the above, Terry takes the time to fully understand what's important to each client. His focus areas are retirement income/savings strategies, investing strategies, market specific investments, estate and legacy strategies, and wealth strategies.

Over the past twenty plus years, Terry has established life-long relationships with his clientele; some span two generations. He is looking forward to continue helping the third generation to achieve their financial goals. Terry usually meets with his clients at least once year to help them keep on track; however, the pandemic made it impossible to have in person meetings. Fortunately, modern technology makes it easy to offer face-to-face guidance over Zoom.

Investment services are considered essential business; therefore, Terry and his office staff worked through 2020 while the office was closed to the public. That year was filled with uncertainties on all aspects of life, which kept Terry extremely busy. Terry described how he coached 60% of his clients to stay put and remain calm while he offered opportunistic purchasing strategies to the other 40%. It was easy to see how he has become a family friend to his clientele through this unwavering partnership.

Since 1995, two years before moving to California from his home state of Ohio, Terry was already helping individuals and families toward achieving their financial goals. From 2000 to 2010, he held a regional position and traveled frequently to mentor and support other financial advisors. He joined Edward Jones in 2010 and returned to the role of a financial advisor. In 2015, he was named a limited partner with Edward Jones.

Today, Terry is a seasoned certified financial planner with over twenty years of wisdom. Most of Terry's clients are from word of mouth although occasionally they found him through online search. Depending on each individual's needs, Terry may refer them to his network of financial planners who are better suited.

He lives in North Berkeley with his wife, two daughters, and their multitude of fur babies. He is an animal lover and a supporter of animal welfare organizations. He is a member of both the El Cerrito and Albany Chambers of Commerce, and Solano Avenue Association.

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Terry Kotsatos CFP[®]

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**El Cerrito Holiday
Market Pop-Up**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 12, 2021
11AM - 2PM
10870 SAN PABLO AVE, EL CERRITO

Local and handmade gifts for your holiday shopping!

Donation Drive and Fundraiser for El Cerrito's houseless community.



@eastbaybakes eastbaybakes@gmail.com

PAST PREZ PALAVER

Continued from page 2

CVS. 900 of their stores will close over the next few years and I'm certain at least one in El Cerrito will be a goner. Our energetic Economic Development Committee should keep that in mind.

Showtime. "Home for the Holidays" is a Las Vegas-inspired evening with songs performed by LaMont Ridgell and his "friends," Sammy Davis Jr., and Nat "King" Cole, backed by a three-piece combo. Three performances only: December 3-4-5. ccct.org for tickets. What happens in Vegas eventually comes to El Cerrito baby!

Cerrito Classics. Thursday, Dec. 16th at 7 p.m., is "Elf" at the Rialto Cinemas Cerrito. You know the place, with the fancy marquee on our holiday lighted theater block! (Great pizza too.) Get tickets online at rialtocinemas.com

Commercial space. Happy Cleaners & Laundry will be vacating their space at 7509 Fairmount Avenue (near Fatapple's) according to the mayor of that block Phil the Barber. Rent is a reasonable \$1500. If interested, talk to Phil at 7519 Fairmount.

Authentic EC. Construction is underway now at the former Batteries+Bulbs site (Schmidt and San Pablo) on El Cerrito's second cannabis store. Opening soon.

Hizzoner. It's time for the annual City Council Shuffle when we change mayors. Paul Fadelli was absolutely superb as mayor during a difficult year and I enjoyed working with him. He signed the City's budget on time, supported the 15% fee cap on third party delivery services (important for restaurant businesses), recognized long time El Cerrito enterprises like Olivero Plumbing and The Glenn Custom Framing, attended ribbon cuttings, and even managed to write for the *Byline*.

On top of all that he's a Parrothead! So how can I *not* like the guy? (Those are Jimmy Buffett fans and I'm one too.) When Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefers come to town, Paul and I will be in the audience with Margaritas in hand. You have that in writing. *Fins up!*

New Member
Board of Supervisors
Contra Costa County (District 1)
Supervisor John Gioia
Robert Rogers, Dist. Coordinator

EDC PLAN

Continued from page 1



3. Pickleball tournaments to support local businesses.

Chair Jean Shrem is a fierce pickleballer who, along with her pals, is raising funds and asking the Council to convert tennis courts at Castro Park into pickleball courts. This presents an opportunity to attract pickleballers from neighboring cities and lure them into local restaurants like nearby Tashi Delek and Los Moles.



4. Restaurant Outreach Initiative.

We're lucky to have a culturally diverse restaurant scene in El Cerrito, but this comes with some challenges regarding language barriers and feeling like a part of a thriving community. Restaurant owner and member Eric Wright is championing an effort to bring all of our restaurateurs into the fold by creating safe and inclusive spaces to communicate and share ideas and opportunities.

These initiatives also support the vision of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, adopted by the City Council in 2014, to foster new housing opportunities in priority development areas connected to transit and commercial uses and create more pedestrian traffic to stimulate and support new businesses.

Want better businesses in El Cerrito? Join the EDC!

If any of these items sound like something you'd like to work on, or (better yet!) if you have new ideas, the City's Economic Development Committee needs you. If we had a motto, it would be: *build the business economy you want to support*. It all starts with people like you.

Check out the committee work plan at el-cerrito.org/EDC and learn more about Economic Development here at el-cerrito.org/ECONDEV.

Byline Online
elcerritochamber.org/byline

Optimism in Microbusiness

NEARLY two-thirds of all businesses in the U.S. are “micro-businesses” with fewer than five employees. During the pandemic this sector is growing, with more individuals pursuing their “passion” projects and increased diversity in entrepreneurship, with more black and female owners jump-starting businesses.

Many microbusinesses are started by people who would otherwise be classified as out of the workforce; laid off, students, retired, disabled, or homemakers. Low-upfront costs and enabling technology are key factors in helping microbusiness succeed amid the unprecedented challenges created by the pandemic.

While microbusinesses build our economies, they also bring a community together during difficult times.

Right here in El Cerrito, a number of creative and talented residents make all kinds of edible and other treasures for all to enjoy. In addition to selling directly through online platforms, some organize “pop up markets” sometimes in concert with other microbusinesses.

Recently, four El Cerrito based microbusinesses (A Pie in the Sky, Little Hills Farm/Breads-Cupcakes, Mandalina SF/Floral Bouquets, Swelter Coffee) teamed up to throw a fun-filled Halloween pop-up event. During this holiday season, make sure to support local businesses of every kind!



Community Matters

GEORGINA EDWARDS

Frog Hollow Farm New on Tuesdays



Fernando Hernandez and Anna Ripley



Photos: John C. Stashik

Farmers Market AT EL CERRITO PLAZA

Open Tuesday & Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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Some Progress in a Year with Many Challenges

[The Byline asked Paul Fadelli to evaluate his year as Mayor. Herewith, his response.]

BY PAUL FADELLI

IN THE SIXTH grade, I ran for Student Council at Mira Vista School in El Cerrito when John F. Kennedy was president. I came in dead last. It would take nearly six decades before I would be Mayor of my hometown this year. What a year it has been!

It has included a range of problems resulting from COVID-19 and its economic and social impacts; the constant threat of wildfires in the East Bay hills; racial tensions and debates on police accountability; an unstable economy; and El Cerrito remaining on the top ten list of the State Auditor's financially troubled cities in California. We were in a bad financial place in El Cerrito last

January. We ended up better—but we still have a long way to go.

When I was sworn in a year ago, I presented my five top priorities for 2021 that I would focus on. Some progress has been made. Let me give a brief update on the goals I mentioned.

Goal #1. Focus Primarily on the City's Troubling Finances

This City began FY 20-21 with no budget reserves, a lack of potential revenues and the need to take action to get back on track. With the Council supporting the State Auditor's Report on El Cerrito as a roadmap, this city held public forums and Council made very difficult decisions which resulted in a balanced budget, a \$4 million surplus/10% reserve and no new taxes. And this was without applying the \$6 million federal relief funds we received from the American Rescue Plan. It took public concern, dedicated staff work and difficult budget and service cuts,

but we are at a better place to continue our structural changes to get to fiscal sustainability.

Goal #2. Focus on Wildfire Prevention and Abatement

This year we expanded our fire abatement efforts and passed a resolution which designated wildfire prevention and safety as a top priority. We also passed a resolution to determine if a regional Vegetation Management Joint



Power Authority (JPA) could benefit El Cerrito and the East Bay in achieving grants and improving firefighting coordination. I am also proud, that with difficult budget actions, we were able to keep Fire Station 72 open and reject cuts to our fire safety budget.

Goal #3. Establish "Equity" Considerations for Council Actions

I am very pleased that Council agreed that we need to look at our city actions through a new lens that allows discussion and scrutiny to assure greater equity in our community. In addition to *financial, environmental* and *legal* considerations, staff and Council members will have to also ask questions about "equity" impacts concerning the policies and ordinances we pass. With the City Manager's assistance, Council also agreed this goal should be broadened to assure that our city's administrative operations also include important equitable considerations.

Goal #4. Pass an Anti-Plastic Foodware Ordinance

Like other local communities, I was pleased that we recently passed an ordinance that will cut down on plastic waste by requiring prepared food providers to use compostable food ware items. This ordinance includes a lot of public outreach, information and extended deadlines so our restaurants will have plenty of time to implement.

Goal #5. Update our Climate Action Plan

In a year of needed climate action, this effort will have to be continued into next year because of an ongoing reality we will have to deal with — inadequate staff due to recent budget cuts, furloughs and transitions. Both city residents and Council members may be frustrated that a decreased city staff won't allow every priority to be undertaken as soon

as they would like.

Maintaining critical services remains our priority as we re-staff when funding becomes available. Thanks to the remaining city staff that has had a very difficult year and still must hang in there with many assignments.

Again, despite a year with a myriad of difficult problems; this has still been a productive year in El Cerrito on several fronts. As I leave the Mayorship in December, I plan to continue as a Councilmember to focus on our finances (because we must), work to assure that the Plaza BART station development will be of benefit to El Cerritans as a new city center with a library, work to address growing homelessness, build back and improve our retail sector, and work on public safety and mental health response issues with a supportive Police Department.

Thank you, El Cerrito, for allowing me to work on your behalf.

**EL CERRITO CHAMBER
HOLIDAY MIXER**



**Monday, December 6th
5 p.m.**

11720 San Pablo Ave.
El Cerrito

Across from Honda of El Cerrito

EL MONO
FRESH FLAVORS OF PERU

**Nominating Committee Report
November 16, 2021**

Board of Directors candidates (4 to be elected): Matt Khadian (El Mono), Kevin O’Neal (Well Grounded), Robert Rogers (Supervisor Gioia’s office), Nic Tang (Winkler Real Estate Group), Jeffrey Wright (Wright Realtors). Ballots have been mailed to all members in good standing.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

■ Continued from page 1

of dirt has been turned at the site, however, fees still must be paid to advance to that stage. He recently paid \$388,895.08 to the City of El Cerrito for plan review fees, new construction permits, etc. He can look forward to paying an additional \$120,156 for open space fees, \$133,866 in transportation fees, \$150,000 in public art fees, and an inclusionary housing fee of \$534,038, all City of El Cerrito related fees. EBMUD fees of \$800,000, Stege Sanitary District sewer fees of \$240,000 and PG&E related fees of \$135,000. There is just a plethora of fees to pay along with dealing with construction loans and the costs associated with that process.

Having had the opportunity to get a “birds eye perspective” as to how the process works and what it entails, I want to thank the many developers who have come to El Cerrito and completed projects or are currently going through the process to bring a project to fruition. There are great sums of money involved and considerable risk. As we all know economic conditions can change and market forces are subject to alter a project from the way it was originally envisioned.

To the developers, thank you again for having the fortitude, wherewithal and sheer guts to go through the process to develop a quality project.

Chamber Ballots Mailed. Return Promptly.

Donation Boxes at These Businesses



10082 San Pablo Ave.
on the Theater Block

11888 San Pablo Ave. across
from The Home Depot



NUG
EL CERRITO

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