Alameda County Legislative Platform

Final - Approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 15, 2015

Board of Supervisors

Scott Haggerty  District 1
Richard Valle    District 2
Wilma Chan      District 3
Nate Miley      District 4
Keith Carson    District 5

Susan S. Muranishi,
County Administrator
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Of Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>County Overview</strong>...........................................................................................................4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong>..................................................................................................................5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economics</strong>.......................................................................................................................6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Governance</strong>.....................................................................................................................7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative Principles</strong>......................................................................................................8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative Proposals</strong>......................................................................................................13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Needle Disposal.............................................................................................................14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of California study for a comprehensive examination of funding for senior services.....14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity care and nonprofit California hospitals....................................................................15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Districts...............................................................................................................16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)...............................................................16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits for Foster Youth..........................................18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive Health Education for Foster Youth.................................................................19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Youth and Camp Sweeney (Alternative Detention).....................................................20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe and Reasonable Speed Limits on Rural Roads in Urbanized Counties.........................22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Overview</strong>................................................................................................................23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Services</strong>................................................................................................................24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong>................................................................................................................................26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Health</strong>....................................................................................................29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Safety</strong>....................................................................................................................30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Land Use and Housing and Community Development.........................................32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation......................................................................................................................33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education..............................................................................................................................34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration............................................................................................................................35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs and Economic Development.........................................................................................36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood Control and Water Resources....................................................................................36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Legislative Priorities</strong>...............................................................................................38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Services</strong>................................................................................................................39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Delivery of Human Services..................................................................................39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore and Enhance Basic Needs Programs.........................................................................41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Foster Youth Well-Being by Strengthening Child Welfare Services.......................42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Adults, Seniors, and People with Disabilities............................................................45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Care and Education Planning Council........................................................................48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alameda County Interagency Children's Policy Council.......................................................49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong>................................................................................................................................50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medi-Cal and Health Care Reform.........................................................................................50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Services....................................................................................................50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing Inequities in Chronic Diseases..............................................................................52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing Inequities in HIV....................................................................................................53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Principles................................................................................................................54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Well-being of Women, Children, Youth and Families.......................................55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medical Services................................................................................................55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Preparedness............................................................................................................56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems of Care for Children and Adults with Disabilities....................................................57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicable Disease Control and Prevention.................................................................58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care Access, Quality, and Affordability.....................................................................60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Health</strong>.......................................................................................................61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Safety</strong>....................................................................................................................62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table Of Contents - Contd.**

District Attorney..................................................................................................................62  
Probation...............................................................................................................................63  
Public Defender's Office......................................................................................................64  
Health and Public Safety....................................................................................................65  
Youth and Juvenile Justice..................................................................................................66  
**Planning Land Use and Housing and Community Development**...............................66  
Land Use Planning...............................................................................................................66  
Homelessness and Affordable Housing..............................................................................67  
Community Development..................................................................................................68  
**Sustainability**...................................................................................................................68  
Sustainability Priorities.......................................................................................................68  
**Transportation**..................................................................................................................69  
Transportation Infrastructure Funding................................................................................69  
Sustainable Transportation.................................................................................................70  
Streamline Transportation Regulatory and Project Delivery Process.........................70  
Active Transportation Funding..........................................................................................71  
Goods Movement................................................................................................................71  
Public Transit........................................................................................................................72  
Support for Regional and Inter-Regional Partnerships and Projects...............................73  
**Education**........................................................................................................................73  
**Immigration**....................................................................................................................75  
**Jobs and Economic Development**..................................................................................76  
Create a Strong and Robust Job-Driven System.................................................................76  
Invest in Place-Based Initiatives........................................................................................78  
Improving Health Outcomes by Addressing Socioeconomic Status................................78  
**Local Government**..........................................................................................................79  
Local Jurisdiction and Tax System.....................................................................................79  
**Flood Control and Water Resources**.............................................................................80  
Increased Funding for Flood Protection............................................................................80  
Streamline the Regulatory and Project Delivery Process..............................................80  
**Federal Legislative Priorities**..........................................................................................82  
**Human Services**...............................................................................................................83  
Improve the Delivery of Human Services.......................................................................83  
Restore and Enhance Basic Needs Programs...................................................................84  
Advance Foster Youth Well-Being by Strengthening Child Welfare Services..............86  
Early Care and Education Planning Council....................................................................89  
Support Adults, Seniors, and People with Disabilities......................................................90  
Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council (ICPC) Federal Human Services....92  
**Health**................................................................................................................................93  
Health Care Access, Quality, and Affordability...............................................................93  
Medicaid and Health Care Reform....................................................................................93  
Behavioral Health Services...............................................................................................94  
Reducing Inequities in HIV................................................................................................94  
Systems of Care for People with Disabilities..............................................................96  
Health and Well-being of Women, Children, Youth and Families.................................96  
Disaster Preparedness.......................................................................................................97  
Communicable Disease Control and Prevention.........................................................98  
**Environmental Health**....................................................................................................98
# Table Of Contents - Contd.

Environmental Health.................................................................................................98

Public Safety..................................................................................................................99
  District Attorney...........................................................................................................99
  Probation.....................................................................................................................100
  Public Defender's Office..............................................................................................101

Planning Land Use and Housing and Community Development.............................102
  Homelessness and Affordable Housing.................................................................102
  Community Development..........................................................................................102

Sustainability.................................................................................................................103
  Support funding through the Department of Energy..............................................103

Transportation................................................................................................................103
  Transportation Infrastructure Funding.................................................................103
  Capital Improvement Project Funding Requests....................................................104
  Goods Movement......................................................................................................106
  Ongoing Funding for I-580 Corridor Improvement Projects....................................106
  Support for Regional and Inter-Regional Partnerships and Projects......................107
  Public Transit.............................................................................................................107

Education.......................................................................................................................109

Immigration.....................................................................................................................111

Jobs and Economic Development...............................................................................112
  Create a Strong and Robust Job-Driven System......................................................112
  Invest in Place-Based Initiatives..............................................................................113
  Improving Health Outcomes by Addressing Socioeconomic Status......................114

Local Government.......................................................................................................115
  Local Revenue and Economic Incentives.................................................................115

Flood Control and Water Resources.........................................................................116
  Increased Funding for Flood Protection.................................................................116
  Streamline Environmental Regulatory and Project Delivery Process....................116
  Flood Control Project Funding Request - San Lorenzo Creek Flood......................116
  Vegetation Management.........................................................................................117

Appendix: County Department Summaries....................................................................119
Alameda County is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors elected by popular vote. Other elected officials include the Auditor-Controller/Clerk-Recorder, Assessor, Treasurer-Tax Collector, District Attorney, and Sheriff/Coroner. The Board of Supervisors is responsible for providing policy direction, approving the County budget, and representing the County in a number of areas including its special districts. The County Administrator advises, assists, and acts as an agent for the Board of Supervisors in all matters under the Board’s jurisdiction.

The Board of Supervisors is guided by the Vision, Mission and Values statements (adopted on March 13, 2007), and by the County of Alameda Strategic Vision Initiative (adopted November 3, 2008).

Vision

Alameda County is recognized as one of the best counties in which to live, work, and do business.

Mission

To enrich the lives of Alameda County residents through visionary policies and accessible, responsible, and effective services.

The Alameda County Strategic Vision provides a multi-year, comprehensive and far-reaching roadmap for establishing Alameda County as one of the best counties in which to live, work and do business. The Strategic Vision consists of five areas, corresponding to the County’s core services and community priorities: Environment and Sustainability, Safe and Livable Communities, Healthy and Thriving Populations, Housing, and Transportation.

2015-16 Final Budget Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014-15 Final</th>
<th>2015-16 Final</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>$2,786,115,563</td>
<td>$2,744,222,509</td>
<td>($41,893,054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent Positions</td>
<td>9,517.52</td>
<td>9,600.12</td>
<td>82.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fund*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>$2,313,871,635</td>
<td>$2,428,627,346</td>
<td>$114,755,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent Positions</td>
<td>7,647.72</td>
<td>7,688.27</td>
<td>40.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* General Fund includes Grants and Measure A

Alameda County was established in 1853. The County was created from the territory of two counties created in 1850: Contra Costa and Santa Clara. It was given the local name for the region, Alameda, which translated loosely as “a grove of poplars.”

The County enjoys a varied geography ranging from bay wetlands to rolling open spaces to hillside lakes and streams. Alameda is the seventh most populous county in California, and has 14 incorporated cities and several unincorporated communities.

The total population is estimated to be 1,594,569 as of January 2015, a 1.3% increase from a year ago. Oakland is the seat of County government and the largest city.
Alameda County is characterized by rich diversity and culture. Population growth has occurred with the natural net increase of births over deaths, but also from substantial immigration, and Alameda County is now one of the most ethnically diverse regions in the Bay Area and the nation.

There is no majority racial or ethnic group in Alameda County. According to the California Department of Education, 59 languages were spoken by English language learners in the K-12 public school systems in Alameda County in 2013-14.

Source: *California Department of Finance, May 2015*

Source: *Census 2010*
The United States economy is in its sixth year of growth as measured by the increase in Gross Domestic Product. In Alameda County, the unemployment rate has dropped to 4.2% as of September 2015, which is about half of what it was three years ago, and is better than California’s 5.5% rate and a 4.9% rate for the nation.

**Alameda County Unemployment Rate**

Source: California Economic Development Department

**Alameda County Median Home Values**

Source: DataQuick

Assessed home value determines how much property taxes the County receives. Alameda County’s median home value was $625,000 in September 2015, up 12% from a year ago and surpassing a pre-recession peak of $619,000 in August 2007.
Legislative Principles
The Alameda County Board of Supervisors supports legislation that is consistent with the following principles:

1. **County Revenues**
   - Support the guarantee of dependable, predictable, and equitable revenue streams to support County programs, as well as additional revenue raising authority and flexibility for counties.
   - Support preservation of existing revenues and revenue authority.
   - Support new opportunities for State and federal funding and expanded opportunities to generate local revenues.
   - Oppose the imposition of State and federal mandates for which funding is not fully provided, and any State and federal budget actions that would result in a negative fiscal impact to Alameda County.
   - Oppose legislative and budgetary actions that result in reduced levels of service to impacted populations in Alameda County, or the shift of program responsibility to the County without adequate funding.
   - Support increased funding of the County’s infrastructure needs.

2. **Services to Families and Children**
   - Support simplification of eligibility determination and income reporting requirements for the CalWORKs program and support expanded educational opportunities and funding for CalWORKs participants through adult education and regional occupational programs.
   - Support incentives for guardianship, adoption and kinship care, such as clothing allowances.
   - Support restorations and benefit increases for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and oppose any cuts to SNAP.
   - Support incentives for family placement of foster children.
   - Support Head Start programs and funding and increase subsidized slots for preschool and child care.
   - Prioritize children in the budget process and protect children and the poor from budget cuts.
   - Support legislative and budgetary actions that help ensure children are born healthy by giving parents and families the support they need to care for infants and young children through access to quality prenatal and postnatal care and home visiting programs.
   - Support efforts to improve academic success in schools with a special focus on boosting third grade reading and math proficiency and ensure all students graduate from high school.
   - Support families living at or near poverty level by protecting safety net programs such as SNAP, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) which are critical. Alameda County opposes any efforts to cut these programs.

3. **Program Flexibility and Integration of Services**
   - Support actions that provide program flexibility in all areas including job training, integrated children’s services, and other social service and health program areas.
   - Support full implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
   - Support adequate funding for preventative and family preservation services for families with at-risk children.
   - Support program service integration to meet the needs of children, families and seniors.
• Support the pooling of federal, State, and county resources to provide integrated safety net services and adequate funding for the provision of safety net health and welfare services.

4. Health Insurance for the Uninsured and Underinsured

• Support funding for the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).
• Support efforts to include all children in health insurance programs.
• Support adjusted funding distribution for Proposition 63 (mental health programs).

5. Health and Retirement Benefits

• Support legislation that continues to further address pension reform, specifically efforts to allow local government flexibility in negotiating pension benefits that maintain financial stability for counties.
• Support efforts to reduce healthcare costs while maintaining sufficient service levels for employees and their families.

6. Public Safety and Justice

• Support efforts to maintain or enhance local government funding for public safety services and retain local authority to enhance efforts for integrated re-entry programs for parolees and rehabilitative programs.
• Support funding for substance abuse treatment and related services.
• Support funding for violence prevention initiatives.
• Support continued funding for Proposition 36 services (drug offenders programs).
• Support enhancement of the rights and protections of all victims of crime, including increased funding to expand services.
• Support funding for the Violence Against Women Act.

7. Housing, Land Use and Transportation

• Support the federal government’s actions to ensure financial integrity of the Highway Trust Fund for the future.
• Support State and federal funding efforts to enhance county streets and roads, transportation, infrastructure, hospital, flood control and seismic safety, including seismic repair and maintenance of estuary bridges.
• Support methods to increase gas tax and alternative revenue sources, including legislative efforts to provide for a county or regional gas tax for infrastructure improvements.
• Support rewarding states that provide significant funding for transportation systems.
• Support efforts to increase funding for and flexibility of transit investments and for non-motorized transportation.
• Support policies that preserve and strengthen an integrated and connected multimodal goods movement system that supports freight mobility and access and is coordinated with passenger transportation systems and local land use decisions.
• Support efforts to address regional housing needs and homelessness, including efforts to protect homeowners from predatory foreclosures, maintain and expand tenant rights, prevent
displacement, rehabilitate and preserve the existing housing stock, and increase the stock of housing affordable for low and moderate income households.

- Support funding for increased affordable housing and ending homelessness.
- Support efforts to close the regional jobs/housing imbalance.
- Support funding for economic development, capital and downtown/neighborhood improvements.
- Support local control of community-based energy programs such as Community Choice Aggregation and oppose legislation that undermines local programs.

8. **Flood Control, Natural Resources, and Environment**

Support legislation that improves streamlining of State and federal environmental review and regulatory approval processes for the delivery, enhancement, or augmentation of flood control projects, wetland restoration projects, and environmental impact mitigation projects.

9. **Federal Assistance to Facilitate the Economic Recovery of California**

- Support actions such as administrative relief from federal penalties, restoration and program funding enhancements for programs such as Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospitals, Medicare and State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, and implementation of equitable funding formulas such as that for Homeland Security funding.
- Support Election Reform.
- Support funding for costs of services to immigrants and refugees.
- Oppose federal penalties for California’s Child Support Programs.
- Oppose any legislation to block grant Medicaid and support any legislation to increase current Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for California and enable counties to access Medicaid funds.
- Oppose unfunded mandates and legislation or regulations that preempt county authority.

10. **Sustainability**

- Support climate change legislation and regulation development at both the State and federal levels to ensure that the interests of local governments are addressed, public health concerns are taken into account, and that the County receives necessary resources for implementation.
- Support Alameda County eligibility as a carbon offset receiving area where carbon offset resources can be realigned and invested.
- Support green transportation initiatives including multi-modal community designs.
- Support funding efforts to enhance the disaster preparedness of critical County facilities and infrastructure.
- Support policies and incentives that promote efficiencies in the built environment, including green public building design, energy conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, home and commercial energy efficiency retrofits and renewable power generation.

11. **Elections – Poll Workers**

- Support legislation that will assist in providing adequate staffing at polling places, including designation of public employees as Election Service Workers.
12. **Veteran’s Services**

- Support funding to assist veterans and their dependents or survivors with job training and placement, mental and physical health care, educational opportunities, housing, benefits and other quality of life services.

12. **Immigration Reform**

- Support immigration reform that provides an expedited, common-sense route to citizenship for new Americans who aspire to be citizens, recognizes the contribution of immigrants, and keeps families together in this country.
- Support reforms that will reduce the negative impact of detention and deportation programs on public safety, civil liberties, public health, and the conditions of detainees.
- Support efforts that protect children of parents detained or deported within the current system.
- Oppose any restrictions of services to undocumented immigrants.
- Oppose any discriminatory or unequal treatment based upon immigration status.
Legislative Proposals
LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

Alameda County’s 2016 legislative proposals, as outlined in the succeeding pages, are in keeping with the County’s legislative principles. There are nine proposals in the areas of safe needle disposal, a State of California study of funding for senior services, charity care and California hospitals, Healthcare Districts, commercially sexually exploited children, Supplemental Security Income for foster youth, reproductive health and foster youth, extending AB 12 funding to camp youth and safe and reasonable speed limits on rural roads in urban areas.

HEALTH

Proposal: Safe Needle Disposal

The County proposes legislation to require a pharmaceutical manufacturer of an injectable drug whose product is dispensed in California via home use syringes be responsible for providing consumers with a safe needle disposal method. Current law since 2008 prohibits consumers from knowingly disposing of home-generated sharps in household garbage, recycling or green waste bins (SB 1305 of 2006).

Discussion/Key Components

There are about 96,000 diabetics in the County as reported by the Centers for Disease Control. Many use syringes for home dispensed medication. In California there are approximately one million users who generate more than 389 million sharps per year, a statistic that is expected to increase as the number of people with diabetes is on the rise.

It was hoped that SB 1305 of 2006 would provide an incentive to local governments, manufacturers, pharmacies and others to step up and help with the development of proper methods of disposal of these products but unfortunately this did not occur. Without a convenient method to safely dispose of sharps, many are placed in the trash and in recycling bins, jeopardizing the health and safety of workers, children and the general public, and potentially increasing exposure to disease.

Benefits

Enactment of this proposed change in State law would reduce costs in the Household Hazardous Waste program operated by the County Environmental Health Department and would reduce risk to workers employed in the program.

Proposal: State of California study for a comprehensive examination of funding for senior services

Alameda County proposes that a comprehensive study be conducted by the State of California to examine federal and State funding streams for seniors in the areas of healthcare, social services, senior housing, senior caregivers, and all other relevant publicly funded services for seniors in the State. The study is to include all agencies and jurisdictions that receive State or federal funds for the provision of services that benefit seniors directly or indirectly. The study will also identify obstacles to effective service delivery that result from the mechanisms by which these funds are created, administered, regulated, implemented and delivered.

The purpose of the study is to examine opportunities for fiscal integration and funding flexibility in seniors programs. The establishment of fiscal integration and funding flexibility would support and enhance whole-person care by allowing providers and government agencies to spend funds in a flexible fashion to meet the needs of
Based on the outcome of the study, recommendations shall be made for changes to State or federal law or regulation as deemed necessary to permit jurisdictions in the State of California to implement programs allowing blending of a variety of funding streams in order to establish an integrated service delivery system for seniors in need of services.

**Discussion/Key Components**

Services to seniors are currently supported by funding streams that are not integrated, are directed towards separate and individual target problems and populations and are not blendable in most respects. This has led to fragmentation of programs and services that adversely impact outcomes for seniors. Some of these programs are federal, others are State funded. Counties encounter barriers in service delivery due to the categorization of funds, as well as duplicative and confusing State and federal administrative procedures and reporting requirements.

Experts, officials and those working in the field of service provision for seniors and a wide range of organizations and entities have long recognized that the multitude of narrow, uncoordinated, categorical funding streams, each of which has its own eligibility, administrative and reporting requirements, is a primary obstacle in the effort to improve service delivery, planning, and ultimately the wellbeing and health of seniors.

This proposal provides for a study of the potential to use blended and braided funding which are the primary mechanisms used to create flexibility. Blended funding refers to the process of two or more public agencies jointly funding a set of services, with the funds pooled into a single payment to organizations responsible for delivering or contracting for the delivery of services. Braided funding refers to two or more agencies jointly paying for a package of services while the funding stream and reporting requirements remain separate.

**Benefits**

In order to determine whether local communities can better serve seniors if categorical funds are blended, a study is needed that will comprehensively identify those funds and the best use of state and local human services funding.

**Proposal: Charity care and nonprofit California hospitals**

The County proposes legislation that adds definitions to tighten up rules on what constitutes charity care and adds sanctions on hospitals that do not meet rules, including but not limited to, denial of tax exempt status.

**Discussion/Key Components**

According to the Legislative Analyst Office, "there is currently no federal, State, or local requirement on the amount of charity care that non-profit California hospitals must provide in order to maintain their nonprofit and tax-exempt status. However, hospitals are required, under state law, to offer reduced rates to uninsured and underinsured patients that may have low or moderate incomes, and to establish policies that state the qualifications patients must meet in order to be eligible for free medical care and discounted payments."

The Affordable Care Act strengthened non-profit hospital accountability by amending the Internal Revenue Code to include a community health needs assessment process which includes evidence-based planning and an implementation strategy for the hospital investment.
Despite federal and State legislative remedies, there is still no standard definition of what community benefits are or the method used to determine their value.

Benefits

Although State and federal legislation has attempted to define charity care, determine the amount of charity care a hospital must provide, and delineate sanctions for hospitals not adhering to rules, these aforementioned issues have yet to be resolved. To provide equity and transparency and to ensure that the community is best served by non-profit California hospitals, the legislature needs to address this issue in a comprehensive manner – in particular concerning the issues of what constitutes charity care and the penalties for not adhering to those rules.

Proposal: Healthcare Districts

Enact legislation that provides strict oversight [and possible dissolution] of healthcare districts that no longer provide a direct health service, defined as ownership or operation of a hospital, medical clinic, wellness center or ambulance service; has substantial net assets; and does not currently receive a property tax allocation.

Health and Safety Code Sections 32000 specifies procedures for formation of districts, elections, powers and assessments. Government Code Section 12463 sets forth financial reporting requirements, including annual financial reports to be submitted to the State Controller.

State law, however, does not address the issue of healthcare districts that no longer provide a direct health service.

Discussion/Key Components

The vast majority of healthcare districts in California continue to serve their communities by directly providing health and wellness services. Only a few have ceased such functions entirely. These districts are often referred to as “grants-only” districts in that their mission is carried out through making grants to community organizations that provide health services.

Due to poor oversight and lack of legislative direction, it is possible for a “grants-only” district to spend 70-90% of its revenues on administrative expenses rather than supporting the health care needs of the community.

To increase revenues for local healthcare institutions and ensure transparency and accountability, it is important that we seek a legislative remedy for this problem.

HUMAN SERVICES

Proposal: Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)

The goal of this proposal is to provide new protections in State law that will ensure that all foster youth who have been sexually exploited are not at risk of further exploitation by their parent or guardian. To accomplish this goal, this proposal seeks legislation that authorizes a juvenile court to not offer reunification services to a parent who has consented to the sexual exploitation of their child. This could be accomplished by adding a new paragraph to
subdivision (b) of WIC 361.5:

WIC 361.5(b)(17): That the child has been sexually exploited, as defined in Penal Code 11165.1(c), or sexually trafficked, as described in Penal Code 236.1(c), and the child's parent or guardian consented to, or participated in, the sexual exploitation of the child.

The State law change should include protections for parents who might themselves be victims of abuse and were coerced into consenting to their child’s exploitation.

Discussion/ Key Components

Existing law does not explicitly provide for the exclusion of reunification services to a parent or guardian when they have knowingly engaged in, or consented to, the sexual exploitation of their child. State law should be changed to provide clear protections for foster youth who have suffered from sexual exploitation.

The sex trafficking of children is a serious problem in California. Our State contains three metropolitan areas (San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego) that have been rated as "high intensity child prostitution" areas by the FBI. Specific to foster care, it is estimated that the majority of children being prostituted are or were formerly involved with child welfare. In response, several laws have recently been passed that provide either additional protections against sexual exploitation or services to foster youth who have already been exploited. One of those laws, SB 855 (Statutes of 2014), created the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children program for foster youth, which is now being implemented by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and counties. Although substantial progress has been made, these efforts do not provide specific protections to ensure that youth who have been sexually exploited by a parent are automatically prevented from being reunified with that parent.

Under existing law, it is possible that reunification services can be denied to a parent or guardian involved in the sexual exploitation of their child under the existing provisions of WIC 361.5(b), depending on other circumstances of a case. However, this is not true for all children. Given the seriousness of this problem, sexual exploitation should be explicitly included in law as a reason the court can deny reunification services to a parent.

Benefits

Such a change in law will offer local flexibility to juvenile courts in the decision of whether reunification services should be provided to a parent. It will also provide additional legal protections to foster youth who have been the victim of exploitation. There do not appear to be any new potential costs that would occur as a result of the bill, since courts can already place commercially sexually exploited children into foster care. The bill would only ensure additional protections for children using existing resources.
Proposal: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits for Foster Youth

Current law leads to situations where foster youth receiving high Aid to Families with Dependent Children Foster Care (AFDC-FC) payments are denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit eligibility or lose their existing SSI benefits, even though they meet other SSI eligibility criteria. The goal of this proposal is to ensure that all youth who are eligible can receive SSI benefits and maintain their SSI eligibility throughout their involvement in foster care without the need for an annual temporary suspension of the IV-E or federal payment, regardless of whether they receive SSI benefits or have high federal payments.

Specifically, we seek to:
1. Allow a foster youth’s SSI benefits to remain in suspense for the duration of their stay in foster care, even if the benefits are in suspense for more than 12 consecutive months.
2. Authorize counties to claim nonfederal AFDC-FC benefits to cover any amount of lost federal AFDC-FC benefit during any month when a foster child or nonminor dependent’s SSI benefits are in suspense.
3. Expand the changes made by AB 1331 to also include foster youth under age 16.5, allowing child welfare agencies to apply for benefits on behalf of the youth, even when their foster care payment is more than the SSI benefit amount.

This can be accomplished by either:
- An amendment to State or federal law or regulation
- Requiring the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to create a workgroup that will explore solutions to this problem and work with the SSA to develop a policy exception for these youth

Discussion/Key Components

SSI benefits are available under Title XVI of the Social Security Act for certain disabled children from families with low incomes and minimal assets. Research has found that compared to children in the general population, children in foster care have greater physical, mental health, and developmental needs. National estimates find that more than 20% of foster children would likely be eligible for SSI. [i] Current and former foster youth already experience poorer outcomes in areas of socioeconomic well-being in comparison to their peers. It is imperative that any services and supports, including SSI, available to an eligible foster youth be secured to support their successful transition from foster care.

Unfortunately, current laws lead to situations where foster youth lose SSI benefits or eligibility. This benefit is a critical financial support for many youth, especially those who will soon transition out of foster care. If SSI benefits are not in place when a youth exits care, this increases the likelihood that they will be without any other provision for support and are therefore at a greater risk for homelessness and hunger.

Under federal law, a foster youth who is eligible for SSI will not receive an SSI payment during any month that their federally funded AFDC-FC payment is greater than the SSI benefit. Additionally, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will not approve SSI benefit applications for youth who are under age 16.5 that are federally eligible for AFDC-FC and have an AFDC-FC payment that is greater than the SSI benefit amount. California sought a federal waiver to address some of the SSI issues for youth over 16.5.

For youth age 16.5 and older, since AB 1331 (Chapter 465, Statutes of 2008), the child welfare agency can apply for benefits on behalf of youth, even when their foster care payment is high, and the SSI benefits are put in suspense. For these youth, when the youth’s federal AFDC-FC payment exceeds the SSI benefit amount, the SSI payment is reduced to zero and placed in suspense by the SSA if the child welfare agency “turns off” their eligibility for other federal funding. If the SSI benefits remain in suspense for 12 consecutive months, the youth’s eligibility for SSI is...
terminated by the SSA unless the child welfare agency forgoes federal payments for one month. To ensure that a minor’s SSI eligibility remains in suspense while receiving foster care benefits, a county must complete certain administrative actions to change a youth’s foster care benefits from federal to State eligibility every 12th month (the county loses the federal share of the costs of care for that month).

The process to maintain SSI eligibility is often complicated and creates administrative issues. During the 12-month period when SSI benefits are in suspense, if countable income becomes less than the SSI benefit rate, the SSI payment is reinstated. However, the resumption of payments is not automatic. The SSI recipient or representative payee must contact the SSA to provide necessary information to re-establish eligibility before the 12 months expire. This process to re-establish eligibility can still result in the loss of eligibility for the youth when errors occur in the timing or processing of the administrative actions needed to maintain SSI eligibility. This can also result in youth exiting from foster care without their SSI benefits in place due to the length of time it takes to reapply for SSI benefits.

The loss of SSI eligibility for foster youth creates financial burdens for counties and youth. When counties appeal the SSA decision to terminate a youth’s eligibility or reapply for SSI benefits, they suffer additional administrative expenses and are not always successful. The SSA offices in the San Francisco Bay Area, for example, are several years behind in processing under-payments and other administrative review requests. Alameda County has made repeated attempts over the course of four years to recover lost benefits on behalf of tens of youth due to under-payments and/or lack of retro-payment when youth are found eligible.

The complicated system and processes to maintain SSI eligibility often result in situations where youth lose eligibility and then do not have access to additional financial supports for their care. This proposal outlines three areas that could help address these issues and ensure more foster youth maintain SSI eligibility and benefits.


Benefits

This proposal is intended to ensure that eligible foster youth maintain their SSI eligibility throughout their involvement in foster care without the need for temporary suspensions of foster care payments. Current law leads to situations where foster youth who are both disabled and from impoverished backgrounds risk being dropped from a major mode of financial support. The changes proposed could help ensure more SSI eligible foster youth are able to access key benefits to support their transition to adulthood.

Proposal: Reproductive Health Education for Foster Youth

Provide State support for training, technical assistance, and demonstration projects to develop best practices for reproductive health education for foster youth ages 14 – 19. The goals should be to increase the availability, and improve the quality, of reproductive health education programs for foster youth. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) could be directed to administer a pilot program with counties that provides training, funding, and oversight for reproductive health education to foster youth. The projects should use an evidence-based curriculum, such as Making Proud Choices, for the reproductive health education program. Evaluation of the pilot projects could help inform improvements to reproductive health education for foster youth across the State to help reduce pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among foster youth.
Discussion/Key Components

Foster youth are at an alarmingly higher rate of experiencing disparate reproductive health outcomes than youth in the general population. Specifically:

- 26 percent of 17 year-olds girls in foster care in California have been pregnant at least once. This is compared to a pregnancy rate of 2.8 percent for all California teens, aged 15 to 19.
- In California, 34.3 percent of girls who were in foster care at age 17 will give birth at least once by age 21.

However, there is not a dedicated funding source provided to counties to support reproductive health education for foster youth. This means that county child welfare agencies must rely on grants or other inconsistent funding sources that may not be available each year or fail to provide sufficient funding to educate all foster youth. In addition, these external funding sources cannot provide for all 58 counties.

Benefits

As California moves forward with the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), special attention should be paid to teenage foster youth. Providing reproductive health education to foster youth ages 14-19 can help prevent foster youth pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections and diseases. Pregnancy can have a devastating impact on a youth’s educational attainment.

- By age 22, only around 50 percent of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30 percent have earned a General Education Development (GED) certificate, whereas 90 percent of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
- Teen fathers have a 25 to 30 percent lower probability of graduating from high school than teenage boys who are not fathers.

Even foster youth that do not experience teen pregnancy are much less likely to graduate high school than other youth. It is critical that foster youth receive reproductive health training to support their successful transition to adulthood. Providing supports for this type of education and training is aligned with the goals of CCR. The State funds requested by this proposal could result in additional local flexibility for preventive service provision to youth that increases their well-being and health.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Proposal: Foster Youth and Camp Sweeney (Alternative Detention)

Opportunities under existing AB12 law (Chapter 559, Statutes of 2010), for youth receiving extended transitional foster care services when they turn 18, may not extend to camp youth. This proposal is to amend existing law to establish that AB 12 services may be extended to camp youth, such as Camp Sweeney in Alameda County.

Discussion/Key Components

Eligibility and Extended Foster Care

Welfare & Institutions Code Section 450 determines which probation youth qualify to participate in AB 12 as non-minor dependents. Accordingly, it is required that a non-minor dependent must have turned 18 "while under an order of foster care placement by the juvenile court" (W&IC §§388(e)(1);450(a);and 11400(v)). In addition, the non-minor needs to have been “a ward in foster care placement who was a ward subject to an order for foster care placement on the day he or she attained 18 years of age,” to have been “removed from the physical custody
of his or her parents . . . and ordered into foster care placement as a ward" (W&IC §450(a)). It is not clear, under existing law, whether or not camp placement is deemed foster care placement.

This creates a challenge for all public safety agencies when camp youth approach the age of 18, and seek permanency and eventual transition to independent living. Camp youth risk not receiving services or having access to programs that would otherwise benefit their health and well-being, and that increases their chances to recidivate. Inaccessibility to AB12 services for non-minor dependents (NMDs) can lead to camp youth suffering outcomes such as: homelessness, reliance on public assistance, teen pregnancy, and low high school and postsecondary graduation rates.

Under a wardship order, a youth may be under Probation's supervision while remaining in the parent or legal guardian's home, or may be under the care, custody and control of Probation, to be placed outside the home. To be eligible for the extended foster services, the youth must have been subject to a foster care placement order on his/her 18th birthday.

**Background and Statewide Demographics**

There are approximately 27 counties in California that have juvenile camps or ranches. As defined under the Board of State and Community Corrections Title 15 - Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities, "Camp" means a juvenile camp, ranch, forestry camp or boot camp established in accordance with Section 881 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to which youth made wards of the court on the grounds of fitting the description in Section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code may be committed. Also, under W&IC §730(a) "When a minor is adjudged a ward of the court on the ground that he or she is a person described by Section 602, the court may . . . commit the minor to a juvenile home, ranch, camp, or forestry camp".

In the most recent Juvenile Detention Profile Survey reflecting results for the second quarter, calendar Year 2014, the camp gender distribution statewide was 93% male and 7% female. The average daily population during that same quarter was 2,195 and the age range (as reported in a one-day snapshot) was from 12 to 18 and over, where 71% represented ages 15 to 17. The total bed capacity was 4,814, which (with the total average daily population count) placed it at 46% occupancy. The average length of stay was 130 days.

From 2009 to 2014, the 2nd Quarter distribution of charges showed an average of 76% of youth with felony offenses, an increase of two percentage points from 75% in 2013 to 77% in 2014. The remaining percentage reflected misdemeanor charges (BSCC, 2015).
TRANSPORTATION

Proposal: Safe and Reasonable Speed Limits on Rural Roads in Urbanized Counties

Current law sets rural road speed limits on local roadways at 55 mph or as justified by an engineering speed study. Alameda County proposes introducing legislation which allows for the establishment of reasonable and safe speed limits on narrow rural roadways in urbanized counties which are used as bypass routes to congested freeways. The proposed legislation would establish a prima facie speed limit of 40 mph on rural roadways in urbanized counties which are 18 feet in width or less and with traffic volumes more than 3,000 vehicles per day.

Discussion/Key Components

Alameda County is a primary destination for regional and inter-regional traffic for goods movement and workforce commute travel between San Joaquin County, Contra Costa County, and Santa Clara County. Major transportation corridors, such as I-580, I-680, and I-880, routinely experience extreme traffic congestion. In an effort to avoid this congested highway, motorists continue to seek alternative routes along the rural roads. This increased traffic congestion results in safety issues, especially for residents living along these rural roadways.

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) provides the requirements for establishing speed limits on California highways and roadways including those within Alameda County. However, the requirements for establishing reasonable speed limits along narrow rural roadways subjected to aggressive bypass traffic presents special challenges in urbanized counties. This aggressive bypass traffic occurs during the extended morning and evening commute hour periods.

Many of these rural roadways being used by bypass traffic are less than 19 feet in width with limited or no shoulder areas. As a result, there are no areas to conduct the engineering speed studies required by the CVC. In addition, since the bypass traffic occurs during the peak periods, the data collected during the speed study periods is very limited.

In order to establish reasonable speed limits for narrow, high volume rural roadways in urbanized counties, legislation to allow flexibility in speed zoning is needed.

Benefits

The benefits would allow for reasonable and safe speed limits to be established along narrow high volume roadways subject to aggressive bypass traffic.
Policy Overview
HUMAN SERVICES

Although the State economy is improving, the recovery remains elusive for too many Californians. According to the 2013 U.S. Census Supplemental Poverty Measure, California has the highest poverty rate in the country (23.4 percent or nearly nine million people). During the recession, the State slashed funding for core health and human services programs (cutting over $15 billion between 2008 and 2013). There have been modest restorations over the past two years but too many core public services are underfunded following years of deep cuts. The State and federal government should restore recent cuts to safety-net programs and make strategic enhancements to better serve children and families.

Alameda County Poverty and Hunger

Locally, many residents are still struggling. In 2014, 12.5 percent of Alameda County residents (approx. 197,500 individuals) lived below the poverty line. The rate of local poverty has remained relatively constant over the past few years, despite improvements in the economy. The rates are even higher for children, with almost one in seven (approx. 47,900 children) living in poverty. The Alameda County Community Food Bank estimates that one in three children in Alameda County face the threat of hunger every day.

Cost of Living

The true cost of living in the County is much higher than the federal poverty rates indicate. According to the Real Cost Measure (RCM), an adult with two children in Alameda County would need $50,647 annually to cover basic costs for housing, food, health care, transportation, child care, and taxes. This is equivalent to more than two full-time jobs at the California minimum wage. By this measure, 25 percent of households with children in Alameda County lack sufficient resources to cover their basic needs.

Safety-Net Programs

These statistics demonstrate how difficult it is to make ends meet even for individuals with a job. According to the RCM, 85 percent of Alameda County households that lack sufficient resources to cover their basic needs include at least one working adult. For these individuals and others living in poverty, safety net benefits such as CalFresh (food stamps), CalWORKs, and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) are especially important. A recent California Poverty Measure report found that social safety net programs helped keep almost three million California residents out of deep poverty and moderated the impact of poverty, especially for children.

Early Care and Education

Access to quality early care and education is critical for children, especially those living in poverty. Research shows that a child’s exposure to high-quality preschool and early learning opportunities contributes to higher academic achievement, increased high school graduation rates, and greater readiness for college and careers. However, child care is often one of the highest expenses for low-income families with children. Recent research found that a single parent in California earning minimum wage would have to spend 71 percent of his/her salary on infant/toddler care.

Aging Adults and Individuals with Disabilities

In addition to children, aging adults are another growing and vulnerable population. The Alameda County adult population aged 65 and above is projected to increase over 40 percent in the next 10 years. The poverty rate among people over the age 65 has increased from 8.2 percent in 2013 to 10.7 percent in 2014 and highlights the growing needs for this population. According to the Elder Index (a county-specific measure of the minimum income necessary to cover basic needs of all of a retired older adults), about a half of this population lack adequate resources to meet their basic needs. In addition, according to the 2014 Census data, 22 percent of individuals with disabilities in Alameda County live below the federal poverty line, an increase from 2013. During the recession, State funding for aging adults and individuals with disabilities was severely cut.
Wealth Inequality
The racial wealth gap in the U.S. is staggering; for every $1 of wealth held by a White household on average (median net worth), a Black household has six cents and a Latino household has seven cents. Without assets, families do not have a cushion in case of emergency, nor can they plan for the future by purchasing a home, sending their kids to college, or starting a business. This means that in addition to the millions of families who live below the federal poverty line, California has a large number of families who are one illness, job loss, or other crisis away from poverty. Policies should promote savings and asset building. Research finds that the children of parents who own assets – regardless of income – are more likely to have higher academic achievement and complete more years of education.

Need to Restore and Invest
Alameda County supports public policies that strengthen the social safety net for the most vulnerable while also investing in our future. Specifically, the County supports policies that provide high-quality early care and learning experiences for children; help aging adults and those living with disabilities live healthier, more independent, and more engaged lives; educate and develop our workforce; make strategic investments in places and neighborhoods with the highest need; encourage and support savings and wealth-building; and promote the economic and social well-being of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities.

Low-income individuals and families need restoration of critical benefits, increased flexibility, expansion of programs that work, and the simplification/streamlining of processes and systems to ensure they are able to access all the benefits for which they are eligible. The Human Services Chapters outline a policy agenda for advancing economic prosperity and equity so that all individuals, children, and families have the opportunity to succeed.

### Many Low-Income Alameda County Families Find It Difficult to Make Ends Meet

*Cost of living for a household of 1 adult and 2 school-aged children*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost of Living</th>
<th>Full-time Minimum Wage Job</th>
<th>Public Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real Cost Budget*: $48,016</td>
<td>Minimum Wage(^{1})</td>
<td>Cash Benefits: $14,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes (Total Taxes + EITC)</td>
<td>Oakland: $25,480</td>
<td>California: $18,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Over-$22,500 gap</td>
<td>Nearly-$34,000 gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Federal Poverty Level: $19,790

* The Real Cost Measure, developed by United Ways of California, is a basic needs budget approach grounded in a household budget composed of costs all families must address such as food, housing, transportation, child care, out-of-pocket health expenses, and taxes. It also takes into account different costs of living in different communities.

\(^{1}\) Income for minimum wage job is calculated as yearly earning based on statewide and Oakland minimum wage, which are currently $9 and $11.25 an hour respectively. To earn the figures shown, a minimum wage earner would need to work full-time for 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year.

\(^{2}\) Each program benefit amount shown here is maximum benefit a client may be eligible to receive based on a household size of 3.
HEALTH

Health, disease and death rates are not randomly distributed. Illness concentrates among low-income people, people of color, and people with disabilities residing in certain geographical places. Inequities in economic, social, physical and service environments continue to create and maintain clear patterns of poor health in Alameda County, statewide, and nationally. Despite increasing life expectancy for all racial groups, the gap in life expectancy between Blacks and Whites in Alameda County has persisted. For 2011-2013, African Americans lived (on average) almost 7 years less than Whites. African Americans lived on average about 12 years less than Asians, the group with the highest life expectancy. Similar inequities exist when comparing neighborhoods in Alameda County with the highest poverty levels to those with the lowest poverty levels (see chart below). The geographic concentrations of race, poverty, disability, and poor health reflect a legacy of discrimination and segregation as well as present day policies and practices that perpetuate unjust and unequal patterns. Due to constant pressures and lack of control over their environment, as well as experiences of racism and discrimination, people living in these high poverty neighborhoods often face a chronic stress response, which over time actually wears down body systems and increases the risk of health conditions like hypertension or diabetes. In order to address the health inequities between different racial and ethnic groups and other subpopulations, policies must be adopted that correct the social and environmental inequities underlining these health outcomes. A core mission of Alameda County's Health Care Services Agency is to eliminate these health and social inequities.

Life Expectancy by Neighborhood Poverty Level:
A Social Gradient in Health

![Life Expectancy Chart](chart-url)

Females of all racial/ethnic groups live longer than their male counterparts, over four years on average. It has been demonstrated throughout this report that the average African American life expectancy is foreshortened. However, when both gender and race/ethnicity are taken into account, the gap widens to 17 years, with the average African American male living 71.1 years compared to the average Asian female who lives 88.3 years.
The ten leading causes of death in Alameda County account for approximately 74% of all deaths. Of these ten leading causes of death in Alameda County, over 90% were caused by chronic diseases including cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic lower respiratory disease, Alzheimer’s, diabetes, hypertension, and liver disease. The table below outlines these ten leading causes of death.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading Causes of Death, Alameda County, 2011-2013</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Deaths</td>
<td>27,985</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>6,695</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of Heart</td>
<td>5,922</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>1,709</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases</td>
<td>1,299</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimers Disease</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintentional Injuries</td>
<td>1,113</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes Mellitus</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Hypertension &amp; Hypertensive Renal Disease</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza &amp; Pneumonia</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Liver Disease &amp; Cirrhosis</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Causes</td>
<td>7,254</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CAPE, Alameda County, with data from Alameda County Vital Statistics Files, 2011-2013

Although chronic diseases are among the most prevalent and costly health problems, they are also among the most preventable. Access to prevention and health care services affect chronic disease burden and outcome. To a large degree, the major chronic diseases - heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and diabetes - result from lifestyles and habits of daily living. Socioeconomic status is also an important determinant of chronic disease risk. People who are poor, have lower levels of education, or are isolated are more likely to engage in a wide array of risk-related behaviors. The social environment influences risk behaviors through the shaping of norms, patterns of social control, or environmental opportunities that determine individual behavior choices.
Additionally, the social environment can impact people in ways that go beyond individual behavior choice. These can include factors which individuals may have little control over and can impact the health of entire communities, such as: exposure to environmental hazards, lack of access to quality education, and lack of clean and affordable housing. Alameda County supports policy solutions that address each of these intervention points in order to prevent chronic diseases and reduce their inequitable burden across different racial and ethnic groups, as well as other subpopulations.

**Mental Health**

When looking at the burden of chronic disease it’s also important to factor in the issues of mental illness. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that people with mental health and substance use conditions die 25 years earlier than the general population mostly due to preventable health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular, respiratory, or infectious diseases (including HIV). The stigma associated with mental illness often prevents those who are in the most need of treatment for these preventable diseases from accessing and utilizing primary care services, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality.

**The Life Course**

The life course perspective brings a critical additional lens to this understanding of health, highlighting the importance of ensuring that babies and children live in supportive community environments that will foster optimal health, development, and well-being over the course of their lives. The life course perspective suggests that health disparities do not stem just from differential access to health care but are the result of broad social, economic, and environmental factors that affect one’s experiences and opportunities over a lifetime, with the greatest impact occurring during critical periods of development, such as pregnancy, early childhood, and adolescence. However, without the reversal of the cumulative disadvantages and inequities experienced over a lifetime or several lifetimes there will continue to be racial inequities in birth outcomes. Multi-level interventions are needed to address these disparities – both by providing needed services and by advancing systemic change to address the root causes that have shaped the neighborhood conditions where poor health clusters.

**Seniors and People with Disabilities**

On the other end of the life spectrum, Alameda County experienced a 54% increase in 60+ populations between 1980 and 2010. Current projections predict that Alameda County will have a senior population of 513,367 by the year 2040. If this projection is accurate, Alameda County will have a 108% increase in the senior population between 2010 and 2040, compared with the 54% increase experienced over the previous 30 years. Evidence shows that rates of disability rise with age.

Currently, 22% of the U.S. population has some kind of disability. In California, people with disabilities make up 36.7% of the population aged 65 and up. These percentages will increase significantly with the expected rise in the rate of autism and aging populations. In addition, 0.9% of people with disabilities in California are African American and in Oakland that number rises to 42.1%. People with disabilities tend to be in poorer health and to use health care at a significantly higher rate than people who do not have disabilities. They also experience a higher prevalence of secondary conditions and use preventive services at a lower rate than people without disabilities, primarily due to lack of access and cultural competence. They are also affected disproportionately by barriers to care. Significant policy and systems changes will be needed to care for the growing population of seniors and people with disabilities.

**Access to Health Care**

Implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides a historic opportunity to provide access to preventative health services to previously underserved populations. California and Alameda County have led the country in aggressively implementing the ACA. However, many challenges still lie ahead to ensure that all those who can benefit from the new law are able to do so. This includes a need to expand the number of primary care providers and to increase the Medi-Cal reimbursement rate to ensure access to care for all Medi-Cal beneficiaries. Additionally, certain Alameda County residents, such as undocumented immigrants, will not benefit from the new law. Continued legislative action will be needed to ensure that no one falls through the cracks of our healthcare system.
Additional challenges remain due to budget cuts at both the State and federal levels that have occurred over the last several years. These cuts disproportionately impacted our most vulnerable populations including people with disabilities, seniors, and low-income children and adults. Some efforts have been made to reinstate these cuts, but additional funding and reinvestment of lost services is necessary to preserve the safety net system of care.

Alameda County supports policies that allow everyone, no matter who they are, where they live, how much money they make, their ability, or the color of their skin, to have access to the same opportunities to lead a healthy, fulfilling and productive life. The legislative platform proposals reflect this vision.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Mission of Alameda County’s Environmental Health department is to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of residents in the County through promotion of environmental quality and food safety. This is accomplished through the following regulatory and direct service programs:

**Food Safety**
The Department enforces the California Retail Food code (Calcode) with a vigorous inspection program for retail food establishments which includes restaurants, markets, bakeries, liquor stores, bars, certified farmers’ market, food service at fairs and festivals, catering trucks, hot dog carts, ice cream trucks, produce vehicles, and food vending machines. The food safety program also conducts multi-lingual food safety classes, conducts plan reviews for new and remodeled facilities, and issues permits, investigates complaints and suspected food borne illnesses, and carries-out food recalls. The public is kept informed with a restaurant grading system that requires food facilities including mobile food trucks to display color coded placards issued by the department attesting to a facilities compliance with food safety laws.

**Hazardous Materials, Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUFT) Spills, Leaks Investigation and Cleanup (SLIC)**

Local Oversight Programs
Through Memoranda of Understanding with the State of California Department of Toxics Substances Control (DTSC) and the Regional Water Quality Control board, a Certified Unified Program Agency enforces state law with respect to the hazardous materials management plan program, underground storage tank program, tiered permitting program, local oversight SLIC/LUFT program and risk management program in the cities of Alameda, Albany, Castro Valley, Dublin, Emeryville, Piedmont, Newark, San Lorenzo, Sunol, and the unincorporated areas of Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Leandro and parts of Byron, Mountain House and Tracy.

**Solid & Medical Waste**
The Department is the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) for medical waste under the Medical Waste Management Act and for solid waste disposal laws regulating transfer stations and landfills. The Solid Waste LEA also oversees the management of 42 closed landfills in the county. The Medical Waste program pursuant to a county ordinance regulates tattoo and body art establishments.

**Land Use (Septic)**
The Land Use Program administers a local wastewater management program for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) or septic systems in both unincorporated and incorporated areas of the County under the authority of Chapter 15.18 of the Alameda County General Ordinance Code. OWTS are useful and necessary structures that allow habitation at locations that are removed from centralized wastewater treatment systems.

**Vector Control and Household Hazardous Waste Service Programs**
The Vector Control program’s mission is to prevent and minimize the spread of vector-borne diseases, injury and discomfort to the residents of Alameda County. The program provides assistance to residents and the community as a whole by monitoring and controlling rodent and other disease vectors, assisting residents in mitigating vector...
infestations on their property, surveillance of vector borne diseases such as West Nile fever and Lyme disease.

The Department operates the Household Hazardous Waste program under an agreement with the Alameda County Waste Management Authority, the Joint Powers Authority charged with AB939 responsibilities for the County with respect to proper handling for home generated hazardous and medical waste. The program has three facilities that accept hazardous waste from the public and small businesses pursuant to State and federal regulations.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

The State of California is decreasing the number of individuals in state prison, thereby increasing pressure on County Public Safety Departments, and stretching resources thin. Historically, Alameda County has retained individuals locally who have been convicted of low level felonies such as nonsexual, nonviolent and non serious crimes. The County supports more efforts in the area of rehabilitation and programs that provide options for incarcerated and/or formerly incarcerated individuals to make safer, healthier and crime free-choices. The County supports collaborative efforts among government entities, community-based organizations, non-profit entities and private entities to reduce recidivism.

Health Care and Other Services Improve Outcomes

In keeping with the progressive nature of Alameda County, public safety agencies and offices have formed stronger working relationships with Social Services, Health Care, and the Community Development Agency, particularly in the area of Housing, with the aim of helping to reduce poverty and recidivism. Alameda County supports legislation that expands health insurance coverage for individuals who are at risk for incarceration and those who have been incarcerated. As part of Medi-Cal expansion through the Affordable Care Act, over one million Californians became newly eligible for Medi-Cal in 2014. The expansion means that more previously incarcerated individuals are now eligible for Medi-Cal. This is significant because more than half of all prison and jail inmates, including 56 percent of State prisoners, 45 percent of federal prisoners and 64 percent of local jail inmates, were found to have a mental health problem, according to a study published by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics. Medi-Cal expansion makes prevention and early intervention for treatment of mental health problems and substance use more accessible. This has potential to help reduce recidivism that occurs due to mental health and substance abuse problems which play a large role in behaviors that lead to incarceration. By extension, it is anticipated that this can help Alameda County reduce the number of people cycling through the criminal justice system. This could also contribute to reducing racial disparities in incarceration frequently correlated with disparate access to treatment.

Alameda County supports legislation to assist more people accessing health coverage and the other public benefits for which they are eligible. The County supports and applauds the repeal of the lifetime drug felony ban for CalWORKs and CalFresh. Beginning in April 2015, individuals with a prior drug felony will now be able to access these critical public benefits to help them stabilize. In addition to cash and nutrition assistance, CalWORKs and CalFresh both offer employment and training support. Restoring access to these benefits will improve outcomes for very vulnerable families and in turn could reduce the risks of reoffending.

Realignment

Alameda County supports legislation that provides more funds for realignment. Realignment is a State initiative that provides strong opportunities for individuals who have committed crimes to access resources such as education, employment training, substance abuse counseling and mental health services. This will reduce criminal behavior and protect the public from being victimized by crime. The intent of realignment is to increase public safety by realigning lower level offenders to community corrections programs strengthened through community-based punishment, improved supervision strategies and evidence-based practices and supervision practices demonstrated by research to reduce recidivism. This includes employing proven alternatives to incarceration for low-risk offenders.

Alameda County’s realignment plan is managed by the Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee (CCPEC). The committee is chaired by the Probation Chief, and includes the Sheriff, District Attorney, Public
Defender, local Police Chief, Health Care Services Agency Director, and Superior Court representative. The committee provides planning, oversight, implementation, and assessment of realignment in the County. Realignment objectives and goals are accomplished through the expanded use of evidence-based practices and programming that will promote positive behavioral change and outcomes.

Individuals in Alameda County convicted of realigned crimes may receive a term of felony probation. More serious realigned defendants may be sentenced to local prison. If so, they will no longer go to state prison. People in custody are under the jurisdiction of the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office. People on probation are supervised by the Alameda County Probation Department. Those who meet the statutory criteria will continue to serve their prison sentence in Santa Rita (the county jail), under the jurisdiction of the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office and not in state prison under the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Most inmates released from state prison are supervised by Alameda County Probation under Post Release Community Supervision.

**District Attorney**

The District Attorney is the only entity that has the constitutional and statutory authority to file criminal charges against an individual. The filing decision is at the discretion of the District Attorney and each case is evaluated at all stages. The District Attorney continues to work with the Defense Bar, including the Public Defender, to implement programs that will provide alternatives to incarceration. The District Attorney has created the Early Intervention Court (EIC) for eligible, realigned individuals charged with low-level felony crimes which will link individuals to programs after they are out of custody. The District Attorney also collaborates with pre-trial release organizations to divert eligible misdemeanants from being charged and/or having their cases dismissed after successful completion of a program when charged with certain misdemeanor crimes. The District Attorney will continue to effectively negotiate with the Public Defender and defense attorneys to identify alternatives to incarceration through formal felony probation. The District Attorney’s office has documented that the use of felony probation has been effective, with an average of a 27 percent recidivism rate. The Public Defender and District Attorney continue to meet and navigate processes and protocols to provide early termination of formal probation and Clean Slate programs that will allow the conviction to be set aside under appropriate circumstances.

When an individual on felony probation, Post Release Community Supervision or Parole is alleged to have committed a new offense, the District Attorney has the option of filing new charges and a violation or solely filing a revocation petition. The District Attorney has similar power to revoke Post Release Community Supervision and Mandatory Supervision. The District Attorney’s office staffs the courts that handle these revocation proceedings.

**Alameda County Family Justice Center (ACFJC)**

In June 2015, the Alameda County Family Justice Center celebrated its tenth year serving victims of crime. Created by the District Attorney’s Office, the ACFJC serves victims of domestic violence and their children, victims of sexual assault, elder abuse, and human trafficking. Since the inception of the ACFJC, more than 115,000 people have been served. The ACFJC, under the leadership of the District Attorney’s Office, has introduced several initiatives including:

- **STEP-UP (Survivor Training Empowerment Program - Utilizing your Potential)** - A women’s empowerment program for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. STEP-UP also serves as a diversion program for women charged with public assistance fraud.
- **Natalie’s Nook** - A 1-2-3 Read program for children who have witnessed interpersonal violence. The program also provides counseling and child-youth engagement services.

**Youth**

The District Attorney’s Office is committed to utilizing alternative methods to serve youth in the Juvenile Justice System. As an alternative to pursuing criminal charges, the District Attorney’s Office partners with the non-profit Community Works in comprehensive restorative justice programs. The District Attorney’s Office has a robust Truancy Mediation Program that includes the Truancy Family Court Program. Additionally, the District Attorney’s Office participates in Girls Court and the Mental Health Court for Youth. Two gender-specific restorative justice programs are ‘My Life, My Choice’ (providing alternatives to detention that specifically link young men to mentors...
and career paths) and the Young Women's Saturday Program (working with young women who have been or are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation).

Alameda County supports more programs and opportunities for youth. Law enforcement entities within the county have already created opportunities for youth to give them a positive view of law enforcement and give them work experience. For example, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office has a program for youth called the District Attorney's Justice Academy. This program provides youth ages 16 to 18 with the opportunity to learn about the justice system by participating in educational seminars and paid internships. Students are placed in a paid internship in a legal or government office to gain work experience as well as different skills needed in the real-world.

Violence Prevention
Alameda County supports budgetary and legislative actions that address root causes of all forms of violence, improve public safety, shift resources from incarceration to prevention, and benefit communities disproportionately affected by violence, including low-income communities, communities of color and people with disabilities. Alameda County is committed to pursuing solutions that recognize the impact of mental health, drug use, and poverty on those involved in or at risk of involvement in the criminal justice system. Alameda County opposes legislation that focuses on suppression strategies that do not ameliorate root causes and risk factors unless they are balanced by primary prevention support.

Alameda County defines violence as intimate partner violence, family violence, gun violence, gang violence, suicide and homicide, commercial sexual exploitation of minors, youth violence, hate violence, sexual assault, and child and elder abuse. Alameda County defines public safety as efforts that promote crime prevention and reduction, positive community-law enforcement relationships and collaboration, non-violent conflict resolution, restorative justice, successful reintegration of people with criminal convictions into communities, living wage jobs, educational opportunities, affordable housing, and protection of all community members' civil rights.

In 2005, Alameda County adopted a Violence Prevention Blueprint, which identifies and elevates prevention strategies that address root causes and risk factors for violence as critical for improving public safety. In 2009 the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI), established to implement the Blueprint strategies, focused on building assets/resiliency among youth, families and those reentering the community from incarceration, as well as ensuring capacity building with community partners. While prevention strategies are expensive in the short-term, we expect long-term savings. Investing state and federal resources in preventing and breaking the cycle of violence will ultimately save money.

Violence is an issue that impacts all sectors of our community, but it disproportionately impacts low-income communities, communities of color and people with disabilities, and as a result resources and legislation for preventing violence and protecting public safety should prioritize these communities. The overall rate of violent crime from 2012-2013 is slightly down in Alameda County. In particular, the rate of aggravated assault has declined, rates of rape were at their lowest in some time, and murder rates are trending downward. In fact, Alameda County's murder rate was at a 10-year low in 2013, moving closer to rates reported for California and the U.S.

PLANNING LAND USE AND HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

State/ Federal

The County proposes policies that foster the health and well-being of all individuals and communities by supporting and developing a built environment that promotes economic and other opportunities for residents, contributes to health, and encourages modes of transportation that reduce greenhouse gases (GHG). The “built environment” refers to the human made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, such as roads, buildings, sidewalks, farms, or parks. Such legislation would seek to reduce the use of car trips, prevent displacement, reduce pollution, reduce greenhouse gases, improve access to public transportation, improve safety, increase the supply of affordable housing, make communities walkable and bikeable, and increase access to parks, green space, grocery
stores, community/school gardens and farmers’ markets. These efforts improve housing conditions, supply, and affordability, which add to the economic vitality of households and make communities safer and more vibrant, and strengthen community interaction.

Affordable housing has a positive community impact enhancing housing stability, employment, mental and physical health, and school attendance. Affordable housing also reduces active substance use, criminal justice recidivism, and other negative community impacts.

With the passage of AB 32 and SB 375 that require the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) and the integration of transportation, land use and housing planning, California is on the forefront of built environment policies. The implementation of these two bills at the regional and local level can have an impact on planning decisions in local communities to reduce GHGs and improve health. As the older existing housing stock is one of the greatest GHG producers and greatest users of energy, a key component in the strategy must be housing rehabilitation, energy efficiency, financial incentives and technical assistance for seniors and low- and moderate-income residents.

Also, many communities in California are exploring and developing community choice energy programs, termed Community Choice Aggregation, community-based energy programs or Public Utility. As an alternative to Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs), community choice programs can be more effective in creating green/renewable energy with more local economic development impact. Legislation should not be supported that limits the ability of local governments to create energy procurement programs. Roadblocks should not be put in place to benefit the status quo, and new laws should promote the creation of more renewable energy, limit use of fossil fuels, and allow for more energy efficiency programs.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Alameda County is responsible for the planning, implementation, and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in unincorporated areas, including the design, construction, and maintenance of roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and traffic control facilities. The County strives to provide, maintain, and preserve public infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner while promoting a healthy and sustainable environment that supports safe and livable communities.

**Funding Shortfall**

An aging infrastructure, rising construction costs, new regulatory requirements, and reduced revenues contribute to a funding shortfall. Other factors, such as heavier vehicles, better vehicle fuel efficiency, increasing traffic and accommodation of alternative modes of transportation like public transit, bicyclists and pedestrians, also place increased demands on roads. New sustainable sources of revenues must be created, and a significant portion should be focused on preservation of the existing roadway network and improving safety for non-motorized users. Once the system is in a state of good repair, the need for maintenance will be reduced.

Adequate funding is critical to both ongoing maintenance of and improvements to the transportation infrastructure to provide safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including motorists, emergency vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation, and emergency vehicles. This also meets the needs of people with disabilities, transportation of freight, including commercial goods which supports local jobs. With increasing fuel efficiency and the introduction of hybrid and electric vehicles, revenues from the Gas Tax, the primary source for transportation infrastructure maintenance and project delivery, are expected to continue to decline. The leveraging power of existing revenue streams continues to decline, while budget constraints have delayed needed maintenance and improvements.

**Legislative Priorities**

State legislative priorities for the transportation program include supporting any method of increasing the gas tax and alternative methods of increasing transportation revenues through a variety of sources including, but not limited to, fuel taxes, Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) fees, Vehicle License Fees (VLF). Additional priorities include
supporting any legislation which increases roadway safety, particularly in rural areas and school zones, and improves bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout Alameda County.

Ensuring the financial integrity of the Highway Trust Fund for the future is the highest federal legislative priority for Alameda County.

Additional federal priorities include protecting identified revenue allocation structures in the implementation of the transportation reauthorization bill to ensure increased and stable funding for the nation’s transportation infrastructure. Alameda County also supports legislative remedies to streamline regulatory burdens, and improve regulatory inefficiencies which continue to hinder the effective and timely delivery of transportation projects. To achieve those goals, Alameda County supports advocating for funding support to provide adequate staffing at the local, state, and federal regulatory agencies.

Alameda County also supports legislative priorities set forth by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), County Engineer’s Association of California (CEAC), the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) which benefit transportation and infrastructure improvements in the unincorporated areas of Alameda County.

EDUCATION

Ensuring high quality educational opportunities for all residents across the life course is a critical component of realizing the County’s vision of being one of the best counties in which to live, work and do business. Access to educational opportunities is essential to our shared and individual prosperity and health. Despite the large array of educational resources in this County, and the recent improvements in reducing disparities in educational outcomes in some school districts, there is still a persistent racial and socio-economic gap in educational outcomes.

Early Childhood Programs

Educational performance and attainment gaps stem from differential access to high-quality educational opportunities rooted in long-term, national patterns of underfunding early childhood programs and schools serving low-income youth and youth of color. A student’s path toward high school graduation and future economic security is set even before a child starts school, and therefore support for academic success must begin during the critical prenatal and early childhood periods. Research shows that positive education results are strongly correlated with access to early childhood programs. Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) education, especially for low-income children of color, has been shown to effectively decrease future special education placement, improve grade retention, and increase high school graduation and college attendance. However, publicly funded Pre-K or Head Start programs nationally are underfunded and do not meet the need for enrollment. In the County, at least 5,000 preschool-aged children who qualify for financial assistance with family child care remain on waiting lists due to lack of funding.

In California, African American and Latino students are much more likely than Whites and Asians to attend schools facing critical resource challenges, including lack of competitive salaries to attract experienced, highly credentialed teachers and to discourage teacher turnover; shortages of educational materials; rundown facilities; fewer resources for English language learners and undocumented students, and a lack of programs engaging parents. Furthermore, schools struggling to meet high needs within the classroom have little capacity to ensure students begin each day ready to learn. From a very early age, many County youth, specifically low-income youth of color, are exposed to trauma and violence at home and in their communities. This exposure to adverse childhood experiences is a significant contributor to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety and depressive disorders, and chronic health conditions, and results in barriers to student learning. A safe and healthy environment that protects the community from stress, violence and poverty from the prenatal period onward is essential for academic success. This is particularly true for boys of color, who experience some of the most significant disparities in health and education outcomes starting from early childhood.

Student Health and Poverty
Additionally, measures that support student health will also impact educational attainment. School attendance impacts academic performance and likelihood of graduation. High poverty neighborhoods have higher rates of students chronically absent from school (missing 10 percent or more school days) compared to affluent neighborhoods. Health and mental health conditions, disabilities, and chronic diseases are common contributors to absenteeism. Student absenteeism also impacts a school district's income from the State based on attendance, which further erodes the school's ability to meet the educational and social needs of students.

Although there have been great strides to address educational disparities in the County, there is still a significant and persistent academic achievement and opportunity gap found throughout the County. As a result, there is a need for continued investment in education for all County school districts and especially in overall programs that serve our highest needs students and low-income students of color, particularly boys of color.

IMMIGRATION

According to the Immigration Policy Center, 1 in 4 Californians is an immigrant, and in Alameda County, the percentage of the population is even higher, as 30.8% of residents are foreign born. Of the 10.2 million immigrants in California, 45.6% are naturalized US citizens. Immigrants and their adult, US born children account for 28.9% of all California voters. Finally, immigrants are a major part of the California economy, comprising 34.6% of the California workforce and paying roughly $30 billion in federal taxes, $5.2 billion in state income taxes, and $4.6 billion in sales taxes each year.

Given immigrants’ integral role in California’s economic and social fabric, policies that support California’s immigrant populations support California overall. For instance, Raúl Hinojosa-Ojeda, founding director of the North American Integration and Development Center at the University of California, Los Angeles, estimates that within the first three years of a legalization program for undocumented immigrants now in the country, the wages of undocumented workers in California would increase by $26.9 billion, generating an additional $5.3 billion in tax revenue and creating 633,000 new jobs. California would benefit from the boost that a path to legal status would provide.

California and the nation are weakened without immigration reform. The current system is expensive – the federal government has spent an estimated $186.8 billion on immigration enforcement since the last major immigration reform in 1986. Additionally, the current system places the health of immigrants and the broader community at risk. According to the U.S. Border Patrol, 5,570 migrants died in the quest to reach family members and jobs by crossing the U.S.-Mexico border between 1998 and 2012. Furthermore, policies that increase stress and anxiety damage the physical and mental health of immigrants, authorized or not. Fear of Immigration and Customs Enforcement increases immigrants’ vulnerability to crime and violence and decreases public safety overall. Decreased health care utilization by immigrants not only leads to sicker people but also strains the emergency care system.

Alameda County has the second highest percentage of unaccompanied immigrant youth (UIY) in California (after Los Angeles) and this number continues to rise. UIY have made the dangerous journey across borders to flee extreme violence in their home countries. The majority of UIY in the U.S. come from Central America. Gang violence is prevalent in Central America and boys as young as six years old are routinely targeted to join gangs or risk being killed. Young girls are targeted for sexual abuse or exploitation. Many UIY have witnessed threats or murder of a loved one. As such, UIY make up a unique, vulnerable population with distinctive health and mental well-being challenges. Displacement, in combination with the challenging processes of acculturation, including socio-economic integration, puts young people in situations of social vulnerability with restricted access to health care. Issues of access to health care, coupled with the physiological consequences of adverse childhood experiences, results in an increased risk for health disparities over the lifespan.
JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Alameda County has considerable wealth and is located in one of the most prosperous regions in the world. The County has emerged out of the recession with a steady recovery and the unemployment rate in July 2015 was down to five percent. However, the effects of the economic recovery are not being felt by all workers. Recent data shows that the Black unemployment rate is more than double the rate for Whites.

Many of the new jobs created during the recovery are low-wage jobs that offer little or no opportunity for advancement. Stagnant wages combined with rising local rents make it difficult for workers to get ahead. Furthermore, poverty and unemployment continue to disproportionately impact people of color. According to a 2014 data report by Alameda County Public Health Department, in Alameda County, 1 in 15 White residents live in high-poverty neighborhoods compared to one in nine Asians, one in four Latinos, and one in three Black residents. Deeply concentrated and persistent poverty has been exacerbated by State and federal policies that destabilized entire families and neighborhoods.

In the face of long-standing disinvestment, people living in persistently high poverty neighborhoods often have especially few resources for supporting family and community stability and wealth-building. For instance, the unemployment rate is 2.1 times higher in very high poverty neighborhoods compared to affluent neighborhoods. These figures reflect limited job availability, transportation barriers, and the lack of quality education and training opportunities.

Furthermore, the top five occupations of people in high poverty neighborhoods only earn enough to support a single adult ($27,456), falling short of what is required to support a family. Together, unemployment and low wages contribute to higher poverty rates and lack of resources in communities. At the individual level, fewer economic resources often mean tradeoffs between paying for food, housing, or healthcare.

All of these economic factors at the individual and community level contribute to a clear social gradient in health and wellbeing. For each step in neighborhood poverty levels, there is a decline in life expectancy. On average, there is a seven year difference in life expectancy between the most and least affluent neighborhoods in the County. This gap is even starker in some cities; it rises to 15 years when comparing the historically disinvested neighborhood of West Oakland to the affluent Oakland Hills.

Access to an educated, skilled, and healthy workforce is critical to the economic vitality of our local communities, State, and country. Persistent inequity puts us at a competitive disadvantage. Investment is needed in education, job creation, economic development, workforce programs, youth employment opportunities, and programs that help alleviate barriers to work.

Alameda County supports State and federal policies that make strategic investments to bolster community economic development and help create shared prosperity and collective well-being. The Jobs and Economic Development Chapters detail a State and federal policy agenda for advancing economic equity in Alameda County.

FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER RESOURCES

Much of Alameda County is in a flood plain. Prior to the 1950’s, large portions of the county flooded repeatedly resulting in closed businesses and schools, interrupted transportation and utility services, and even deaths. In 1949, the State Legislature created Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (the “District”). The District designed and constructed flood control infrastructure assuming full build-out of the County. Cities and unincorporated areas, grouped by “zones” corresponding to area watersheds and community boundaries, joined the District to gain protection from devastating floods.
The District’s flood control infrastructure — a system of pump stations, erosion control structures, dams, and hundreds of miles of pipeline, channels, levees, and creeks — protects nine zones in western Alameda County stretching from Emeryville to Fremont. Work continues to upgrade or replace aging equipment, keep flood control channels clear of silt and debris, and evaluate the impact of new developments on creeks and channels.

To ensure continued protection from flooding and to protect its natural resources, Alameda County supports legislative remedies aimed at increasing funding for restoration projects and developing adaptive strategies to deal with climate change and sea level rise. Furthermore, regulatory inefficiencies continue to hamper the effective and timely delivery of flood control projects. Delivery of projects is often bogged down by the multiple and mostly redundant approval processes and long time frames, including environmental clearance and mitigation, design approval, right of way certification, and project financing. To this end, Alameda County seeks legislative remedies to streamline regulatory burdens and advocate for funding to support adequate staffing at the local, state, and federal regulatory agencies.
State Legislative Priorities
HUMAN SERVICES

IMPROVE DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES

Facilitate Access to Benefits
Alameda County supports efforts to enroll individuals and families in the range of benefits for which they are eligible. Policies should:

- **Streamline and integrate public benefits enrollment.** Support efforts to make it easier for individuals and families to apply, maintain, and recertify for benefits, including CalWORKs, CalFresh, General Assistance, and Medi-Cal.
- **Maintain continuity of benefits.** Help individuals and families maintain coverage and benefits. Specifically, we support automatic renewals for families living on a fixed income or households who are highly unlikely to experience changes in income that could terminate eligibility. Whenever possible, benefit renewal dates should be aligned across different programs to make it easier for clients.
- **Support technological advancements that promote access to services and administrative efficiency.** Promote and utilize technology to streamline benefits enrollment, such as auto-enrolling clients and encouraging the use of self-service tools.
- **Expand and leverage data-sharing agreements.** Make it easier for agencies to share data to better serve clients.

Focus on Effective Implementation and Staff Training
State and federal program rules are constantly changing. Many of these changes are positive developments for clients and staff. However, additional investment and supports are needed to ensure timelines for implementation are reasonable, allow systems to be updated, and staff to be properly trained. State and federal legislation should include policies that make it easier for staff to do their jobs effectively. Specifically, Alameda County supports:

- **Reasonable timelines for implementation of new policies/procedures.** The State should work with stakeholders, including counties, when determining timelines for rolling out new policies and procedures.
- **Ensure there is a training region for computer systems.** Staff trainers need the ability to create fake cases to avoid breaching confidentiality when teaching workers. The State should make sure there is a dedicated training region for each of the systems used for human services programs.
- **Include training funding as part of new laws/changes.** Standardizing all new laws or changes that impact the practice of human services programs to include training funding. Resources to train staff are vital to successful implementation of program changes.
- **Create a statewide workgroup for trainers/staff development managers.** This forum could allow for sharing across the State on best practices and facilitate better collaboration.

Increase Access to Safe, Affordable Housing
California is home to 20 percent of the nation’s homeless population and has the highest rate of homeless families in the country. Homelessness has particularly damaging effects on children. Lack of access to safe, affordable housing is an issue across all human services programs.

- **Increase supports for affordable housing and homelessness prevention.** Alameda County supports a range of policies and programs that prevent and resolve homelessness and housing instability. We support programs that foster the expansion of evidence-based best practices, including housing first, rapid re-housing, long-term housing subsidies, and models that include wrap-around transitional housing and housing support services.
  - For additional homelessness and housing priorities, please see the Planning, Land Use, and Housing and Community Development Chapter

Better Serve Boys and Men

- **Promote fatherhood and father-friendly practices.** Better serving fathers and men as partners in their
families and communities results in significant benefits in terms of child development/well-being, public health, community cohesion, and economic development/prosperity. Alameda County supports President Obama’s Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative along with policies to develop demonstration programs to test father-friendly program designs that solicit and facilitate father engagement.

- **Create and expand ladders of opportunity for boys and men of color.** President Obama launched the My Brother’s Keeper Initiative, which aims to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and to ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. Alameda County supports this Initiative and policies and partnerships that focus on addressing critical challenges, risk factors, and opportunities at key life stages to improve long-term outcomes and create ladders of opportunity for all young people.

**Promote Economic Stability and Wealth Building**

In addition to a strong safety net that helps families get back on their feet quickly, Alameda County supports policies that promote economic stability while also focusing on wealth building. Asset building policies and programs include a range of opportunities including matched-saving accounts, homeownership assistance, financial education, access to affordable financial services, and credit building products and services. Broadening savings and asset ownership opportunities will help move families and individuals from just breaking even to actually getting ahead.

- **Remove asset limits for public benefits.** Asset limits create disincentives for low-income families to save money for emergencies. Policies should promote savings and ensure individuals and families do not have to spend down any cushion they have before qualifying for public assistance.

- **Expand State tax credits for low-income families.**
  - **Expand the State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).** California should expand the State version of the EITC to reduce the regressive tax burden on the working poor, put more money in their pockets, and make saving for the future possible.
  - **Restore the refundable portion of the Tax Credit for Child and Dependent Care Expenses.** In 2011, California repealed the refundable portion of the Tax Credit for Child and Dependent Care Expenses (SB 86). This resulted in the loss of a benefit that provided $70 million to California’s lowest-income families with children. Alameda County supports restoring the refundable portion of that tax credit.
  - **Expand refundable tax credits.** More State tax credits (including the Dependent Tax Credit and the Tax Credit for Child and Dependent Care Expenses) should be fully refundable so that all low-income families, even those without a tax liability, can benefit from the credits.

- **Reduce or eliminate Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Fees.** Low-income California families that receive CalWORKs spend approximately $19 million each year in out-of-network ATM fees to access cash benefits on their EBT cards. Alameda County supports actions that will reduce or eliminate EBT fees to ensure families can keep more of their benefits.

- **Maintain and expand savings programs.** Policies should help low-income individuals and families accumulate assets through increased savings and investments. Alameda County supports a variety of savings accounts and incentive programs that are designed to help low-income people build assets and opportunities (such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), Children’s Savings Accounts, and retirement accounts).

- **Restrict payday lending and other predatory financial products and services.** Alameda County supports policies that protect consumers from predatory credit products, specifically by prohibiting, or capping rates on, payday loans and promoting low-cost, consumer friendly, alternatives.

- **Expand the presence of mainstream financial institutions in underserved communities.** Many neighborhoods lack access to mainstream financial institutions and instead rely on predatory lenders, such as check cashers, payday lenders, and pawn shops that drain millions of dollars from communities through high fees and usurious loans. Alameda County supports efforts to encourage safe, affordable financial products that protect income and assets.

- **Expand access to credit and capital.** Difficulty accessing financial services, affordable credit, and investment capital has long been a problem, especially in low-income and historically disinvested communities. Alameda County supports efforts to help low-income individuals and communities gain access to low-cost financial
products and services, high-return savings products, and investment capital that meet the specific needs of economically underserved communities.

- **Protect assets and savings.** Alameda County supports policies that preserve assets and protect individuals and families from predatory practices. Specifically, protections for student loan borrowers and policies that promote access to education, lessen student debt burdens, and make loan repayment more manageable. Defaulting on a student loan can ruin a borrower’s credit and impact future opportunities.

- **Promote retirement savings.** Less than half of California’s private sector workers have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Alameda County supports State and federal policies that promote retirement savings and make it easier to save.

- **Fund asset building in county social service agencies.** Alameda County Social Services Agency is entering the third year of piloting asset building programs for current and former public benefits recipients. This program provides credit building, financial education, and one-on-one coaching to help individuals and families save money and achieve self-sufficiency. California should consider funding similar efforts and piloting innovations that build off the lessons learned in the asset building field.

### RESTORE AND ENHANCE BASIC NEEDS PROGRAMS

#### Strengthen CalWORKs

CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) provides time-limited cash aid, as well as employment and employment support services, to eligible adults with children. Alameda County supports a range of policy changes to ensure this safety net program is addressing poverty and promoting financial stability.

- **Repeal the CalWORKs Maximum Family Grant Rule (MFG).** The MFG rule restricts, with exceptions, cash assistance to a child born into a family where any parent was a recipient of CalWORKs ten months before the child’s birth. This rule exacerbates poverty and denies basic assistance to certain children and families.

- **Increase the CalWORKs Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) and reinstate a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).** CalWORKs grants are below 50 percent of the federal poverty level and are too small to cover basic necessities. Including recent increases, the current maximum grant is $704 for a family of three. After adjusting for inflation, the grant for that family represents $115 (14 percent) less purchasing power than what was provided in fiscal year 2007-08.

- **Eliminate the asset test for CalWORKs.** Eliminating the asset test altogether would reduce administrative costs and allow staff to spend more time working with clients. At the very least, the State should eliminate the vehicle asset test for CalWORKs. For low-income working families, having access to a reliable car is critical to finding and maintaining employment and becoming financially stable.

- **Eliminate deprivation for CalWORKs.** To be eligible for CalWORKs, the child(ren) in the family must be deemed deprived of parental support. To qualify for deprivation in a two-parent household, the primary wage earner must not have worked more than 100 hours in the past four weeks. This rule creates a disincentive to work and is difficult to administer. The elimination of the deprivation requirement would reduce administrative costs and align CalWORKs rules with CalFresh and Medi-Cal (which no longer have deprivation requirements).

- **Increase CalWORKs earned income disregard.** A CalWORKs family’s grant decreases as the family earns more income. However, a portion of earned income, known as the “earned income disregard,” is excluded from the grant calculation. Alameda County supports policies that increase or modify the earned income disregard to encourage work and allow CalWORKs families to keep a larger percentage of their earnings.

- **Increase housing and homelessness assistance for CalWORKs families.** Lack of access to safe, affordable housing is a barrier for many CalWORKs families. Alameda County supports policies and programs that expand access, including additional funding for the CalWORKs Housing Support Program and policy changes that allow additional flexibility to meet temporary housing needs.

### Improve Access to Food

Alameda County supports policies and programs that help children, individuals, and families access healthy, nutritious food. Specifically, we support streamlining and strengthening enrollment into CalFresh and ensuring
this vital program reaches individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. CalFresh is California's food stamp program [known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the federal level], which provides assistance for households to purchase nutritious food.

- **Support efforts to simplify and streamline benefits enrollment.** Alameda County supports state efforts and rule changes to streamline and simplify applications and recertifications to enroll more eligible individuals and families in CalFresh.

- **Increase CalFresh outreach and enrollment for older adults.** According to the Alameda County Community Food Bank, residents over 50 years old now make up more than one-third of their clients. This need is only expected to increase as older adults are the fastest growing segment of the population in Alameda County. Alameda County supports increased CalFresh outreach and enrollment efforts for seniors along with efforts to increase the minimum benefit amount.

- **Support efforts to maintain benefits enrollments and reduce churn in CalFresh.** Churn occurs when a client exits and then reenters the program within four months; this process results in a loss of benefits for the individual or family and is costly to both clients and the agencies that administer the program. Alameda County supports policies that help individuals and families maintain benefits.

- **Support food banks.** Alameda County supports efforts to help local food banks secure nutritious food. Specifically, funding the State Emergency Food Assistance Program and expanding tax credits for food donations.

**Better Assist Refugees and Asylees**

- **Additional supports and services for refugees and asylees.** Alameda County supports additional State and federal funding to expand services available to refugees and asylees. Specifically, we support increasing Refugee Cash Assistance payment levels, providing homelessness and housing supports, expanding employment and vocational training programs, and increasing other supportive services.

**ADVANCE FOSTER YOUTH WELL-BEING BY STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

The Alameda County Social Services Agency’s Department of Children and Family Services serves children and youth who have experienced, or are at-risk of experiencing, abuse, or neglect. For all children and youth, Alameda County is committed to improving outcomes in the following areas:

- **Safety.** By preventing and responding to maltreatment.

- **Permanency.** By helping children and youth remain with their family and out of foster care whenever possible, by preserving family relationships and connections, and by establishing guardianships and adoptions when it is unsafe for children and youth to return home.

- **Well-Being.** By partnering with families as they improve their capacity for meeting their children’s physical, mental health, and educational needs.

**Enhance Child Welfare Systems and Programs**

- **Successfully implement Continuum of Care Reform (CCR).** As the state moves forward with efforts to move children out of congregate care and into more family-based settings, Alameda County supports continued conversations with stakeholders and ensuring there are adequate county resources to support the transition. Funding will be needed to recruit/retain additional care providers, ensure adequate behavioral health services, and provide supportive services and resources to families and children.

- **Ensure that placements are available, fully funded, and supported with services.** Specifically, placements need to meet the needs of youth whose plan is to transition to a family-like setting but who currently need a more intensive placement and supportive services. As part of the CCR, California Department of Social Services (CDSS) should pay special attention to youth with special needs, such as those who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and/or youth struggling with alcohol or other drug addiction.

- **Increase funding and supportive services for child welfare programs.** Alameda County supports a range of increases in child welfare funding to improve the well-being of children, including adequate funding for services
and income supports needed by parents seeking to reunify with their children who are in foster care. This could include funding for child care and housing and funding and policies in support of family residential substance abuse programs that allow for an entire family, including both parents, to reside together, and single fathers to reside in the program with their children. Typically, residential programs do not allow the family to remain together, which causes additional trauma to children who must separate from one or both parents.

- **Additional resources that could promote better outcomes for children.** Examples include culturally relevant mental health services, educational supports, employment/linked learning opportunities, matched-savings accounts, developmental child care (including post-permanency), respite services for relative and foster caregivers, services and resources promoting father engagement, and housing subsidies.

- **Increase funding to support counties in monitoring and providing services to foster youth who are authorized by the court to receive psychotropic medications.** The children served by the foster care system have experienced severe trauma; for some, medication is appropriate when thoughtfully prescribed as part of an overall treatment plan that includes non-pharmacological interventions as well. Alameda County supports additional funding for behavioral health services for youth and to support counties in providing oversight and monitoring of psychotropic medications prescribed to foster youth.

- **Expand child welfare funding and resources to populations with unique needs:**
  - **Youth in foster care who are also parents.** Parenting foster youth are in particular need of services that promote their educational attainment, parenting skills, and resources, and support their transition to independence.
  - **Undocumented children of undocumented parents who are under child welfare supervision.** Additional resources are needed to ensure that these families receive the necessary services to prevent the child from entering into or remaining in foster care.
  - **Support for children of incarcerated parents.** Support additional funding and programs that promote the health, safety, and well-being of the children of incarcerated parents and the efforts of parents to reunify with their children.
  - **Parents and children with disabilities.** Foster children with disabilities, their parents, and their caregivers need additional support to navigate systems and services that meet their developmental, educational, and medical needs. Disabled parents also may need additional resources and support to access needed services.
  - **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children** (see section below).

- **Allow a foster youth’s Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits to remain in suspense for the duration of their stay in foster care.** Alameda County supports policy changes that ensure youth over 16½ years of age maintain their SSI eligibility throughout their involvement in foster care without the need for an annual temporary suspension of the Title IV-E or federal payment, regardless of whether they receive SSI benefits or have high federal payments.

**Support Caregivers and Permanency for Foster Youth**

- **Increase funding for foster and adoptive parent recruitment, training, and retention.** Alameda County encourages additional support, funding, and other resources designed to increase the number of qualified caregivers available to provide stable and loving foster and adoptive homes for youth. These changes will help to address what licensed foster parents and relative caregivers often cite as critical factors in deciding whether or not to serve as a foster parent: inadequate reimbursement rates, high costs of child care, and the lack of supportive services. Examples of potential supports and resources include:
  - Increased funding for subsidized child care and respite care, and funding for one-time expenses such as a bed for a foster youth when youth are to be placed with a relative caregiver but the relative lacks the funds needed to purchase the necessary items.
  - Increased funding for additional specialized training and targeted support services for caregivers of foster youth age 13 and older with acute mental health needs and commercially sexually exploited children.
  - A statewide public education campaign led by the State to promote an interest in foster parenting.
° A refundable tax credit to foster parents who have provided foster care in their home to a foster child for at least one calendar month during the taxable year.

- **Expand funding for post-placement services for children reunifying with a parent.** Policies should help maintain the child in their home and prevent reentry to foster care. For example, housing and child care assistance to help parents provide a safe and stable environment as well as supervision for their child(ren) while they are at work or school. There are limited housing and child care slots available through existing resources, and additional resources should be targeted specifically to these families.

- **Provide Kin-GAP benefits to children whose relative guardianship was established in Probate Court.** Although Probate Court guardianships with a non-relative can be eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Foster Care payments, relative guardianships established in Probate Court do not qualify for Kin-GAP, even though many of these children have needs similar to youth who have a guardianship established in Juvenile Court. Providing Kin-GAP benefits to these probate guardianship youth will improve their transition to adulthood and may reduce their need for social services as an adult.

- **Allow for continued benefits after age 18 for youth whose relative guardianship was established prior to the youth’s 16th birthday.** Alameda County supports policies to extend State Kin-GAP benefits to age 21 for youth who turn 18 while receiving federal or State Kin-GAP benefits and who entered the program prior to reaching the age of 16. The current restriction on benefits after age 18 is a disincentive for permanency for these children.

**Improve Assistance and Services for Transition-Age Youth**

- **Additional supports and programs for transition-age foster youth (ages 14 - 21).** In October 2010, California passed AB 12, also known as the California Fostering Connections to Success Act, in response to the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Public Law 110-351). AB 12 changed foster care significantly by optionally extending foster care until age 21. Although some transition-age foster youth now have the benefit of extended foster care, these youth often remain in need of additional funding, policies, and programs that support their transition out of foster care and into independent adulthood. Specifically, Alameda County supports:

  ° **Additional funding for safe and stable housing and supportive services such as substance abuse or mental health treatment.** There is a specific need for financial support of a continuum of care of substance abuse programs for minors.

  ° **Flexibility with placement requirements for non-minor dependents (NMDs) in Extended Foster Care who are in need of in-patient substance abuse treatment.** If a NMD’s temporary stay in an in-patient facility could be considered a Supervised Independent Living Placement, for example, this would allow the otherwise eligible youth to remain in Extended Foster Care and receive related services that support their transition to independence, rather than forcing their exit from care.

  ° **Increased financial support for programs that assist foster youth in the transition to financial stability.** Examples include post-emancipation assistance such as secondary education, job training, housing, and access to health care.

- **Expand Independent Living Program (ILP) eligibility to include older youth in Family Maintenance.** Youth who are nearing adulthood (age 16 – 18) and receiving in-home child welfare services such as Family Maintenance are in need of services supporting their transition to independence as healthy and responsible adults. An expansion of eligibility requirements for ILP funds could allow for the provision of services to these youth.

- **Provide counties funding to fulfill credit report monitoring and assistance activities to foster youth.** Identity theft is a major concern for youth in foster care and can destroy their credit. For foster children who "age out" of the system as young adults, the consequences of identity theft are particularly devastating and can make it difficult to rent an apartment or obtain educational loans. Alameda County supports additional funding for counties to assist their efforts in monitoring credit reports on behalf of foster youth and ensuring that youth receive assistance in interpreting their reports and clearing any inaccuracies, as required by State and federal law.
• **Provide funding to support reproductive health training.** Although some funding is currently available for reproductive health education of foster youth through grants, a dedicated funding stream is needed statewide to ensure that these trainings are available to all foster youth, as well as child welfare staff and foster parents who are working with or caring for foster youth. Foster youth are a vulnerable population in particular need of education that promotes their health and provides them with the knowledge needed to prevent sexually transmitted infections and teen pregnancy.

**Ensure the Safety and Well-being of Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)**

- **Additional funding and supports for CSEC.** The commercial and sexual exploitation of children is a national and statewide epidemic and additional support is needed to strengthen capacity of child welfare agencies to effectively meet the needs of this population. These children/youth have unique needs that require coordination and support from other systems, including mental health, public health, law enforcement, community providers, and probation. Responding to CSEC requires a multi-pronged response that includes prevention, intervention, and after care. Alameda County supports additional funding and resources, beyond what is currently provided to counties, to expand training, tailor services, and support collaborative work with other systems. More funding is needed to address the immediate needs of victims, including clothing and safe shelter, and to provide long-term services to assist CSEC victims in achieving positive outcomes of permanency and well-being.

- **Additional protections for CSEC.** Existing law does not explicitly provide for the exclusion of reunification services to a parent or guardian when they have knowingly engaged in or consented to the sexual exploitation of their child. Alameda County supports changing State law to authorize a juvenile court to deny reunification services to a parent or guardian who has consented to, or participated in, the sexual exploitation of the child. This change would provide explicit protection for foster youth who have suffered from sexual exploitation.

**SUPPORT ADULTS, SENIORS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

It is projected that the Alameda County senior population will increase by over 40 percent in the next ten years and approximately 50 percent of all seniors in Alameda County do not have adequate financial resources to address their daily needs. In addition, approximately one in five people with disabilities in Alameda County live below the federal poverty line. Local affordable housing resources are severely limited, which is adversely impacting the health, care, and quality of life of seniors and people with disabilities.

- **Increase funding available to develop and support affordable housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities.** Older adults and persons with disabilities often live on fixed incomes and appropriate housing options available are becoming scarcer while their incomes are not increasing at the same rate as housing prices.

- **Support and expand programs for equitable access to advance care planning (ACP) and end-of-life services at any age.** Too often clinicians, patients, and families embark upon treatment options for a serious disease without important information and understanding of the illness and its likely course. Good ACP gives people a way to think about death and dying allowing them to confront dying directly instead of being a “vague, unmanageable concept” or leaving the end of life decisions up to others once the patient is unable to meaningfully participate in the process. Supporting programs that provide culturally relevant outreach and understanding of palliative care and hospice to our diverse populations will increase equitable access and utilization of end-of-life services.

- **Permanently restore funding for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).** IHSS is a federal, State, and locally funded program designed to provide assistance to those eligible aged, blind, and disabled individuals who, without this care, would be unable to remain safely in their own homes. IHSS providers and clients have experienced a series of cuts over the past few years. Alameda County supports restoring cuts and ensuring the most vulnerable in our community get access to the care they need.

- **Protect vulnerable populations in community care facilities.** Currently, licensed community care facilities, including residential care facilities for the elderly and day programs for adults and seniors, are inspected by California Community Care Licensing only once every five years Alameda County supports annual unannounced
inspection visits.

- **Increased flexibility for Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI) counties.** Building upon many years of stakeholder discussions, the CCI begins the process of integrating delivery of medical, behavioral, and long-term care services and also provides a road map to integrate Medicare and Medi-Cal for people in both programs, called “dual eligible” beneficiaries. The State has an opportunity with the CCI to allow the initial counties to experiment and try new approaches to better serve clients and maintain program integrity. Alameda County encourages the State to allow local flexibility for CCI.

- **Restore cuts to the Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) and reinstate an annual State cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).** SSI is federally funded and provides income support for individuals who are aged 65 or older, blind, or have a disability; the SSP is the California program that augments SSI. Deep cuts to SSI/SSP over the past few years have compromised the ability of low-income California seniors and people with disabilities to afford necessities, such as housing and groceries. These cuts are exacerbated by the fact that SSI/SSP recipients are not eligible for food assistance through the CalFresh Program. Alameda County supports restoring these benefits and including an annual COLA.

### Coordinate the System of Care for Older Adults

Alameda County supports a coordinated service delivery system that protects, supports, and advocates for an aging population. Specifically, we support the integration and simplification of the complex system of senior services to ensure policies and programs are consumer-focused and that residents have access to and receive the services they need.

- **Support and expand programs and policies that promote Healthy Aging/Aging in Place.** Older adults often lack access to information and resources about social service and health issues, or are unaware of preventative measures they can take to remain healthier for longer. Alameda County supports policies that promote healthy aging, independence, and well-being of seniors who wish to age in place, or who wish to remain in their homes as they age.

- **Increase Funding for Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Programs.** The services that the AAA provides to residents age 60 and older are often underfunded or restricted. Alameda County supports increased State and federal funding and flexibility.

- **Reduce food insecurity for seniors.** According to the Alameda County Community Food Bank, residents over 50 years old now make up more than one-third of the clients. This need is only expected to increase as older adults are the fastest growing segment of the population in Alameda County; however, State and federal funding for senior nutrition is limited and restrictive. Alameda County supports increased funding and greater funding flexibility for senior nutrition programs and services.

- **Support and funding for Elder Courts.** Many seniors find the legal system complicated and difficult to navigate, which creates a barrier to remediation of legal issues such as elder abuse, housing disputes, and more. Elder Courts facilitate legal issues specifically for seniors, including coordinating, scheduling, and making referrals to providers. Alameda County supports the establishment of Elder Courts as well as additional funding for existing Elder Courts.

- **Expand and fund programs that support caregivers.** Families are the major provider of long-term care for older adults, but research has shown that caregiving exacts a heavy emotional and financial toll. Almost half of all caregivers are over age 50, making them more vulnerable to a decline in their own health, and one-third describe their own health as fair to poor. Alameda County supports increased efforts to support caregivers through creation of a Blue-Ribbon Caregiver Council and restoration of funding to Caregiver Resource Centers.

- **Promote retirement savings.** Less than half of California’s private sector workers have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Alameda County supports State and federal policies that promote retirement savings and make it easier to save.

- **Increase funding for programs that support the integration of health care and social services focused on aging and advance care planning.** Funding a whole person approach to care and reducing barriers to the integration of health and social service systems will increase the coordination of services and allow sharing of vital health information. The integration of advance care planning into a health and social services regimen
allows time to put social supports in place before self-care and mobility are limited by the downward trajectory of a terminal illness. The ability to stay at home with integrated health care and social services may reduce hospital readmissions, futile treatments, and suffering from symptom burdens, while also improving the quality of care at the end of life.

- **Restore and increase funding for community-based programs for seniors.** Over the past few years, senior safety net funding for multiple programs under the Older Californians Act and Older Americans Act has been eliminated or severely reduced. Alameda County supports reinstating and increasing funding for these and other programs that support seniors.

- **Increase funding to expand services specifically for older adults with mental health and co-occurring substance abuse issues.** Behavioral health concerns are not a normal part of the aging process. Mental illness and substance use disorders are major impediments to living well in old age; they cause considerable personal suffering and make it difficult for older people to achieve their potential. Older adults who become disabled by mental illness deserve the same guarantee of care already extended to those who face other kinds of disabilities.

For more information on these issues, please see the Behavioral Health Services section in the Health Chapter starting on page 50.

**Protect Vulnerable Adults**

Alameda County Division of Adult Protection consists of Adult Protective Services (APS), Office of the Public Guardian-Conservator (PG/PC), and the Public Administrator’s Office (PA). Together these programs provide a continuum of services that form a safety net for vulnerable adults.

- **Increase funding for APS training.** Training for APS workers and their partner agencies is severely underfunded and has not increased in recent years despite rising cases. APS workers receive a small fraction (four cents for every dollar) of the funding provided to child welfare workers who deal with similar situations. It is imperative that APS workers receive comprehensive training so that they may provide elder and dependent adult victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation with the same types of essential services that child abuse victims receive. Alameda County supports increased federal and State funding for APS training.

- **Increase support and statewide coordination of APS.** There are currently inconsistencies among APS programs in California counties. Alameda County supports efforts to better coordinate and promote uniformity in the development and adoption of best practices in protective services casework throughout the State. These efforts should also include consistency in data collection so that there is comparable data across counties and updating of the APS State Regulations.

- **Increase services and supports for elderly or dependent adults who are victims of financial abuse.** Financial abuse is estimated to account for 40 percent of all forms of reported abuse against seniors. Dependent adults also face similar challenges. Additional services and supports are needed for education, prevention, and investigation of financial abuse and exploitation of these populations.

- **Increased safeguards and protections for adults with caregivers.** Alameda County supports increased protections for adults who name caregivers as their power of attorney, executor of their wills, or identify the caregiver as an heir. It is important to ensure the adult is making an informed decision and is not being exploited.

- **Oppose allowing a foreign heir to nominate an administrator of a decedent’s estate.** Specifically, Alameda County opposes the continuation of AB 1670, which will sunset in 2016. AB 1670 authorizes the court appointment of an administrator nominated by a non-U.S. resident beneficiary to administer a decedent’s estate. AB 1670 allows profitable estates to be “cherry picked” by others leaving the insolvent and difficult estates to Public Administrators. Such a scenario will exacerbate a significant fiscal hardship for Public Administrator offices and counties.

- **Oppose making Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) hearing records public.** LPS hearings concern the involuntary civil commitment of an individual to a mental health institution in the State of California. Alameda County believes LPS proceedings should continue to be confidential.

- **Increase funding for the Public Guardian-Conservator (PG/PC).** Counties have had to augment funding for
PG/PC and funding sources have not kept pace with the increasing demand for services under new State mandates. The State should provide counties with funding sources for this vital and critical service.

- **Oppose allowing a Probate Court judge to order an LPS conservatorship investigation.** Current law provides that individuals cannot be indiscriminately placed in involuntary settings without due process, which includes LPS conservatorship and a finding of grave disability. Alameda County opposes efforts that could circumvent the protections that are currently in place to protect the rights of residents who have a mental illness.

**Better Serve Veterans**

Alameda County supports policies that assist veterans with accessing benefits, housing, and stable employment.

- **Increase employment opportunities for veterans.** Support policies that help veterans access employment in the public and private sectors. Specifically, Alameda County supports funding for prior-learning assessments that allow veterans to earn college credit for their military training and skills learned in service.

- **Reduce veteran homelessness and provide supportive treatment and services.** Support a range of policies that address the root causes of veteran homelessness. Specifically, policies that improve employment opportunities, increase substance abuse prevention and treatment programs, establish affordable housing, and improve rehabilitation efforts for homeless veterans.

- **Increase funding for County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs).** CVSOs assist California veterans in navigating the claims process and accessing all State and federal benefits for which they are eligible.

- **Increase State grants to veterans service organizations to work with CVSOs.** These grants facilitate California veterans filing claims with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PLANNING COUNCIL**

The child care system supports the dual economic goals of supporting parental employment and laying the groundwork for children’s lifelong success. Almost 13,000 of about 18,000 eligible Alameda County children receive child care and preschool services through State subsidies for low-income families from 2,400 Early Care and Education providers. This means 5,000 preschool aged children and families are not receiving services for which they are eligible with greater shortages for infant and toddler care. There are an estimated 10,000 children on waiting lists for child care across the County.

A majority of children attend licensed, center-based programs that meet higher quality standards and are reimbursed directly by the State Department of Education. Some parents receive vouchers, which are used to pay for child care at licensed centers, family child care homes, or with family, friends, or neighbors. Since 2008, statewide early care and education cuts have been significant, totaling more than $1 billion, and resulting in the loss of 111,095 or 33% subsidized spaces. About 64% of this funding was restored between 2013 and 2015, and about 34% of slots were restored statewide, leaving an urgent need for more resources for early care and education affordability, access and quality. Additional effort is needed to:

1) Initiate and promote efforts to protect and increase local, state, federal and private funding for Early Care and Education (ECE) prioritizing infants and toddlers.

2) Monitor, take positions and make recommendations on state issues, legislation and initiatives that significantly impact ECE quality, access and affordability.

3) Advocate for family centered, inclusive, developmentally and culturally appropriate practices for all children in care as well as those in transitional kindergarten.

Specifically, in 2016 the Planning Council will advocate to:

- Reinvest in ECE access, including increased funding for infant/toddler care and serving all eligible families.
- Increase Standard Reimbursement and Regional Market Rates.
- Streamline and create efficiencies such as coordinated regulatory, contracting and reimbursement processes within the current federal and state programs.
- Improve quality in child care.
• Increase ECE professional development with a focus on dedicated paid days of training for staff at Title 5 contracted centers and compensation to reflect professional work in the field.
• Restore the Centralized Eligibility List.
• Institute one year eligibility for parents in state contracted child care programs.
• Increase the frequency of Community Care Licensing Visits.
• Increase funding for Local Planning Councils to pre-recession levels.
• Increase the Alternative Payment agency administration rate.
• Update the income guidelines to use most recent census income data.
• Allow one year eligibility for community college students with child care subsidy.
• Allow CalWORKs parent volunteering in child care programs to count towards work requirements.
• Base income eligibility on net income, not gross income or gross income minus taxes.
• Increase mental health resources and connections with ECE programs.

ALAMEDA COUNTY INTERAGENCY CHILDREN’S POLICY COUNCIL

The Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council (ICPC) is comprised of County agencies and department directors and leaders. The ICPC mission is to engage in cross system collaboration by improving interagency communication, developing child friendly policies and practices and initiating systems changes that result in safe, healthy and thriving children and families throughout Alameda County. ICPC provides advocacy leadership in the development of legislative policies that improve and enhance service delivery and outcomes for children and youth. ICPC’s goal is to work together to advocate for legislation that improves the lives of children in Alameda County.

• Advocate that sufficient funding be provided for State Preschool so that all eligible children have access to preschool before they enter kindergarten.
• Eliminate inequities in enrollment in and access to quality early childhood education.
• Increase funding for primary and secondary education, and prioritize resources for low-income students of color.
• Increase funding to ensure all high school students graduate and that graduates are college and career ready.
• Ensure students with disabilities (including learning, emotional, and physical) have equal access to educational opportunities.
• Advocate for funding full service community schools.
• Support strengthening the State's afterschool infrastructure and build summer programs to deliver high-quality expanded learning opportunities.
• Support policies that ensure students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
• Eliminate inequities in funding and access to quality teachers, particularly for teachers of early childhood, special education, and Dual Language Learners.
• Eliminate the disproportionate impact of suspension and expulsion rates on students of color and students with disabilities.
• Advocate for adequate state funding for court-appointed attorneys who represent children and parents in dependency court to ensure the protection of their individual rights and the integrity of the court system.
HEALTH

MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) allowed states to expand Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California). Medi-Cal is California's health insurance program for eligible low-income individuals and families. Beginning in January 2014, Medi-Cal was expanded to include income-eligible childless, non-disabled, adults. Enrollment locally and across the State exceeded all predictions and one-third of California residents are currently receiving Medi-Cal. Alameda County supports efforts to leverage health care reform to enroll children, individuals and families in the full range of benefits for which they are eligible. For more information on public benefits (CalFresh and CalWORKs), please see the Human Services Chapter starting on page 40.

- Eliminate the asset test for ALL Medi-Cal categories. With the Medi-Cal expansion, the newly eligible population does not have an asset test. However, other populations receiving Medi-Cal still have resource limits ($2,000 for an individual; $3,000 for a couple). Asset limits are a disincentive to save and Alameda County supports the elimination of these tests for all categories of Medi-Cal.

- Fully restore Denti-Cal. Good dental hygiene is crucial to overall health and can have impacts on job prospects and self-esteem. Alameda County supports the partial restoration of adult dental Medi-Cal benefits (Denti-Cal) that began in May 2014 and a full restoration of the cuts from 2009. Untreated oral infections complicate medical conditions and are often a source of increased medical costs.

- Restore Medi-Cal optional benefits. Optional benefits (including Acupuncture, Audiology, Chiropractic, Incontinence Cream and Washes, Optician/Optical Lab, Podiatry, and Speech Therapy) were cut in 2009 in response to the State fiscal crisis. Restoring these benefits would increase services for Medi-Cal recipients and broaden the care they can receive under the program, increasing their overall health and well-being.

- Increase Medi-Cal provider reimbursement rates. California has some of the lowest provider reimbursement rates in the country and recent rate cuts raise concerns about consumer access at a time when millions of new individuals are enrolled in Medi-Cal. Alameda County supports increases in Medi-Cal reimbursement rates and policies that make it easier to claim reimbursements.

- Provide adequate funding for Medi-Cal Administration. Medi-Cal caseloads have increased significantly since health care reform (a 50 percent increase in Alameda County in 2014). Medi-Cal administration funding for counties needs to be sufficient to handle increased workloads and meet case management standards.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Behavioral health problems (mental health and/or substance use disorders) are an important public health problem, both in their own right and because these conditions are associated with other chronic diseases and the resulting morbidity and mortality. The effects of mental illness range from minor disruptions in daily functioning to incapacitating personal, social, and occupational impairments and premature death.

Utilizing a health equity lens, support for the following will assist Alameda County in providing a fiscally sound, comprehensive continuum of behavioral health services ranging from prevention/early intervention to treatment and recovery/support that will foster increased access to services, a reduction in stigma and discrimination and improved health outcomes for Alameda County residents with behavioral health conditions:

- Increase funding to expand services specifically for older adults with mental health and co-occurring substance abuse issues. Mental health problems are not a normal part of the aging process. Mental illness and substance use disorders are major impediments to living well in old age; they cause considerable personal suffering and make it difficult for older people to achieve their potential. Older adults who become disabled by mental illness deserve the same guarantee of care already extended to those who face other kinds of disabilities.
• **Increase funding to build a competent geriatric behavioral health workforce to meet the demands of the rapidly aging population.** The unique characteristic of geriatric mental health and substance use needs create important requirements for workforce competencies, including the ability to detect possible mental health and substance use conditions in older adults with coexisting physical health conditions and cognitive and functional impairments.

• **Expand the 1915(i) State Plan Amendment to include evidence-based supported employment services as a billable rehabilitation service under Medi-Cal.** Eighty-five percent of adults with psychiatric disabilities do not work, while research shows that 60-70% would like to be employed. Expansion of the 1915(i) State Plan Amendment by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to include evidence-based supported employment services as a billable service will allow Alameda County to participate in federal cost sharing and provide a viable financial model for this tremendously important resource.

• **Expand permanent supportive housing for individuals who have become homeless and/or disabled.** A wide range of research studies and policy papers have articulated the benefits of expanding permanent supportive housing (affordable housing coupled with appropriate supportive services) for homeless individuals and individuals with disabilities. California remains behind other states that have developed ongoing statewide commitments to further the creation of permanent supportive housing. The Department of Health Care Services should allow health plans to develop innovative approaches to meeting the housing needs of their clients and should play a leading role in advocating for an expansion of affordable housing resources at the state and federal level.

• **End the Medi-Cal lock out of reimbursable mental health and substance use disorder treatment services for youth and adults who are incarcerated.** Research shows that 50% or more of State prisoners meet the criteria for a diagnosis of drug abuse or dependence, but only 10% receive medically based drug treatment. Similarly for youth, as many as four out of five teens in the juvenile justice system have drug or alcohol problems, yet fewer than 20% have access to substance abuse treatment programs. Additionally, more than 8 in 10 formerly incarcerated individuals have chronic physical, mental, or substance abuse disorders that create significant and distinct reentry challenges and service needs. Because of the link between substance abuse and crime, allowing Medi-Cal reimbursable treatment services for incarcerated individuals in both the juvenile and adult prison systems has the potential to yield substantial health and economic benefits.

• **Create a single database at the State level for licensed residential care facilities.** There are over 15,000 licensed residential care facilities throughout California. Four state agencies are responsible for licensing and overseeing these diverse community-based residential facilities. Due to multiple agency involvement in these facilities, there are numerous databases with varying information on each facility which makes searching for appropriate care very difficult for staff as well as families.

• **Advocate for the reduction of individuals with mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders incarcerated in county jails.** More than two million adults with serious mental illnesses are admitted to county jails nationally each year. Once incarcerated, people with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and are at a higher risk of re-incarceration than individuals without these illnesses. Reducing the number of mentally ill in the criminal justice system by providing responsible alternatives can save money, reduce recidivism, improve public safety and provide better outcomes for the offenders.

• **Reduce the waiting time before out-of-county foster youth receive behavioral health services.** Under current law, the County of Residence (where the youth is living) requires the County of Origin (county that holds the Medi-Cal) to authorize and accept fiscal responsibility for all needed behavioral health services. However, with the current re-alignment structure the County of Residence is responsible for services (through their re-alignment funds) and no costs are borne by the County of Origin. Yet because of SB 785, counties are still required to go through the process of authorization, which can delay needed services to this very vulnerable population.

• **Support alignment between Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) billable services for youth and the State of California’s Youth Treatment Guidelines.** Effective alignment would mean that DMC adolescent substance use disorders treatment providers would be able to be reimbursed for individual counseling appointments (beyond intake, discharge, & treatment plan), family therapy, drug testing and case management. It would also end the same
day billing restrictions so that youth could receive multiple kinds of interventions in the same day.

REDUCING INEQUITIES IN CHRONIC DISEASES

In Alameda County the four leading causes of death - cancer, heart disease, stroke, and chronic lower respiratory disease - are due to chronic diseases and account for 56% of all deaths. Diabetes and hypertension account for another 5.8% of deaths. Despite increases in life expectancy among all racial/ethnic groups, there has been a growing disparity between these groups. For example in 1960 African-Americans in Alameda County had a life expectancy 4.0 years less than Caucasians and in 2013, despite marked increases in both racial/ethnic groups, the disparity had increased to almost 7 years.

- **Support chronic disease screening, detection, education and care management system** - Chronic diseases disproportionately affect people of color. Poor screening, access to care, and the lack of understanding of how to manage these diseases leads to complications and premature death. The County supports expanding and enforcing a chronic disease system of care that includes the payment for and provision of self-management education for people with chronic disease to manage their disease.

- **Enforce standards-based physical education in public schools as mandated in the Ed Code** - Students must be instructed by a credentialed physical education specialist in grades 1-6 for 200 minutes every 10 days, and in grades 7-12 for 400 minutes every 10 days. Less than 30% of all County students in grades 5, 7, and 9 can pass 5 out of 6 of the required areas of the California Fitness test.

- **Promote the initiation and prolonged duration of breastfeeding** - Breastfeeding has been proven to provide a broad range of health benefits to both baby and mother including reducing a child’s chance of becoming overweight or obese. Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding, and enforcing laws that protect low-wage workers, allow family leave, foster child bonding, and create breastfeeding-friendly work places will lay a foundation of good health.

- **Limit the marketing of junk food to children** - The Institute of Medicine recently issued a comprehensive list of recommendations to combat the obesity crisis, including the creation of guidelines to limit the marketing of junk food to children. In recent years this marketing has increased greatly, particularly concentrated in low income communities, leading to an increase in childhood obesity and its associated diseases.

- **Expand the availability of healthful foods and beverages, and decrease the availability of unhealthful foods and beverages.** Healthful and nutritious foods and beverages must be made more easily available in low-income neighborhoods paired with a decrease in access to unhealthful foods and beverages. The State’s pilot program to increase access to healthful foods should be expanded and greater financial incentives and/or assistance should be provided to retailers to implement the changes.

- **Decrease the availability of unhealthful beverages through a sugar sweetened beverage/ “soda” tax or fee.** In the County, approximately 60% of adolescents and 31% of children consume one or more sodas per day. Greater consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is associated with dental caries, diabetes, overweight, and obesity among both adults and children. A soda tax or fee would gain broader support when funds raised are reinvested in the communities most disproportionately affected by the obesity epidemic.

- **Improve utilization of food assistance programs** - The complexity of applying for and maintaining eligibility for food assistance programs is frequently a barrier to low-income families. Streamlining the application for nutrition programs - CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and School Meals Program (Breakfast/Lunch) would greatly increase the numbers of children served.

- **Increase the tobacco excise tax with 20% of any new tobacco tax designated for tobacco control programs with the goal of decreasing adult tobacco-use prevalence from 12% to 10% by 2017.**

- **Reduce smoking, limit secondhand smoke exposure, decrease youth access to tobacco products and marketing, and promote health equity among California’s diverse populations:** The County supports provisions that 1) protect individuals from secondhand smoke exposure, 2) strengthen laws to reduce youth access to tobacco products, 3) counter pro-tobacco influences including advertising and media images or content, 4) reduce or eliminate the retailing of new tobacco or nicotine products, 5) promote tobacco cessation, 6) Incorporate health equity, language access, and cultural competency standards in all tobacco
control agencies, programs, processes, and practices. 7) Increase support to priority populations’ advocacy and leadership alliances in tobacco control. 8) Strengthen the capacity of agency and institution personnel to achieve tobacco-related health equity, and 9) Conduct monitoring, surveillance, evaluation, and research; disseminate findings to reduce tobacco-related health disparities and measure progress toward achieving health equity and social justice.

- **Create “Asthma-Friendly” communities:** The County supports policies that create “Asthma-Friendly” communities, especially those that eliminate the disproportionate burden of asthma for people living in poverty and communities of color. This goal can be achieved through optimizing the diagnosis, treatment, and management of asthma by adherence to the current National Heart Lung and Blood Institute’s asthma guidelines; expanding the reach of proven case management programs for serving persons with asthma; utilizing community health workers and trained professionals; improving air quality; reducing diesel emissions in our communities, and improving housing conditions to meet the standards of a healthy home while holding those responsible for the conditions to a legal standard.

**REDUCING INEQUITIES IN HIV**

There are currently an estimated 5,751 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the County. The annual incidence rate of new HIV infections has not fallen in nearly two decades. The impact of this trend on behavior risk groups and minority populations is significant. The HIV epidemic disproportionately impacts African American, Latino and Asian residents of the County. HIV also affects marginalized communities such as Intravenous Drug Users, other substance users, especially those using crack cocaine and sex workers. Cuts to prevention and testing programs from the California State Department of Health will have devastating consequences for some of our most vulnerable populations.

- **Support Needle Exchange Programs:** Injection drug use is the second leading cause of HIV transmission and the leading cause of Hepatitis C infection in California. In the County, injection drug use accounts for 24% of all AIDS cases among African Americans and 35% of all AIDS cases among women. Studies of needle exchange programs have repeatedly shown that these efforts are successful in reducing the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C while showing no increase in the use of injection drugs. The County therefore supports policy and legislative efforts to support these needle exchange programs.

- **Increase Condom Distribution and HIV Testing in Jails and Prisons:** At present, the distribution of condoms is prohibited within the County jail and federal prisons. Rates of many diseases are higher for the incarcerated than for the total US population. Condom distribution and routine, non-mandatory, HIV testing should be allowed in jails and prisons in order to prevent the spread of these diseases within the inmate population and among their partners in the community.

- **Assist Formerly Incarcerated Individuals:** The County supports any legislation that facilitates the rapid and effective transition of HIV care services for people going in or coming out of State prisons and County jails.

- **Support HIV Testing:** Routine HIV testing should be offered in all medical settings so that HIV testing can be administered in the same manner as diabetes and tuberculosis screenings. The County supports the easing of restrictions on who can perform HIV Rapid Testing. Currently, state funded programs only allow licensed medical practitioners and state-trained HIV test counselors to administer the HIV Rapid Test. This restriction is not required in most other states or by the test manufacturer, severely limiting California’s state-wide HIV testing efforts.

- **Maintain Support for AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP):** The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), part of Ryan White Program funding, pays for prescription drugs for people who have limited or no coverage for HIV medications and otherwise cannot afford these medications. ADAP is managed by states, and most states also contribute to the funding for this program. ADAP benefits and eligibility requirements vary widely state by state. Across the country, programs have experienced a funding crisis and the County supports efforts to maintain this coverage.

- **Increase Comprehensive Reproductive and Sexual Health Programs for Teens:** Create a legislative process to fund comprehensive reproductive and sexual health programs for teens. The number of some Sexually
Transmitted Infections (STIs) in young women under the age of 20 is almost equivalent to the numbers reported for all other women over the age of 20. This illustrates the high levels of unprotected sexual activity occurring among teens which creates greater opportunities for HIV transmission. Current AIDS data reflects that young people 13 -19 represent .4% of the cases. It is important to fund comprehensive reproductive and sexual health programs that educate young people about contraception, family communication, responsible negotiating and decision-making skills.

- **Simplify and Assist Health Care Reform (Affordable Care Act) Enrollment:** The County supports policies and/or legislation that simplifies and streamlines the enrollment of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS into appropriate health care coverage. People Living with HIV have been overwhelmed with choices about insurance coverage. The County supports efforts that keep PLWHA from falling out of care or having disruptions in their HIV treatment that could lead to viral resistance to treatment.

**ALCOHOL PRINCIPLES**

Current law and regulation provide valuable tools that can be used to develop strategies for changing many high-risk environments in which alcohol and other drugs are used. This “environmental” approach to Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention focuses on changes in laws, public policies and social norms to reduce and prevent problems related to the use of alcohol and other drugs. The principles noted below, when applied through actual legislative changes, will enhance the ability of concerned community and neighborhood groups to reduce and prevent alcohol and other drug related problems.

- **Reduce the Social Availability of Alcohol to Youth:** Currently underage youth can easily access alcohol through social sources, including parents, older siblings, or teen parties. Social host liability laws can hold adults who served alcohol to underage youth accountable for injuries that occur as a result of underage drinking.

- **Stop Targeting of Youth for Alcohol Advertising:** It is currently very difficult for parents and other adults to control a youth’s exposure to alcohol advertising, marketing, and promotions, which frequently associate alcohol use with success, attractiveness, and popularity. Strategies for addressing this problem may include: Limiting the sponsorship of community events by the alcohol industry, tightening section 25664, the section of the Alcohol Beverage Control code related to advertising to minors, and supporting enforcement of existing local advertising regulations that control the placement and display of advertising.

- **Reduce the availability of alcohol products targeted to the youth market:** Alcohol products such as flavored malt beverages (alcopops), with their colorful packaging and fruity sweet flavors, are targeted to underage youth, particularly young girls. Marketing the products as “malt” beverages (beer), despite their being primarily distilled spirits, has allowed them to be taxed at a significantly lower rate, advertised on TV, and sold in convenience stores, small markets and other “beer and wine” stores.

- **Renew Efforts to Deter Alcohol-Impaired Driving:** Nationally in 2012, more than 10,000 people died in drunk driving crashes - one every 51 minutes. An average drunk driver has driven drunk 80 times before first arrest. Strategies to deter alcohol-impaired driving include: lowering the legal blood-alcohol levels, prompt suspension of a driver’s license for people arrested, expanded sobriety checkpoints, alcohol-ignition interlock programs, and sustained health education that includes efforts to reduce binge drinking.

- **Reduce the overconcentration of alcohol sales establishments in neighborhoods:** A high concentration of retail alcohol licenses in communities is considered a risk factor for youth growing up in that environment. Public health research has consistently linked high crime and violence rates to high concentrations of alcohol licenses. Although most regulation of the siting of new alcohol retailers is at the local level, there are state policies that can impact over-concentration. These policies include increased resources for sustained enforcement of regulations and limiting the active status of alcohol permits to 10 years.

- **Support alcohol taxes to pay for public health and safety costs, reducing alcohol harm and underage drinking.** Alcohol taxes have not been raised in California since 1992 when the tax was increased by a penny per drink. Since that time, the real value of alcohol taxes in California has decreased 45 percent due to rising inflation. Raising alcohol taxes has been shown to be a highly effective tool in reducing a wide range of harm and consequences among all age groups. Such harm includes alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, risky sexual behaviors leading to STDs, traffic fatalities, and especially underage drinking.
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Many more women, children, youth and families now have access to quality medical care, thanks to years of education efforts, provider outreach and advances in medical technology. The Affordable Care Act has also expanded access to care and preventive services for many Alameda County residents. Access to medical care is important and has likely contributed to improvement in some maternal and child health outcomes – infant mortality, for example, has been declining steadily over the last two decades – and yet women, children, youth and families in many of our communities still experience less than optimal health. The low birth weight rate, a key maternal and child health indicator, has not budged over the last ten years but remains above the Healthy People 2020 benchmark. Being born at low birth weight not only contributes to significant newborn and infant health problems, but can also result in long-term illness and disability, including chronic disease and developmental delays. And there are deep inequities in maternal and child health by race: infant mortality rates among African-Americans are two times higher than Whites and African-American women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women. Additionally women now face challenges to their reproductive freedom in a way that we have not seen since the initial debates that led to the passage of Roe v Wade in 1973.

Ensuring access to comprehensive, low cost reproductive, prenatal and primary care – including case management services where appropriate – will continue to be important, but attention should also be paid to policies that 1) do not limit the range of options available, especially in the arena of family planning services; 2) ensure access to accurate, unbiased information about reproductive and sexual health for youth and adults; and 3) take into account and attempt to remedy the impact of neighborhood and social conditions on the health of women, their children, their partners and their families, thereby securing the health and wellbeing of current and future generations.

• Support efforts to explore innovative state-level financing mechanisms for home visiting. Other states, such as Minnesota, have agreements between Public Health Departments and Medicaid managed care organizations (MMCO) stipulating that home visiting services be directly billed to the MMCO. In other states, partnerships between Public Health, Health Care Services and Social Services agencies at the state level have resulted in braided funding mechanisms that sustain local home visiting programs not supported by Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting, Healthy Start or other federal funds. California should explore similar funding ideas that could result in evidence-based home visiting programs becoming a permanent part of the early childhood landscape of services for low income women, children, fathers and families.

• Support continued full implementation of the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP) for all Medi-Cal eligible women, regardless of whether they are fee-for-service clients or enrolled in Medi-Cal managed care, as well as for women who are newly eligible for coverage under the ACA. CPSP provides low-income Medi-Cal eligible women with comprehensive nutrition, psychosocial and health education assessments, interventions and support throughout the prenatal and post-partum period, in addition to high quality prenatal care. CPSP is a vital component of the effort to ensure that low-income women get the support and care they need during their pregnancies.

• Support policies and legislation that promote comprehensive sex education and HIV/AIDS prevention instruction in schools that is age-appropriate and emphasizes abstinence, in compliance with the California Comprehensive Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Act and the No Child Left Behind Act.

Ensure that California continues to emphasize abstinence within the context of HIV/AIDS prevention education (EC 51934 (3) of the Comprehensive Sexual Health Act) but reinforces that abstinence-only education is not permitted in California public schools. Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), unplanned pregnancies, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) all pose public health risks and youth have the right to know the different methods of transmission and protection and how they can protect themselves. Partnerships between public health departments and schools have been successful in educating and empowering youth on these subjects and should continue to be emphasized.
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

In 1980, the Legislature enacted the EMS Act, which empowers counties to establish local EMS agencies (LEMSAs) to develop and implement EMS systems. (Health & Safety Code, § 1797.200.) The formation of LEMSAs was and continues to be needed to oversee the varying special interests of both public and private providers, hospitals, and tertiary resources to ensure a coordinated systems approach to the delivery of emergency medical services for the people of California in their most vulnerable moments. As specified in the EMS Act LEMSAs are empowered to create an EMS system to provide for a "specially organized arrangement" involving "personnel, facilities, and equipment for the effective and coordinated delivery" of EMS in "emergency conditions." (Id., § 1797.78.)

- **Ensure Funding for Emergency Medical Services Continuity** Ensure the continuation of County authority for planning, implementing and evaluating local EMS systems. Under current law, counties have an obligation to ensure public health and medical care for its citizens including ambulance services. EMS and ambulance services planned for and provided on a county-wide basis ensure system integrity and the delivery of optimal patient care. Our goal is to maintain and improve the EMS system that delivers optimal patient care and efficient system design for the County overall and avoid fragmentation.

- **Secure Funding to support Emergency Medical Services in Hospitals** Funding is necessary to support emergency medical services, specialty centers, trauma care, pediatric care, stroke centers, and STEMI centers (STEMI is a full-blown heart attack caused by the complete blockage of a heart artery). Hospitals throughout the State provide a significant volume of emergency care to patients who do not have third-party insurance coverage and the financial impact is often greater on designated trauma centers located in urban areas. Over 50% of hospital emergency rooms operate at a net operating loss due to the significant volume of uncompensated care. Legislative efforts, including an initiative to provide new dedicated funding for uncompensated care in emergency rooms and specialty centers, are needed.

- **Increase Revenue for Medical and Ambulance Transportation** Medical and ambulance transportation reimbursements in Alameda County have significant gaps. Between collection rates and Medi-Cal reimbursements, the ambulance provider only receives payment for 30% of their billable invoices. Legislative efforts are needed for new dedicated funding or for an increase from Medi-Cal reimbursements.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The recent fires in California, emerging communicable diseases, projections of more frequent and severe extreme weather events, and a potential earthquake on the Hayward Fault clearly demonstrate the need to ensure that Alameda County has a coordinated system in place to respond to any disaster. Coordinated response to build the capacity of public health and health care systems includes planning for a “surge” of patients. The Public Health Department and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) continue to work in collaboration with County, State and Federal agencies, local health care providers and other institutions to strengthen our collaboration, communications and responsiveness. The following will ensure that our State and local disaster response systems are adequately prepared to respond in an emergency, prepared to respond to long-term health issues from disaster, and prepared to maintain continuity of operations:

- **Support Funding for Regional Communications.** Regional planning must take place to develop communication systems that are functional in a mutual aid response situation. Clear leadership provided by the State Department of Public Health and EMS Authority should promote improved communication with the public and private sector. Funding is needed to support robust and redundant systems and enhance existing communications and information management systems.

- **Develop Systems for Vulnerable Populations.** Develop systems to ensure that services are delivered in a timely and efficient manner to vulnerable populations with special consideration for children and adults with disabilities requiring functional or access support services, as well as low income populations, seniors, children, and individuals with language barriers. Pre-planning for disaster response must be focused on those who are dependent on others such as caretakers in the event of a large-scale public health emergency.
• **Secure Funding for Pre-Disaster Mitigation.** Support legislation which promotes funding opportunities for pre-disaster mitigation to protect and support disaster responders.

**SYSTEMS OF CARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Children and adults with disabilities in California rely on systems of care that have been chronically underfunded, and severely compromised by cuts due to our recent State fiscal crisis. The economic recession and recurring budget cuts have resulted in a loss of over $10 billion to California safety net services. The California economy has recovered, leaving a State surplus, but essential and necessary restorations to safety net services have not been made. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that nearly 250,000 people, ages five years and older, are living with disabilities in Alameda County, which is 15.7% of the total County population of 1,594,569 (January 2015). People with disabilities comprise 22% of the total population of the US. The U.S. Census Bureau also reports that 28% of people with disabilities live in poverty. The Centers for Disease Control reports that nearly half of the adults with an annual household income of less than $15,000 reported a disability, one in three adults able to work reported a disability, and four in ten adults who have not completed high school reported a disability. Adults living with disabilities are more likely to be obese, smoke, have high blood pressure, be inactive, and are three times more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. Disability results in health care expenditures of $400 billion per year, costs that could be reduced substantially with adequate access to prevention and care. We need to develop services that serve all our residents, and we need to adopt policies that result in better outcomes for children and adults with disabilities. Restoration of funding and reinvestment in new services are essential to the stabilization of our compromised systems of care and to provide a quality of life beyond institutionalized poverty for children and adults with disabilities.

• **Mandate Universal Developmental Screening with Incentives.** Require the use of a high quality developmental screening tool in well-child exams at 9, 18 and 24-30 months, and mandate a greater incentive, and higher relative value unit, in publicly funded insurance and service programs. Fewer than one in three young children in California receive timely developmental screenings. When pediatricians use developmental surveillance instead of a high quality screening tool, less than 30% of developmental delays are identified. This group of infants and toddlers can make significant developmental gains; 69% of at risk children who receive early intervention services require no special education services by the time they start kindergarten. Universal developmental screening greatly improves the rate of identification of developmental delays, boosts child success and reduces health and education system costs.

• **Increase Regional Center Funding.** Support legislation that provides increased funding for community service providers and Regional Center operations in order to stabilize the system, reform funding for provider service rates and Regional Center operations to ensure funding levels are adequate and sustainable, and provide annual increases until reform strategies are implemented. Regional Centers provide outreach, community education, intake and assessment, eligibility determination, resource development, and on-going case management services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. There are over 10,400 babies, children, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the County receiving Regional Center services. California spends the least amount of any state on community-based services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities eligible for federal reimbursement. Significant impending systemic changes, including the federal ruling to prohibit federal reimbursement for services provided in segregated settings, the closure of the Sonoma Developmental Center, and the need for the development of new programs and services for the rising population of individuals with autism will place additional pressure on a system characterized in the 2015 ARCA report as “On the Brink of Collapse.”

• **Affordable Housing.** Support legislation and budget priorities that create affordable housing and rental subsidy programs for people at the lowest income levels. The vast majority of adults with developmental disabilities have incomes at or below the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) level of $854 a month, which equates to less than 20% Area Median Income (AMI). The report Priced Out in 2012 demonstrates that the average rent for a modestly priced one-bedroom apartment is greater than the entire SSI payment received by a person with a disability. The percentage of SSI for an efficiency apartment in California is 102%; in Oakland it is 104%.
• **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).** Support policies and legislation that creates an infrastructure of programs and services that assists individuals with ASD and their families, and helps local governments and school districts meet concomitant fiscal challenges. ASD is the fastest growing serious developmental disability and has a national economic impact of $137 billion annually. In the County, the rate of Department of Developmental Services Autism cases has increased 1,573% since 1990 (representing just a portion of the overall clinically-defined population). The report, “Autism Rising”, notes that based on current averages for cost of services for adults with autism, regional center annual costs will nearly triple over the next ten years, and do not include non-regional center costs such as parental expenses, In-Home Support Services, SSI or housing assistance, and do not address significant future factors such as aging parents, cost-of-living increases or the need for higher level of support as the DDS autism population ages.

• **Employment.** Support legislation and policies that fully fund supported employment services and alternate hiring processes that promote competitive, integrated job placements for individuals with disabilities and close significant gaps in employment rates among those with and without disabilities. October 2012 Labor Force statistics estimate that 28.4% of working age adults with disabilities are employed compared with 71% of those without disabilities. For people with developmental disabilities, the disparity in employment participation widens further; and only 14.7% of individuals supported by developmental disability agencies participated in integrated employment (Human Services Research Institute, 2012).

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

Communicable diseases are the fourth leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of death worldwide. Control of communicable disease is a core public safety function of government at the local, state, and federal levels. Fulfilling this function requires a sustained, adequately funded infrastructure that monitors, evaluates, and responds to communicable disease threats. Communicable diseases are kept in control only by continuing vigilance and ongoing effort, even when a threat may not be apparent.

In addition, the threat of bioterrorism requires Health Officers to be prepared to recognize and respond to possible cases or intentional outbreaks of unusual diseases such as smallpox, plague, anthrax, or botulism.

The three key areas for Communicable Disease Control and Prevention are epidemiology and surveillance, communicable disease response, and vaccine-preventable disease programs. Support for these areas will help to protect the public health infrastructure and capacity to control and prevent communicable diseases in the County.

• **Assure adequate resources are available to maintain staffing levels and provide for staff development activities.** Adequate staff with training and expertise is the foundation of communicable disease prevention and control. Prevention and control programs need staff with expertise in laboratory, epidemiology, data management and analysis, outbreak response, and case and contact investigation. Capacity must also be maintained that will allow for a surge in activities associated with recognized outbreaks or other communicable disease emergencies, such as pandemic influenza, that necessitate substantial increase in surveillance for weeks to months.

• **Assure adequate resources for public health laboratory services.** Public health laboratory services are vital for communicable disease diagnosis, assessing potential environmental threats, follow up of cases and carriers of disease, and monitoring the effectiveness of vaccines and other control measures. Recent budget cuts have crippled both local and state public health laboratory services and a major concern is the lack of availability of services previously available through the state public health laboratory system. There is also concern about a trend toward decreasing laboratory confirmation of diagnoses in the clinical health care sector of a number of important communicable diseases which is, to some extent, the result of disincentives built into capititated or otherwise “managed” payment systems. Public health laboratories may need to perform testing to compensate for decreased testing by the clinical providers.

• **Support electronic access to anonymous and aggregate data from large health care systems and hospitals.** This would provide significantly improved baseline data on disease processes in the community, while simultaneously providing for more rapid detection of trends that warrant investigation. Data systems, including electronic data systems, provide essential situation status information about communicable diseases in our
communities. Public health agencies must attain access to data from electronic medical records systems as they are developed and implemented in clinical care settings. While early reporting of communicable diseases by astute physicians and clinical laboratories remains essential to the prompt initiation of critical public health investigations and rapid control of outbreaks and emerging infectious diseases, the ability to access electronic health information regularly provides a critical opportunity to monitor syndromes and diseases before a final disease diagnosis is established.

- **Assure adequate local public health staff, including investigative staff, public health nurses trained in communicable diseases, epidemiologists and laboratorians, dedicated to the surveillance and investigation of emerging infectious diseases and diseases causing outbreaks.** This must include the rapid detection, monitoring, investigation, and control of outbreaks due to diseases not supported by categorical funding.

- **Support Partner Services programs to prevent and control HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases.** Partner Services have been proven to play an effective role in preventing and controlling HIV and other STDs. All persons with newly diagnosed or reported HIV infection or early syphilis should receive partner services, with active health department involvement. Partner services programs should use surveillance and disease reporting systems to assist in identifying persons with newly diagnosed or reported HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea, or high-priority chlamydia cases who are potential candidates for partner services. Fully funding partner services and restoring funding for other HIV prevention activities must be a high priority.

- **Assure that HIV testing and counseling options, in both anonymous and confidential testing programs, continues to be free and readily available in all local health jurisdictions.** Priority should be given to restoring funding to HIV testing programs and increasing the use of confidential testing. Routine HIV testing should be integrated into regular primary care practice. Pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV should be made available according to CDC guidelines, and should be integrated with STD prevention and care. Post-exposure prophylaxis for sexual and needle exposure to HIV should continue to be evaluated and applied more widely as appropriate.

- **Preserve and support efforts to eliminate tuberculosis (TB).** Identification and treatment of latent TB infection is an important step in moving toward TB elimination, including targeted screening of high-risk groups to find persons with latent TB infection. Persons with latent TB infection should be offered appropriate treatment, including short-course regimens and the use of emerging technologies to facilitate remote observation. Action to improve the prevention effectiveness of overseas screening and domestic follow-up of persons newly arriving in the United States from high incidence countries is important. Additionally, closing gaps in health insurance and Medi-Cal coverage and access for undocumented persons, or others with TB who are uninsured, especially those with multi-drug resistant TB, is a critical priority.

- **Support efforts to provide public health screening and broader provision of the vaccine that will help control human papillomavirus (HPV) in males as well as females.** The emergence of new technologies for testing and surveillance for this sexually transmitted disease has clarified the importance of HPV in the pathogenesis of multiple types of cancer, including cervical cancer.

- **Support policies that assure access to vaccines for the population.** Policies must address the appropriate development, production, and distribution of vaccines necessary to protect the public's health and assure adequate funding for vaccine purchase, delivery, outreach and education, especially for high-risk populations. Optimal immunization levels for all vaccine-preventable diseases must be aggressively pursued through immunization programs that are assured of continued adequate funding. Strategies should include universal infant immunization, required school entrance and advancement immunizations, and a continued focus on immunization of high-risk groups. Recommended immunizations for control of diseases in adults should be provided in all comprehensive immunization programs.

- **Support the development of county and statewide internet-based immunization registries linked to electronic health records, with appropriate restrictions to maintain confidentiality.** Immunization registries are vital to ensuring timely and up-to-date vaccinations. The County supports measures to increase registry usage by all providers of immunizations, including pharmacists and school-based clinics. In addition, the County supports the use of registries for other public health interventions.
HEALTH CARE ACCESS, QUALITY, AND AFFORDABILITY

All key provisions of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) are in place as of January 2014, and the legislation has been successful in reducing the rates of uninsured and in the nation. According to the US Census Bureau, the rate of U.S. residents who were uninsured fell from 13.3% to 10.4% in California, the rate of uninsured fell from 17.2% in 2013 to 12.4% in 2014, a decline of almost 5 percentage points. In the County, the rate of uninsured fell from 12.6% in 2013 to 8.2% in 2014. However, there were still approximately 65,000 people with incomes <200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) who were uninsured in the County.

The County embraces the “triple aim” in its healthcare system: improving patient experience and quality, the health of populations, and cost-effectiveness. For health care reform to succeed, we must maximize eligibility, enrollment and retention in health insurance and access to appropriate and high quality health care. Special attention should be paid to policies that:

- **Increase access to health insurance.** Simplify the health insurance application process for all, especially hard-to-reach and underserved populations. Support legislation that would streamline enrollment and retention for Medi-Cal.

- **Increase access to health care.** The County supports legislation that provides lower cost and more accessible treatment alternatives in community settings; promotes efficiency; incentivizes physicians to go into primary care; incentivizes expanded medical staffing, including use of advanced-practice nurses where there are physician shortages and the use of a wider range of healthcare team members, such as community health workers.

- **Expand dental care access and preventive services for low-income Californians.** Dental health is an integral part of overall health and can impact children’s growth, development, self-esteem, and learning. The County supports policies that would increase prevention services and new, more efficient models of care, such as the virtual dental home and expanded dental teams.

- **Ensure linguistically and culturally appropriate communication with patients.** The County supports legislation that encourages use of appropriate written materials from insurance companies, providers and pharmacy companies, and promotes standards and adequate training for in-person communication at the point of care.

- **Support state-wide comprehensive health care for undocumented persons.** Expand health care access and coverage for undocumented individuals and families and the expansion of Medi-Cal and Covered California to cover the remaining uninsured.

- **Promote payment reform that increases the ability to provide preventive services and establishes risk-sharing between hospitals and primary care.** Support payment reform that incentivizes positive health outcomes, not just the ability to bill for more tests or visits. It should promote health education and allow same-day visits for better integrated care, and enable doctors to spend more time with patients at the initial visit to improve the quality of overall care.

- **Ensure maintenance and enhancement of the safety net system.** Increase provider rates, improve transitions of care (e.g. from acute or specialty care to primary care medical homes) and support policies that provide coverage to those with part-time or temporary employment. Use the opportunities provided by the 1115 Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver to enhance integration and effectiveness of the safety net healthcare system. Support adequate Per Member Per Month payments for health home services under Affordable Care Act Section 2703.

- **Support whole person care:** Enhance integration of mental health and substance use treatment with primary care to create seamless care for patients. This may include supporting capacity to appropriately share data across systems in order to improve coordination and efficiency of care and payment reforms, e.g. ability to bill for behavioral health visits that occur on the same day as primary care visits.

- **Support policies that enable systems and providers to reduce health inequities.** As an example, the County supports infrastructure for the collection, analysis, and utilization of race, language, and ethnicity and disability data in monitoring and planning to reduce or eliminate disparities.
• Support limits of estate recovery for Medi-Cal enrollees. Limit Medi-Cal recovery to what is required under Federal law, including the cost of long-term care in a nursing home. An unintended consequence of the expansion of Medi-Cal under the Affordable Care Act is the State’s ability to recover a broad array of costs and assets — including homes — from Medi-Cal recipients 55 and older after they die.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

To ensure environmental quality and food safety in the community, Alameda County supports policies and legislation that would prioritize the following:

• **Support effective Product Stewardship/Extended Producer Responsibility legislation.** Product Stewardship/Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a strategy that shifts the responsibility for end of life/residual management to the producers by internalizing the cost of collection and disposal in the price of the product. This includes but is not limited to existing and emerging waste streams such as pharmaceuticals, sharps, household batteries, fluorescent lamps and marine flares. Effective products stewardship legislation should apply to all manufacturers across a particular product spectrum, have required minimum collection rates, increasing collection goals over the course of the program, and no local preemption clause.

• **Oppose legislation that pre-empts or supersedes local control over Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program elements and goals that require service changes or increases without providing state or producer funding for such increases.**

• **Oppose legislation that limits, or restricts the role of manufacturers and producers participation in product stewardship programs.** In the 2015 legislative year AB 45 proposed statewide mandates for Household Hazardous waste programs to increase resident participation and require a door to door element without providing a funding mechanism. Effective product stewardship programs must have full participation by producers for both the financing and execution of a program.

• **Support legislation that continues or increases funding for management of Invasive Species including Pest Exclusion, Pest Detection Trapping and Survey activities, Rapid Response Pest Management and Eradication (if feasible), and Public Education Outreach.** There are a number of significant invasive species being introduced and detected in California that threaten agriculture and the environment. Continued State funding for invasive species programs is critical to protect Alameda County’s and California’s resources.

• **Support a determination by Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) that there is no other reasonably effective alternative for reducing public health risks caused by overpopulated Norway rats in sanitary sewers.** In June 2014, CA Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) adopted section 6471 of Title 3, California Code of Regulations (3CCR) to designate the active ingredients of brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum and difethialone as California-restricted materials, making all second generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR) products restricted materials due to effects on non target species. A determination by DPR would allow properly licensed Local Government vector control agencies to use restricted SGAR’s.

• **Support legislation which increases Environmental Health Department authority to monitor and regulate threats to community health.** This includes a number of emerging environmental health and justice issues such as: hydraulic fracturing, green chemistry, ensuring the safety of organized camps, bedbug infestations, and threats to food safety by climate change induced alterations in vector geographic distributions.

• **Support policies and funding that promotes environmental health and justice.** People of color and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution and climate change, particularly children and elderly. Environmental pollution, including conditions of blight and climate change, degrades and poses added risks to the environment and public health, particularly to vulnerable populations. The County supports policies and funding that uses a “precautionary approach,” prevents and mitigates environmental pollution, increases monitoring and enforcement action, creates green jobs and spurs the green economy, and seeks to meaningfully involve community residents most impacted by pollution decision-making in order to address health disparities, cumulative health impacts and further environmental justice.

• **Support legislation that provides regulators with more authority to oversee both existing and new Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS).**
Support legislation that provides funding from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, bond money from Proposition 1 (2014 Water Bond) and other sources to assist communities and property owners in complying with new OWTS regulation. On June 19, 2012, the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted the Water Quality Control Policy for siting, design, operation, and maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS Policy). The state estimates that more than 1.2 million OWTS are installed and operating in California. As California’s population continues to grow, and we see both increased rural housing densities and the building of residences and other structures in more varied terrain, the risks of causing environmental damage and creating public health risks from the use of OWTS increases. There is a need for funding assistance and regulatory oversight to help private property owners and communities relying on OWTS comply with the State OWTS Policy.

PUBLIC SAFETY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

In partnership with community and law enforcement agencies, the District Attorney's Office is responsible for the prosecution of crimes in the County of Alameda, California. The District Attorney's Office is dedicated to serving the community through the ethical prosecution of criminal offenses and the vigorous protection of victims’ rights.

The District Attorney’s Office supports policies and legislation on the following:

- **Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.)** Funding for the Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) Watch to enhance services to victims of human trafficking and commercially sexually exploited minors. To combat human trafficking this program needs funds to educate the community, provide effective community outreach and train law enforcement. Stronger laws are also needed to prosecute human traffickers, and services for victims need to be expanded.
  - Improve legislation and resources for those who are victims of human labor trafficking.
- **DNA Backlog.** Funding to eliminate the current backlog of untested rape kits with the partnership with other law enforcement agencies and private entities to provide a streamlined model throughout the State to prevent future backlogs. DNA evidence can be used to eliminate or confirm suspects, and develop investigative leads to solve a number of unsolved cases.
- **Victims of Crime.** Enhancement of the rights and protections of all victims of crime, and increased funding to expand services to all victims of crime, especially victims of violent crime including: homicide, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and commercially exploited minors. Funding to aggressively collect restitution of behalf of all victims of crime.
  - Strengthen the process for seeking and securing restitution for victims of crime.
- **Mental Health.** Advocate for strong funding streams for treating and assisting people with mental health issues.
- **Realignment.** Realigning lower level offenders to community corrections programs strengthened through community-based punishment, improved supervision strategies and evidence-based practices, and supervision practices demonstrated by research to reduce recidivism. This includes employing proven alternatives to incarceration for low-risk offenders. In addition, systemic reforms in the Alameda County court system are required to establish a centralized process to help individuals file revocation petitions.
- **Reducing Serious/Violent Crimes.** Initiatives to reduce violent crimes by proposing the formation of the regional multi-agencies task force to combat violence. The task force would provide meaningful alternatives to individuals engaged in criminal behavior who are amenable to various treatment strategies.
- **Enhancing Community-Based Support for Formerly Incarcerated.** Support funding for community programs that aid incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals through their rehabilitation efforts and process. Funding can provide programs for individuals as an alternative to incarceration or through the expansion of District Attorney driven Diversion Programs wherein charges are dismissed after successful completion of the...
Program. Funding can provide programs and support for individuals under supervision of the Probation Department following conviction as well as for individuals after they return from jail or prison. Community programs include access to health care, job training and education to provide tools to support themselves and reduce recidivism.

- **Youth Empowerment and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention.** More programs and funding for youth to provide work experience so that youth can gain real-world skills and experience to help them become self-sufficient in a positive way and prevent them from entering the juvenile and/or criminal justice systems. Stronger intervention and prevention programs for commercially exploited minors as well as funding for resources for minors and transitioning youth who have been victims of human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation.

- **Youth Violence Prevention and Education Programs.** Funding for violence prevention and education programs and/or counseling programs for youth who are at risk of or have been involved in crime to provide information about the juvenile justice system; teach about healthy relationships and decision-making, and assist youth to achieve their dreams. Also more partnerships with additional groups to provide counseling, mentorship, case management, life skills, employment and training.

- **Alternative Programs to Incarceration.** Advocate for continued funding for alternative programs to incarceration.

- **Enhancing Public Safety.** Evaluate and propose changes in the law that protect innocent bystanders and children from mutual gun combat.

- **Consumer Protection, Environmental Protection, and Worker Protection.** Increase efforts in Consumer Protection, Environmental Protection, and Worker Protection, particularly labor trafficking.

- **Collaboration.** Advocate for and create a legislative platform to require county agencies to work with community agencies collaboratively to combat human trafficking, specifically the sex trafficking of minors and labor trafficking.

**PROBATION**

Probation engages in department-wide efforts to initiate and maintain strong partnerships with all government and community agencies. We establish and maintain community and government partnerships in order to provide a cohesive system of support for our clients. This partnership includes cross-jurisdictional collaboration with State and County agencies, community and faith-based organizations, therapists, and social workers.

The Probation Department supports policies and legislation on the following:

- Commitment to serving vulnerable youth and families and reducing the number of youth crossing over between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems:
  - Continued support for foster youth in placement by improving aftercare planning and services for youth exiting foster care placement and support for alternatives to permanent placement such as Family Finding.
  - Continued work with organizations that provide intensive youth-centered and family driven services.
  - Maintaining partnerships with County agencies, law enforcement and community-based organizations in an effort to effectively serve the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) in the County’s established program, utilizing a multidisciplinary approach for case management, service planning and the provision of services.
  - Expanding AB12 resources to non-minor dependent Camp youth who are at-risk and in need of services and programs benefitting their health and well-being.

- Interventions funded under Title IV-E serve as evidence-based practice models that will enable Probation to carry out its goals to improve family reunification efforts and ultimately reduce out-of-home placements. Partnerships with stakeholders specializing in evidence-based practices, along with collaborative efforts to provide effective programs and services for Probation youth, will aid in achieving improved outcomes in the overall health and well-being of youth encountering various systems.

- Continue to provide leadership in public safety realignment efforts by maintaining public, private and
community partnerships for referrals to services contributing to reduction in recidivism:
° Connect clients to employment opportunities and community support.
° Communicate opportunities and access to community resources.
° Provide support services that maintain family connections.
° Train staff and organizations providing support services focusing on community and family cohesiveness.
° Increase client capacity for the Transition Day Reporting Center.

• Support public safety measurements such as adopting the use and practice of body-worn cameras.
• Participate in and support programs that teach parenting skills and promote family cohesiveness.

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The Public Defender’s Office supports:
• Protecting and expanding the rights to liberty, privacy, and due process.
• Protecting all members of the community from unreasonable search, seizure, arrest, detention, and surveillance.
• Preserving and expanding the right to a fair trial.
• Strengthening Evidence Code requirements concerning the competency and trustworthiness of evidence to be introduced at trial.
• Diversion programs and other programs designed to prevent people from coming into the criminal justice system.
• The decriminalization of non-violent drug possession offenses and a shift of resources from incarceration and criminalization to treatment and harm-reduction practices.
• Sentencing reform aimed at reducing jail and prison populations, eliminating disproportional sentences, and promoting more just outcomes for those convicted of crimes.
• Removing barriers to successful reintegration of people into communities after incarceration, such as unnecessary barriers to education, employment, housing, and health and social services.
• Increasing funding for criminal defense investigation, the retention of experts, and the litigation of complex and/or particularly sensitive cases.
• Programs designed for rehabilitation, the restoration of rights, and the expungement of criminal records.
• Increasing the availability of rehabilitation services both for in-custody defendants and those who have been released from custody.
• Initiatives to promote effective, ethical, and accountable police and law enforcement agencies. Specifically, instituting non-suggestive policies regarding identification procedures, such as double-blind photo line-ups.
• Increasing treatment program funding for drug and alcohol abuse.
• Increasing the funding for mental health treatment programs. Promoting ways to divert those with mental illness out of the criminal justice system.
• Reducing the number of people under supervision by the courts, state, and/or County by agencies including parole and probation.
• Providing effective health care services to all those incarcerated at either the state or county level.
• Providing social services to impoverished communities, particularly those aimed at preventing criminal behavior, including recidivism.
• Policies promoting the health and welfare of indigent clients.
• Principles of Restorative Justice and policies designed to implement those principles.
• Initiatives promoting racial justice at all levels of the criminal justice system.
HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Alameda County supports the following:

- **Decrease risk factors and increase resiliency factors for youth and families**: Legislation and funding that supports the resiliency building strategies outlined in the Blueprint, including expanding child and youth development programs that emphasize strong attachments and relationships and violence prevention skills, and provides an alternative to gang involvement. Legislation and programs focused on gang reduction should address the root causes and should not rely on suppression. Additionally, Alameda County supports actions that promote family well-being, including efforts that help families meet basic needs, as well as develop effective parenting and conflict resolution techniques that help prevent child abuse and domestic violence.

- **Foster thriving neighborhoods**: Legislation and funding that supports improving neighborhood conditions, including policies that decrease the density of alcohol outlets and advertising and improve the physical appearance and economic vibrancy of those neighborhoods. Such policies could include efforts to ensure government subsidized capital investments and infrastructure projects that benefit high-crime neighborhoods. Additionally, Alameda County should pursue legislation that ensures public safety money can be used flexibly and can support building community cohesiveness for collective problem solving.

- **Improve community-law enforcement relationships**: Legislation and funding for strategies that strengthen community-law enforcement relationships such as community policing, and mandatory trainings like the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Training topics could include increased police awareness of unconscious bias and how to account for it in the line of duty, and appropriate police response to persons with mental illness or developmental disability, which will help to avoid additional violence and/or inappropriate admission into the criminal justice system. Alameda County supports the collection of data to determine the effectiveness of public safety methods and interventions for accountability to Alameda County residents.

- **Eliminate the disproportionate representation of people of color and people with disabilities in the criminal justice system and as victims of violence**: Administrative, legislative and budgetary actions with the explicit goal of eliminating the over-representation of people of color in the criminal justice system. Efforts include reviewing systems that contribute to issues of “disproportionate minority contact,” identifying and addressing issues related to sentencing bias, and acknowledging and mitigating unconscious bias within the criminal justice system overall.

- **Support alternatives to incarceration, sentencing reform, and decriminalization of substance use disorders and other criminal justice reforms as a way to reduce recidivism and shrink the prison population**: Evidence-based, community-based programs that address the root causes of incarceration and re-incarceration and do not support increasing prison or jail capacity for both youth and adults. For instance, Alameda County supports alternative sentencing laws for non-violent and non-sex-related crimes, such as treatment and therapy in the case of addiction, while protecting public safety. Alameda County supports drug sentencing reform as current state laws unnecessarily contribute to the growth of the jail and prison populations and contribute to the disproportionate incarceration of people of color. Alameda County supports statewide actions that increase the use of creative proactive dispute resolution structures and support at the neighborhood and school level, including restorative justice programs.

- **Remove barriers to successful reintegration of people into communities after incarceration, such as barriers to education, employment, housing, and health and social services**: Encourage the State Attorney General and the State legislature to direct appropriate agencies and licensing bodies to review the impact of existing policies on previously incarcerated people and to reform policies that prevent successful reentry and do not serve to protect public safety, with a focus on agencies and programs related to education, employment, housing, and public assistance. Furthermore, Alameda County supports legislation that provides incentives for hiring formerly incarcerated persons and efforts that provide amnesty to the more than 4 million people in California who have a suspended license, mostly for unpaid fines. Living without a license is a significant barrier to employment and transportation.
• **Expand health and social services for the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated population:** Legislation that funds expanded rehabilitation programs and mandates and funds comprehensive reentry planning in jails and prisons to support successful reentry. Alameda County also supports the expansion of funding for physical and mental health services, substance use treatment, housing, education, job training and employment services, including coordination of care both during incarceration and post release. Alameda County supports legislation that ensures that jail and prison conditions do not contribute to worsening mental health, including the elimination of solitary confinement as a punishment for both youth and adults and making maintaining family connections during incarceration a priority.

• **Reduce the availability and usage of firearms:** Continued statewide efforts to strengthen gun laws. Between 2010 and 2012, the third greatest number of unintentional injuries was due to firearms. The County supports the expansion of gun buy-back programs, and encourage California to play a very active role in Federal gun reforms, as California residents are at risk as long as high-power weapons with large magazines are sold in other states.

• **Increase funding for preventing and responding to domestic violence:** Efforts to secure and expand domestic violence prevention dollars.

## YOUTH AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

The following priorities are submitted by the Alameda County Interagency Children's Policy Council:

• Support the maintenance of all Juvenile Justice funding streams which have greatly contributed to the reduction of juvenile delinquency, incarceration and recidivism, including indigent juvenile defense and other advocacy services.

• Support increased system reform and coordination with regard to "cross-over" youth and families involved or at risk of being involved in both the juvenile justice and foster care systems.

• Advocate for community-based alternatives to detention and incarceration and services for youth involved in the criminal justice system to reduce recidivism.

• Support programs that reduce truancy and positively support school attendance as there is a high correlation between truancy, dropping out of school and juvenile crime.

## PLANNING LAND USE AND HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### LAND USE PLANNING

To create healthy and vibrant communities, the County supports policies and legislation that would:

**Include Health and Equity in General Plans and Land Use Plans.** Require a health element, health language, health analysis, or health standards in all General Plans, as well as in guidelines from the State Office of Planning and Research. The County also supports collaborative planning processes that give communities more power to influence land use plans and policies.

**Limit Access to Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Unhealthy Goods.** Fully fund and empower State agencies to enforce laws and regulations against alcohol and tobacco license holders in order to eliminate illegal activities in these communities and reduce the overconcentration of these outlets. Certain neighborhoods and communities in the County are overburdened with a concentration of alcohol and tobacco outlets that are often in low-income communities of color.

**Promote Healthy, Livable, and Resilient Communities.** Prevent, reduce, and mitigate toxic emissions and chemical exposure, as well as other environmental impacts that harm the public and workers health and quality of life, particularly in low-income communities of color. The County supports policies that create opportunities for more healthy food access, develop sustainable built environments that reduce urban heat island effects, reduce
greenhouse gas emissions, and other climate impact on health and prepare communities to adapt to climate change, specifically in low-income communities of color. In addition the County supports policies that prevent displacement of current residents when improving communities.

**Support Mineral Resource Management.** To further the County’s efforts to reduce greenhouse gases, extraction of quarried materials in “Regionally Significant Construction Aggregate Resource Areas” should be encouraged. Aggregate from these resource areas is used for the construction industry, much of it occurring in the County, mostly in the urban centers and highly developed areas. To reduce emissions and discourage long hauls of aggregate material, quarries in Regionally Significant Construction Aggregate Resource Areas should continue to be recognized as a regional asset, and every effort should be made to promote compatibility between quarries and adjacent land uses.

**Limit or Prohibit Hydraulic Fracturing.** Limit or prohibit hydraulic fracturing (fracking) at the state level. Locally, the County is moving to limit oil and gas extraction, including a potential ban on fracking.

**HOMELESSNESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The County’s goal is to ensure adequate, affordable, safe, and high-quality housing for all of its residents. Without long-term resources dedicated to developing and maintaining affordable housing, this goal will be unreachable. The elimination of Redevelopment Agencies in 2012 significantly reduced funds available for the development of affordable housing, which have not yet been replaced. Creating a permanent source of funding for affordable housing is a top priority in maintaining the housing opportunities and infrastructure needed in the Unincorporated County, the County as a whole, and statewide.

To this end, the County supports:

**Increased funding for affordable housing for extremely low and low income households.** Affordable housing improves positive community impacts such as housing stability, employment, mental and physical health, and school attendance and reduces active substance use, criminal justice recidivism, and other negative community impacts. Housing is considered affordable when monthly housing costs, including utilities, are no more than 30% of total household income. Homelessness is inhumane and also increases costs to emergency and safety net systems. The County supports policies which increase the supply of affordable housing, particularly for low and extremely low-income residents, including policies such as mixed income housing, increased funding for affordable housing development and permanent rental assistance, promoting the development of new funding sources to replace those lost to federal budget reductions and the elimination of Redevelopment Agencies, and reductions in available state funding.

**Safe and Healthy Housing.** “Green”, healthy, safe and high-quality housing, particularly for low-income people. Housing quality has a significant impact on people’s health and well-being. Issues such as the existence of lead, water leaks, poor ventilation, mold, dirty carpets, pest infestations, and location near toxic sources can result in numerous health problems such as developmental delays in children, skin disease, headaches, asthma and other respiratory conditions. Additionally, we support efforts to rehabilitate existing housing, without placing the financial burden on low-income tenants and homeowners, and develop new housing, located at a safe distance from polluting sources, such as freeways, ports and businesses with toxic emissions, particularly for low-income communities of color and vulnerable populations, and when not possible, ensuring appropriate indoor and outdoor mitigations are put in place.

**Increased and Coordinated Funding to Prevent and End Homelessness.** Higher funding levels and increased coordination between funding for services and housing is needed to create and sustain supportive housing for the highest need and individuals and families who are disabled and homeless. Affordable and supportive housing is critical to preventing and ending homelessness and cost the same or less than shelter, incarceration, hospitalization and other crisis response interventions.
Funding and policies to protect homeowners from foreclosure and protect the rights of tenants living in foreclosed properties. Communities and neighborhoods in the County are still suffering the effects of high foreclosure rates and resident displacement. The County supports legislative efforts to prevent foreclosures and ameliorate their impacts.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To create more livable and economically vibrant communities for everyone, the County supports the following policies:

Access to Open Space. An increase in funding for and access to safe and quality parks, trails, green and open space, urban agriculture/community gardens, and recreation centers. Policies should ensure that these opportunities are made available in all communities. A person’s neighborhood shapes their opportunities to play, exercise, enjoy nature, and be healthy.

Accessible Communities. Promote the use of universal design to ensure accessibility of spaces for everyone of all abilities. Communities that are designed to be accessible to seniors, children, and people with disabilities will be accessible for everyone. This includes street and sidewalk design, as well as wheelchair accessible public spaces such as parks and community centers, lighting, and other safety issues.

Prioritize Reinvestment in Low-income Communities. Increased funding and the creation of funding tools, such as tax increment financing and developer incentives that local jurisdictions can use to increase affordable housing, and affordable and reliable transit and infrastructure in their communities. The elimination of redevelopment revenues greatly reduced sources of funding to invest in low-income and blighted communities. This funding should prioritize the needs and prevent displacement of existing residents.

Support for Regional Planning Efforts. Additional resources to promote the greenhouse gas reduction goals of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), including policies and programs that promote transit, infill development, housing near transit and the conservation of irrigated agricultural land. Over the past several years local jurisdictions throughout the State have been developing a regional SCS through their local council of governments. In the County the council is the Association of Bay Area Governments, and the SCS was adopted in the summer of 2013. Currently in its second round of community process, the SCS goals of compact, infill development should be supported at the state level with additional funding for housing, transit and public infrastructure.

Incentives for smart growth development. Additional resources to promote smart growth as a corollary to regional and local planning efforts. The loss of Redevelopment funding has made it more difficult to attract development to Priority Development Areas (PDAs) – the community building blocks that make up the SCS. The County supports the creation of resources to create a PDA “bank” at the regional level and other resources to attract development, especially to areas that suffer from economic neglect.

SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES

Support policies, funding and incentives that promote efficiencies in the built environment and spur the green economy throughout Alameda County, particularly those benefitting low-income communities and vulnerable populations, including green building design, energy and water conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, home and commercial energy efficiency retrofits, renewable power generation, and adaptation and resilience.

• Support policies that promote the green economy. Support innovative economic development policies and approaches that result in the expansion of green jobs and provide livable wages, while reducing climate change impacts in Alameda County.
• Support policies that promote sustainable agriculture, water conservation, prohibition of pesticide use, worker health, and local job generation.
• Support funding, encourage legislation, and California Public Utilities Commission and CEC initiatives that improve the efficiency of energy and water use, particularly at public facilities by providing stable funding sources, reduced transaction costs, and expanded use of flexible, efficient, public contracting methodologies.
• Support funding and encourage legislation that increases the generation of renewable energy and energy storage at public facilities and other government-owned infrastructure, through regional collaborative contracting mechanisms. Support efforts to enable use of state revenues for local government energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy and emerging green technology projects. Support increased funding and legislative authority for local government participation and leadership of Community Choice Aggregation and Regional Energy Networks, such as BayREN.
• Support policies that create sustainable communities with transit-oriented development, increase clean commute opportunities, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, reduce urban heat island effects, and other climate impacts on health and the environment, while preventing displacement of low-income communities and vulnerable populations.
• Support policies and increased funding for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience programs.
• Support policies that promote sustainable transportation systems. Support policies and funding for programs that address the disproportionate environmental and health impact of vehicular traffic through and within low-income communities, including commodities being transported such as coal and crude oil.
• Support State and regional transportation policies and funding allocated to initiatives that reduce vehicle trips, and increase the availability, reliability, accessibility and affordability of public transit options, walking and biking for all users.
• Support the development of programs and support policies that increase pedestrian and cycling mobility, reduce vehicle trips, and programs that promote traffic calming and improved safety.
• Support the development and expansion of electric vehicle (EV) deployment, EV charging infrastructure, onsite renewable power generation and grid-to-vehicle battery storage.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

With increasing fuel efficiency and the introduction of hybrid and electric vehicles, revenues from the excise tax on gas (Alameda County’s primary funding source for transportation infrastructure maintenance and project delivery), are expected to continue to decline. The current economic environment is also contributing to declines in various revenue sources, making it difficult to fund critical infrastructure projects. While transportation funding continues to decline, the demand for infrastructure construction, maintenance, and operations continues to increase. Alameda County continues to seek and support increased infrastructure funding to operate, maintain, rehabilitate, and improve transportation infrastructure including local streets and roads, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The County recommends the following:
• Support legislation that makes a significant new investment in the operations, maintenance, rehabilitation, and improvement of transportation infrastructure including local streets and roads, bridges, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
• Support legislation that increases funding for transportation from a broad range of options, including fuel taxes, license fees, vehicle registration fees, and/or a fee based on vehicles miles travelled per registered vehicle;
• Support legislative efforts to preserve and protect State funding for local infrastructure improvements including the Highway User Tax Account, State Transportation Improvement Program, State Highway Operation...
and Protection Program, Traffic Congestion Relief Program, and the Transit Assistance Program;
• Support efforts to return the revenues attributable to off highway vehicle fuel sales as well as truck weight fee revenues back to counties for transportation purposes rather than diverted to backfill general fund debt fee service payments for general obligation bonds;
• Support efforts to ensure repayment of all transportation loans and transfers and ensure that any funds distributed to counties are allocated based on the Proposition 42 formula;
• Oppose any effort by the State to borrow, defer, or redirect existing revenues and/or create any additional unfunded mandates;
• Oppose any regulations or efforts that exceed statutory authority regarding implementation of Transportation Development Act law which may infringe upon statutory authority of local agencies;
• Support legislation that rewards Self-Help Counties and States who provide significant transportation funding for transportation systems;
• Support bond initiatives designed to provide necessary funding for backlogged infrastructure capital improvement projects.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Throughout California, transportation agencies are taking innovative actions to combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and toxic air pollution from transportation. Some of the sustainable goals include improving the durability of construction materials, improving mobility with new traffic control devices, and supporting the transition towards zero-emission vehicles. Additional efforts are being made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and toxic air pollution by reducing traffic congestion, expanding active transportation (multi-modal trails, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure), embracing new technology in construction materials, and efficient roadway lighting. The County recommends the following:
• Support climate change legislation that provides funding for innovative infrastructure, operations and programs to relieve congestion, improve air quality, reduce emissions, and support economic development;
• Support new technologies and innovation that helps fight climate change and provide resilient, sustainable transportation systems;
• Support legislation, policies and research that help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts;
• Support legislation, funding and incentives for the use of renewable resources in transportation projects; and,
• Support legislation, funding and policies that support collaboration among local and regional partners to deliver sustainable transportation infrastructure resilience in the face of climate change.

STREAMLINE TRANSPORTATION REGULATORY AND PROJECT DELIVERY PROCESS

The County takes its responsibility to protect the environment seriously. Likewise, the County recognizes its need to balance environmental protection and the need to maintain the transportation infrastructure through design, construction, and delivery of new transportation projects. Unfortunately, regulatory inefficiencies continue to hamper the effective and timely delivery of transportation projects. To this end, the County continues to seek legislative remedies in streamlining regulatory burdens while advocating for any and all funding opportunities at all levels of government. The County recommends the following:
• Support legislation that streamlines the project delivery processes for the delivery, enhancement, or augmentation of transportation infrastructure projects and programs, including requiring specific time frames for state and federal reviews and approvals, to expedite project delivery while ensuring appropriate environmental protection and mitigation;
• Support legislation that categorically exempts road safety projects from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State and federal permitting requirements (404 permits, 1601 permits);
• Support mandating State and Federal permitting agencies to meet the prescribed schedule and deadlines
specified in the environmental review process, reduce overhead, and eliminate waste and redundant documentation; and,

- Support legislation that exempts the maintenance of existing transportation facilities and infrastructure from permit requirements under the Endangered Species Act.

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING**

Existing pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bike lanes and trails, can be used for active transportation, recreation, and fitness. A well-designed and well-maintained active transportation infrastructure benefits its users as well as the rest of the community. Some of these benefits are economic, such as increased revenues and jobs for local businesses, and some are non-economic benefits such as reduced congestion, better air quality, safer travel routes, and improved health outcomes. The unincorporated areas of the County have over $400 million in needed sidewalk improvements to address community and pedestrian safety, especially near schools. Funding for the design and construction of the much-needed active transportation sidewalks in unincorporated areas of the County is critical.

The County recommends the following:

- Support legislation, policies and funding that enhance safe, efficient, clear bicycle/pedestrian connections and infrastructure;

- Support legislation that promotes increased funding for sidewalk infrastructure, bicycle facilities, and other infrastructure improvements which enable all pedestrians and bicyclists to commute safely and efficiently.

**GOODS MOVEMENT**

Alameda County is a gateway to the world for goods movement. Its airport, Oakland International, is one of three in the region. The Port of Oakland, the nation’s 5th busiest container port, is one of three Pacific Coast gateways with maritime, rail and aviation freight activities. The Port of Oakland is a key economic asset for Alameda County, the greater San Francisco Bay Region and neighboring regions. It supports more than 73,000 jobs in the region and its activities are connected to 827,000 jobs across the United States. As an intermodal operation, port activities impact regional and inter-regional streets, rural roads and highway, rail corridors and waterways.

Planning and implementation is underway for future expansion of the Port of Oakland to support its activities and for improvements to the transportation network system. The Alameda County Transportation Commission is developing the first Countywide Goods Movement Plan. The Plan outlines a long-range strategy for how to move goods efficiently, reliably and sustainably within, to, from and through Alameda County by roads, rail, air and water.

Because a substantial amount of goods movement occurs on local streets and roads throughout Alameda County, the plan also addresses impact to transportation infrastructure. Challenges faced on the local streets and roads include lack of truck route connectivity across city boundaries, providing safe access by all local streets and road users (autos, pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit) and cut-through traffic on rural roads to avoid congestion on major corridors. Additionally, truck traffic on local streets and rural roads designed to accommodate vehicles is resulting in pavement damage and impacting the livability and quality of life for the residents living adjacent to these goods movement corridors.

The County recommends the following:

- Support policies that preserve and strengthen an integrated and connected multimodal goods movement system that supports freight mobility and access and is coordinated with passenger transportation systems and local land use decisions.

- Support legislation, policies and funding to study, plan, fund and implement improvements for a safe, efficient, resilient and well-maintained goods movement facilities and corridors;
• Support legislation, policies and funding to study, plan and design safety improvements along local streets and rural roads to accommodate the increasing goods movement traffic, including driveway consolidation for truck access to wineries, left-turn pockets and truck deceleration lanes;

• Support legislation, policies and funding for programs that reduce and mitigate the impact from goods movement operations to create a healthy and clean environment and support improved quality of life for people most impacted by goods movement; and,

• Ensure that Bay Area transportation systems are included in and prioritized in state and federal planning and funding processes.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

With the passage of AB 32 and SB 375 that require the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) and the integration of transportation, land use and housing planning, California is at the forefront of built environment policies. The implementation of these two bills at the regional and local level can have an impact on planning decisions in local communities to reduce GHG and improve health. Transportation funding should support all modes and all users, and not highway expansion, to ensure the long-term effectiveness in reducing GHG and improving overall health.

In addition to reducing the number of vehicle miles driven, public transit also encourages more active transportation like walking and biking as people get to and from their bus or train, which helps to make an impact on the obesity epidemic. Access to affordable and reliable public transit is particularly vital to health for low-income communities, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities to get to jobs, school, and medical appointments and to visit family members and other support systems. The opportunity for social interaction and access to jobs increases and the reliance on air polluting vehicles decreases when jobs and services are placed close to homes with accessible and affordable public transit options.

The County supports the following policies to increase access to public transit:

• **Prioritize Increased Funding for Public Transit.** Dedicate a higher proportion of existing transportation funding streams to increase the availability, accessibility, reliability, and affordability of public transit options, particularly local buses, as well as connectivity to regional rail systems and walking and biking opportunities.

• **Prioritize Funding for Low-Income and Transit Dependent Populations.** Direct public transit funds to uses which benefit low-income populations and transit dependent populations, including maintaining and improving local transit service levels, maintaining and improving affordability through free and discounted fare programs, and the coordination of alternative transportation options as part of a mobility management strategy. Low-income people, seniors, youth, and people with disabilities are much more likely to not own a car and be completely public transit-dependent.

• **Prioritize Transit-Oriented Development Over Urban Sprawl.** Increase housing density in urban areas, rather than suburban and rural areas, increasing housing and transit affordability for low-income communities with anti-displacement protections, and locating housing and jobs near rail and bus lines. Concentrating the growth of housing, jobs, and services in public transit hubs makes it easier and more natural to choose public transit over driving and provides a reliable customer base for public transit systems. In addition, the County supports the inclusion of anti-displacement provisions and protections in transit-oriented development projects, in order to support the ability of existing residents to stay and benefit from improvements in their neighborhoods.

• **Prioritize Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds for Vulnerable Communities.** Dedicate state level greenhouse gas reduction funds to projects that benefit health and wellbeing in communities facing environmental hazards, health burdens, and high levels of neighborhood poverty, in addition to other indicators of vulnerability. In addition, the County supports prioritizing projects which have greater benefits than burdens for vulnerable communities and which minimize unintended consequences, including displacement.
SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL AND INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS

Although having 20% percent of the population, Alameda County experiences 40% of the traffic congestion within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area region. Intersected by numerous inter-regional rail and highway corridors which serve as gateways into the region, Alameda County has a robust transportation infrastructure including local streets and roads, freight corridors, express lane implementation and transit systems. Through regional coordination and funding partnerships at all levels of government, a significant investment to improve transportation infrastructure occurred county-wide in recent years. Alameda County supports and encourages continued cross-jurisdictional partnerships to deliver transportation projects and programs to its constituents. Since 1986, Alameda County and its 14 cities have been recipients of a county-wide, voter-approved sales tax measure dedicated to transportation investments throughout Alameda County.

The County recommends the following:

- Support legislation that encourages and facilitates the establishment of public-private partnerships and low-cost financing strategies;
- Support efforts that encourage and promote regional cooperation and coordination to develop, promote and fund solutions to transportation infrastructure improvement and support governmental efficiencies and cost savings in transportation. This is essential to complete planning and development of important regional transportation projects that benefit the state and local road system including Crow Canyon Road, Vasco Road, Tesla Road and Patterson Pass Road in unincorporated Alameda County;
- Support policy development to influence transportation planning, policy and funding at the County, regional, state and federal levels;
- Support legislation that promotes efficiency and cost-savings in transportation infrastructure;
- Support Express/HOT Lane expansion in Alameda County and the Bay Area.

EDUCATION

To promote equity and ensure a bright future for all children, the County supports State-level education policies that achieve the following across the life course:

- **Increase funding in State Budget for primary and secondary education, and prioritize resources for low-income students of color.** Create increased and more equitable funding for education to increase reading proficiency, particularly for third-grade students of color, and increase transparency and promote family engagement, while ensuring fair taxation for residents and businesses. Elementary school investment should include increased funding for arts, music, physical education, college mentoring, parent engagement, academic tutoring, and after-school enrichment programs. Secondary school investment should focus on creating and expanding programs and partnerships between higher education and the public and private employment sectors to increase internships, college and career preparedness with special emphasis on policies that support adopting and funding Linked Learning. As the Local Control Funding Formula is implemented, ensure that the supplemental funds raised for low-income students, English language learners, and foster youth are spent on programs and services that address their needs and improve educational outcomes.

- **Increase funding to ensure all high school students graduate and that graduates are college and career ready.** Prepare high school students for college and career while providing wraparound support, reduce disproportionate graduation and drop-out rates and expand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in low-income communities and communities of color. State and federal efforts to increase access to math, science, and technology education, starting in primary education environments, are increasingly critical to prepare future job seekers for competition in the job market and are important to improve education and health outcomes, particularly for communities of color who are underrepresented in these fields. The County supports creating more opportunities for sustainable funding streams for Linked Learning, career pathways and career technical training, such as the California Career Pathway Trust Fund,
particularly for low-income students of color, foster youth, and boys of color.

- **Increase funding, access and affordability of post-secondary education and provide debt management assistance.** Policies and funding to strengthen the community college system and remove barriers to educational opportunities, including policies that ensure affordable tuition and reduce the burden of student debt. The demand for higher education in California exceeds the capacity of State and community college systems, which are particularly critical for low-income communities and students of color, as they are a gateway to higher education and economic opportunity. Student aid and family incomes have not risen at the same rates as tuition, and as a result the dream of education is becoming more elusive.

- **Eliminate inequities in funding and access to quality teachers, particularly for teachers of early childhood, special education, and Dual Language Learners.** Increase investments in recruitment, retention and support of teachers through competitive salaries, high-quality mentoring, and ongoing professional development, especially among teachers of special education, those in low-income schools, and teachers of English Language Learners and special education. Increase professional development of administrators and teachers including training on restorative justice, diversity and inclusion, and mental health. Protect, stabilize and increase funding for Early Care and Education (ECE) and ECE professional development, with a possible focus to dedicated paid days of training for staff at Title V contracted centers. Students who are learning English face unique challenges to school success, as do special education students, and teachers for these populations are currently not required to have basic teaching credentials.

- **Eliminate inequities in access to quality early childhood education.** Increase funding for early childhood education. Increase state and federal efforts to subsidize early childhood programs and increase and update the link between reimbursement rates for State contracted programs and those funded with vouchers and continue to expand efforts to fund a Quality Rating and Improvement System for all Early Childhood Education programs. Access to quality early childhood education, Pre-K, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten are shown to be vital building blocks for students ages birth to eight years and important to educational attainment and achievement and health outcomes for all children, particularly for boys of color.

- **Increase funding to promote full service community schools and ensure all students are healthy and ready to learn.** Adoption of full service community schools and promotion of partnerships between schools, community-based organizations, businesses, and other entities. Support increased funding for full service community schools through the adoption of a comprehensive education revenue and reform package that establishes an equitable and adequate finance system, ensures transparency, continues to enable greater local decision-making flexibility, and strengthens human capital and accountability. Support efforts that will increase access to violence prevention programs and services, including programs that promote healthy relationships. Full-service community schools reach beyond the traditional boundaries of public education and mobilize all available community resources to reduce the negative impact of poverty on student achievement, address the needs of students and truly educate the whole child.

- **Provide funding for programs and services that reduce chronic student absenteeism and truancy and ensure students attend school ready to learn, particularly in schools with low academic performance, low-income students of color, particularly for African American and Latino males.** Address absenteeism by providing family and community support services, such as coordinated medical care, behavioral and mental health services, youth development programs, and parent, family, and community engagement programs. Efforts to reduce absenteeism should include funded mandates for schools to track attendance data to create an absenteeism and truancy early warning system that identifies frequently absent children and connects them and their families with comprehensive, wraparound interventions. Increase funding for programs that aim to reduce disparities for low-income students and students of color, particularly boys of color, in early literacy skills, graduation rates, and dropout rates, such as male involvement programs and mentoring.

- **Ensure students with disabilities (including learning, emotional and physical) have equal access to educational opportunities.** Improve the identification rate of students with disabilities so that they can have equal access to education and to reinstate teaching credential requirements for special education teachers. In California, students with disabilities ranked 48th among all states in their math and reading assessments (2011). Furthermore, California has one of the lowest identification rates of students with disabilities in the nation,
according to a 2012 report from the American Institutes for Research.

- **Eliminate the disproportionate impact of suspension and expulsion rates on students of color and students with disabilities.** Eliminate practices that contribute to disproportionately high suspension and expulsion rates, including the use of punitive and zero tolerance policies among boys and young men of color, students with disabilities, and preschool suspensions. The County further supports legislation that calls for training in alternatives to expulsion and in-school and out-of-school suspension, and for reforms in suspension policies for defiance, particularly for African American males and females, and Latino and Pacific Islander males. The County also supports policies that increase professional development of administrators and teachers including training on restorative justice, diversity and inclusion and mental health.

- **Promote health and wellness among students and healthy school environments.** Increase access to safe and appropriate health, dental and mental health services in schools, including school-based health centers, particularly for students of color and students in families with mixed immigration status. The County supports policies that reduce chronic diseases (such as asthma and diabetes), communicable disease (such as sexually transmitted infections (STI's), and promote programs aimed at decreasing teen pregnancy and STI's, particularly among youth of color who experience disproportionate rates of STI's, and policies that reduce childhood obesity and other physical activity and diet-related diseases, such as comprehensive wellness policies. The County supports policies that create healthy school environments both on-campus and the surrounding neighborhoods, including policies that improve access to fresh and nutritious food in and around schools, increase access to clean drinking water in schools, and prevent unnecessary exposure to environmental toxins.

## IMMIGRATION

Alameda County supports state-level policies that achieve the following:

- **Increase access to language appropriate health and behavioral health care among unaccompanied immigrant youth:** Provide a “No Wrong Door” fund for school and community-based early screening providers. A fund currently exists to allow behavioral health providers to bill for mental health services provided to Unaccompanied Immigrant Youth (UIY) who are not covered under Medi-Cal regulations. The County amended a contract with La Familia Counseling Services to launch the UIY Care Team comprised of two Clinicians, a Youth Promotor, and Parent Partner to serve UIY in areas that have been identified as high need service areas and supports similar services.

- **Eliminate harmful local impact of federal immigration policy:** Separation between local law enforcement and a federal deportation system which lacks due process, in order to address the public safety, civil liberty, and local resource burden issues related to the federal Secure Communities and its reboot, Priority Enforcement Program, and other deportation programs.

- **Increase access to education, including higher education and adult education:** The County supports legislation that increases primary and secondary school resources for students with Limited English Proficiency, as well as English as a Second Language for adults, and policies that increase access to post-secondary education through access to subsidized loans, such a statewide version of the DREAM Act.

- **Protect against racial profiling based on “perceived” immigration status, ethnicity, religion, or national origin:** Legislation that identifies and eliminates racial profiling in the public and private sectors, such as AB 524, signed into law on Oct. 5, 2013. Such actions could include ensuring that the new license for immigrants without authorization (created through AB 60, signed Oct. 4, 2013) is honored by local government, including libraries and banks.

- **Protect the health and welfare of children and children whose parents are being detained or deported by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Border Patrol:** Prioritize the needs and welfare of children by keeping families together, providing resources for unaccompanied minor immigrants, and creating appropriate and accountable training policies and protocols for interacting with and screening children that reflect a humanitarian approach.

- **Increase access to language appropriate health and behavioral health care for immigrants:** Increase
equitable access to quality, affordable health care coverage and services, including among undocumented immigrants not covered by ACA that promotes culturally and linguistically appropriate care.

- **Promote public safety by ensuring that reporting crimes, including domestic violence, to local authorities, does not lead to deportation proceedings:** Support funding for an evaluation of the new license program established through AB 60 to ensure that it is not used by local law enforcement or other governmental agencies for racial profiling.

- **Protect and promote the well-being of immigrant workers, including undocumented workers:** Legislation that protects immigrant workers, especially the vulnerable undocumented population, from wage theft, and extends important labor standards to jobs predominantly occupied by immigrants, such as migrant workers. State employment laws should protect all workers' labor and civil rights and restrict, rather than build on, a burdensome “employer sanctions framework.”

- **Ensure nondiscriminatory, equal treatment under the law, and protect the confidentiality and privacy of individuals:** Actions that affirmatively extend access to public services and benefits to all residents, regardless of immigration status, and prohibits social services providers from reporting suspected undocumented immigrants to authorities. Due process should be ensured for immigrants in federal and local detention facilities and those facing deportation.

### JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**CREATE A STRONG AND ROBUST JOB-DRIVEN SYSTEM**

**Invest in Systems and Policies that Support Workers and Employers**

- **Successfully implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).** The new law reauthorizes the nation’s employment, training, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation programs created under the Workforce Investment Act. WIOA improves connections to employment and training opportunities that lead to economic prosperity for workers and their families by strengthening existing workforce development and adult education programs. These positive policy developments create an opportunity for leaders and advocates to rethink, reshape, and expand workforce systems, policies, and practices to improve the education and employability of many, most especially low-income people and individuals with barriers to employment.

- **Invest in education that prepares individuals for the 21st century workforce.** Support the alignment of the education and workforce investment systems to meet the needs of the 21st century workforce and the promotion and development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. A special effort should be made to support education in the Science, Technology, Education, and Math (STEM) areas and pathways to careers in high-growth sectors.

- **Support fair and sustainable wages.** Support policies that aim to create livable wages, promote income mobility, and close the gender and racial wage gap.

- **Promote job creation and economic development.** Support policies and programs that create local jobs. Specifically, tax incentives, innovative funding mechanisms for more public/private partnerships, waivers, support for small businesses and entrepreneurs, and policies that promote/support locally-made products. Policies should increase resources for “proactive” business assistance programs that prevent closures and mitigate job loss.

- **Support local hire policies.** Alameda County supports expanding and promoting local hire policies, including precluding State agencies or departments from authorizing call-center contracts for public assistance or health benefit programs if they hire employees outside California to perform the work.

- **Support the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board (ACWIB) Platform.** Support and reaffirm the Legislative Platform of the ACWIB.

**Support Individuals with Barriers to Employment**

- **Support policies that create work and educational opportunities for long-term unemployed workers, low-income adults, and at-risk youth.** Including subsidized employment, supportive services for adults, summer
and year-round employment opportunities for youth, and competitive grants to help low-income adults and youth obtain education and training leading to jobs and credentials.

- **Expand workforce programs.** Programs should be targeted to hard-to-serve populations, such as CalWORKs clients, formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, youth transitioning out of foster care, limited English speakers, and residents of neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.

- **Support and expand workforce development efforts that promote career pathways and address racial, cultural, and economic disparities in employment and achievement.** Including programs and policies that help prepare and integrate communities of color, low-income immigrant and migrant workers, older workers, individuals with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and other individuals with barriers to employment into the workforce.

- **Support efforts to require State agencies to create "Economic Inclusion Plans."** Such plans would mandate agencies to create spending plans that generate jobs for low-income communities and communities of color.

- **Expand support of adult schools and programs that offer basic and remedial skill attainment for individuals who need on-ramps into sustainable-wage careers.** Including programs and initiatives that aim to help individuals who need basic skills training in order to be successful.

- **Increase employment opportunities for older adults.** Support policies such as subsidized employment or tax incentives that encourage employers to hire older adults. In addition, training and programs should be coordinated and targeted to help seniors who want or need to remain in the workforce so that they can be self-sufficient.

- **Remove the criminal background check requirement from initial job application requirements.** Economic opportunity is greatly diminished for formerly incarcerated individuals (who are disproportionately people of color) because of employment discrimination against people with criminal records. Recent “Ban the Box” legislation (AB 218) that passed in California requires State and local agencies to determine a job applicant’s minimum qualifications before obtaining and considering information regarding the applicant’s conviction history. Alameda County would like to see this policy expanded to include more employers throughout the State.

**Expand Opportunities for Youth**

- **Invest in intensive summer programs geared toward work readiness and STEM-related occupations.** Work-readiness programs geared toward STEM-related occupations, and/or other in-demand occupations, combines work with learning and provides valuable opportunities for youth to stay engaged in summer learning. Additionally, when youth are engaged in the summer, they may gain exposure to a variety of industries and career paths, while also learning skills that can help them succeed during the academic school.

- **Support and expand programs that serve young people.** Programs and services targeted at young people both in and out-of-school to assist them in their career and educational development. Specifically, programs should target young people who have left school, foster youth, homeless youth, juvenile justice involved youth, and other youth with barriers to employment.

- **Support Career Technical Education programs and initiatives.** Extensions to Career Technical Education programs and initiatives that strengthen the partnerships and linkages between regional workforce bodies and educational institutions to prepare students for college and employment, and to help students create career pathways.
INVEST IN PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES

Many social service programs and public policies focus on vital individual supports, such as cash aid or food assistance. However, we also know that people are impacted by the places in which they live and work. Too many children in our communities are growing up in neighborhoods with no grocery stores, closed parks, and struggling schools. Recognizing that people and place are inextricably linked, place-based initiatives take a comprehensive approach to community development and aim to revitalize multiple aspects of neighborhood to create lasting change for its residents.

- **Promote and expand place-based strategies that concentrate resources and investment in communities with the highest levels of need.** Support place-based economic investments that increase opportunity in low-income communities and communities of color. A place-based approach should include strategies to bring public benefits and services out into the community and to provide wealth building, wage subsidies, and job supports to residents. In addition, place-based strategies could facilitate the flow of capital into high need, disinvested communities by having government serve as an intermediary, leveraging government-owned land, employment, and procurement, as well as relationships government may have with financial institutions, businesses, and foundations.

IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES BY ADDRESSING SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

The County supports the following policies in order to improve the economic and health outcomes of all its residents:

- **Enact a higher state minimum wage:** Increasing the income of low-wage workers is fundamental to positive health outcomes because it provides access to important health-enabling resources, including proper nutrition, good medical care, stable health insurance, and favorable housing — all of which can be leveraged to avoid risks and protect health. Create a policy that closes loopholes and includes cost of living increases. State services that are dependent on fixed rates should be adequately funded to ensure continued service provision.

- **Protect worker health and safety:** Strengthen existing laws and enforcement for worker health and safety. Build on the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act of 2014 which mandated paid sick days.

- **Protect and expand workers rights:** Enact State legislation that protects and strengthens the worker’s right to organize and collectively bargain, such as labor peace agreements and card-check and neutrality agreements. In addition, many hourly employees have to live off too few hours on too little notice that prevents them from caring for their families. The County supports enacting policies requiring fair, stable work schedules.

- **Restore civil rights protections and reduce barriers for formerly incarcerated people in the workplace:** Formerly incarcerated individuals often struggle to access quality employment because of barriers maintained by State policy. The County supports policies that enable formerly incarcerated individuals to access quality jobs and economic stability.

- **Protect temporary and contingent workers:** The growing populations of temporary and contingent workers are often at higher risk of suffering from employer exploitation and rights violations. The county supports policies that protect these workers by holding companies responsible for paying excessively low wages and relying on taxpayer-subsidized benefits for their workers.

- **Increase access to entrepreneurship opportunities:** Policies that help expand access to business opportunities include: (1) Supporting microenterprise through policies that support community-based non-profit microenterprise and financial organizations that support entrepreneurs, expand access to private markets and sources of capital, and establish supportive tax environments; (2) Supporting co-operatives and creating incentives for employee ownership through State policies that promote sound business conversion to cooperative business models, including but not limited to Employee Stock Option Plans (ESOPs), through tax incentives and mandated assistance, as well as those policies that remove barriers to starting co-operative businesses; and (3) Supporting policies that expand access to capital among entrepreneurs of color and people...
with disabilities, such as working with the State to move beyond the Community Reinvestment Act and use its contracts with financial institutions to increase lending and extension of credit in low income communities and communities of color.

- **End discrimination in employment, education, and job training and enforce labor laws:** One major issue is the intentional misclassification of workers which relieves employers of having to make contributions to Social Security, unemployment insurance, workers’ compensation, health insurance, and even avoidance of minimum wage and overtime laws. The County supports California joining the Labor Department’s effort related to worker misclassification or initiating its own investigation and improved regulation. Policies to enforce labor laws and prevent wage theft include strengthening public agency prosecution of wage claims (both civil and criminal), denying business licenses to employers found to be in violation, and increasing the penalties for civil violations. Undocumented workers have the highest rates of wage and hour violations and must be included in prevention efforts.

- **Expand and reform Unemployment Insurance:** Outmoded eligibility rules mean that unemployment benefits are out of reach for many unemployed workers. In particular, state UI programs, which determine most of the rules that govern eligibility for benefits, have left low-wage workers, women and part-time workers struggling to qualify for the program. Other growing segments of the workforce also fall through the cracks, including temporary workers, older workers and immigrant workers.

- **Ensure equitable taxation:** Many tax preferences are expensive and regressive and as such are of little help to low- and moderate-income households trying to become more financially secure. Tax code benefits accrue to the wealthiest 5 percent of taxpayers and largely miss the asset-poor majority in this country. Meaningful incentives to save for residents of all income groups should be provided, and the tax system should benefit all residents equally. Successful tax credits that reward work, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) should be expanded to continue to help California residents get out of poverty.

- **Use government purchasing and contracting to promote living wage work:** Government spending can be used to shift more industries towards providing better wages and benefits through approaches like living wage standards and “best value” bid evaluation systems that recognize the benefits to both taxpayers and working families. When businesses invest in their workforces, state spending can incentivize more employers to provide family-supporting wages and benefits.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**LOCAL JURISDICTION AND TAX SYSTEM**

- Support the guarantee of dependable, predictable, and equitable revenue streams to support programs needed by County residents.
- Support opportunities for increasing State revenues and expansion of the County’s ability to generate local revenues.
- Support efforts to ensure local discretionary control over governance issues and the delivery of services.
- Support increased funding of the County’s infrastructure needs to maintain and expand capital investments vital to economic development.
- Support the extension of Design-Build and Public Private Partnership authority for local governments and expand the existing public contract code definition of “Project” to allow more flexible use of these project delivery methodologies.
- Support legislation that maintains or increases levels of State funding for mandated programs and services to meet the increased costs of delivering programs and services.
- Support legislation to require the State to provide ongoing, guaranteed funding to counties and other local governments for the cost of providing services that were shifted in the 2011 Realignment from the State to local government.
- Support Marketplace Equity and Consumer Protection. Weights and Measure programs are important to
businesses and consumers in Alameda County and throughout California. These programs ensure that there is a "level playing field" for business and industries. Likewise, these programs are critical in providing protection for consumers and a method for making value comparisons by safeguarding equity in the marketplace.

- Support equitable taxation: a tax system that benefits all residents equally and can serve to reduce poverty by expanding the State Earned Income Tax credit and reforming Proposition 13 by creating a Split Roll Property Tax that would require businesses to pay a higher share of property taxes.
- Oppose the imposition of State mandates for which funding is not fully provided.
- Oppose State budget actions that result in a negative impact to Alameda County.
- Oppose the shift of any further property taxes.
- Support measures that would enhance counties' efforts to administer the property tax system, and oppose those that increase counties' unfunded responsibilities for the system.
- Oppose the transfer of programs from the State to counties unless program control and flexibility are also shifted and adequate State funding is guaranteed.
- Support State and Federal funding for infrastructure investments that improve seismic safety of essential government facilities.

FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER RESOURCES

INCREASED FUNDING FOR FLOOD PROTECTION

Continued protection from flooding and protecting its natural resources in Alameda County requires legislative remedies including increased funding for flood protection, levee repair and wetland restoration projects, and developing adaptive strategies to climate change and sea level rise. To address new requirements by the State Agencies, funding is needed for both planning and construction of capital improvement projects.

The County recommends legislative support for the following:
- Changes to the State Water Resources Control Board’s proposed Wetland and Riparian Protection Policy to ensure consistency between federal and State definitions of wetlands and result in a reasonable requirement that will have the least impact on the development, operation, and maintenance of essential public works projects and facilities;
- Legislation that identifies additional funding for levee maintenance, including repair and reconstruction after a flood event;
- Changes that allow for the inclusion of local flood control projects in Alameda County to be funded from voter-approved bonds;
- State and federal funding to study, design and implement coastal flood protection solutions to protect County residents from the effects of sea level rise and extreme tides due to climate change;
- Facilitate and establish partnerships among local, State and federal agencies to promote protection from floods and climate change adaptation and resiliency.

STREAMLINE THE REGULATORY AND PROJECT DELIVERY PROCESS

Regulatory inefficiencies continue to hamper the effective and timely delivery of flood control projects. Delivery of flood control projects is bogged down by the multiple redundant and overlapping regulatory agency approval processes, long time frames, and required reports and mitigation that do not add significantly to improving the environment yet result in costly project delivery costs. To this end, Alameda County seeks legislative remedies to eliminate regulatory redundancies, streamline regulatory burdens and advocate for funding to support adequate staffing levels at the local, State, and federal regulatory agencies.

The County recommends support for legislation to do the following:
Allow and encourage State and federal regulatory agencies to offer service agreements to public entity applicants and permittees to fund additional personnel or contractors needed for expeditious permit processing;

- Improve the streamlining of State environmental review and regulatory approval processes to include specific time frames for State reviews and approvals of permits to expedite project delivery while ensuring appropriate environmental protection and mitigation;

- Support the approval of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reciprocity pilot program which would build on California's successful implementation of the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program and allow for even greater project streamlining to enhance efficiency in flood control projects;

- Eliminate redundancy between State agencies such as Fish and Wildlife Services, Water Quality Control Board, and the Bay Costal Development Commission;

- Provide expedited review for projects that are consistent with an adopted Sustainability Communities Strategy;

- Exempt the maintenance of existing flood control facilities and infrastructure from permit requirements under the Endangered Species Act;

- Facilitate and establish local, State and federal agency partnerships in habitat restoration/resource protection including developing adaptive strategies to climate change and sea level rise.
Federal Legislative Priorities
HUMAN SERVICES

IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES

Facilitate Access to Benefits
Support efforts to enroll individuals and families in the range of benefits for which they are eligible. Policies should:

- **Streamline and integrate public benefits enrollment.** Make it easier for individuals and families to apply, maintain, and recertify for benefits, including CalWORKs, CalFresh, General Assistance, and Medi-Cal.
- **Maintain continuity of benefits.** Help individuals and families maintain coverage and benefits. Specifically, support automatic renewals for families living on a fixed income or households that are highly unlikely to experience changes in income that could terminate eligibility. Whenever possible, align benefit renewal dates across different programs to make it easier for clients.
- **Support technological advancements that promote access to services and administrative efficiency.** Specifically, support policies that promote and utilize technology to streamline benefits enrollment, such as auto-enrolling clients and encouraging the use of self-service tools.
- **Expand and leverage data-sharing agreements.** Support policies and systems that make it easier for agencies to share data to better serve clients.

Focus on Effective Implementation and Staff Training
State and federal program rules are constantly changing. Many of these changes are positive developments for clients and staff. However, additional investment and supports are needed to ensure timelines for implementation are reasonable, allow systems to be updated, and staff to be properly trained. State and federal legislation should include policies that make it easier for staff to do their jobs effectively. Specifically, Alameda County supports:

- **Include training funding as part of new laws/changes.** Standardize all new laws or changes that impact the practice of human services programs to include training funding. Resources to train staff are vital to successful implementation of program changes.

Increase Access to Safe, Affordable Housing
California is home to 20 percent of the nation’s homeless population and has the highest rate of homeless families in the country. Homelessness has particularly damaging effects on children. Lack of access to safe, affordable housing is an issue across all human services programs.

- **Increase support for affordable housing and homelessness prevention.** Support a range of policies and programs that prevent and resolve homelessness and housing instability including programs that foster the expansion of evidence-based best practices such as housing first, rapid re-housing, long-term housing subsidies, and models that include wrap-around transitional housing and housing support services.

° For additional homelessness and housing priorities, please see the Planning, Land Use, and Housing and Community Development Chapter.

Better Serve Boys and Men

- **Promote fatherhood and father-friendly practices.** Better serving fathers and men as partners in their families and communities results in significant benefits in terms of child development/well-being, public health, community cohesion, and economic development/prosperity. Alameda County supports President Obama’s Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative along with policies to develop demonstration programs to test father-friendly program designs that solicit and facilitate father engagement.
- **Create and expand ladders of opportunity for boys and men of color.** President Obama launched the My Brother’s Keeper Initiative, which aims to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and to ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. Alameda County supports this Initiative and policies and partnerships that focus on addressing critical challenges, risk factors, and opportunities at key
life stages to improve long-term outcomes and create ladders of opportunity for all young people.

**Promote Economic Stability and Wealth Building**

In addition to a strong safety net that helps families get back on their feet quickly, Alameda County supports policies that promote economic stability while also focusing on wealth building. Asset building policies and programs include a range of opportunities including matched-saving accounts, homeownership assistance, financial education, access to affordable financial services, and credit building products and services. Broadening savings and asset ownership opportunities will help move families and individuals from just breaking even to actually getting ahead.

- **Remove asset limits for public benefits.** Asset limits create disincentives for low-income families to save money for emergencies. Policies should promote savings and ensure individuals and families do not have to spend down any cushion they have before qualifying for public assistance.

- **Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).** The country's most successful anti-poverty program, the EITC, encourages low-income people to work and is credited with lifting millions of people out of poverty across the nation. Alameda County supports expanding this vital credit and ensuring low-income working families are able to keep more of their hard-earned money.

- **Maintain and expand savings programs.** Policies should help low-income individuals and families accumulate assets through increased savings and investments. Alameda County supports a variety of savings accounts and incentive programs that are designed to help build assets and opportunities among low-income people (such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), Children's Savings Accounts, and retirement accounts).

- **Restrict payday lending and other predatory financial products and services.** Alameda County supports policies that protect consumers from predatory credit products, specifically by prohibiting, or capping rates on, payday loans and promoting low-cost, consumer friendly, alternatives.

- **Expand the presence of mainstream financial institutions in underserved communities.** Many neighborhoods lack access to mainstream financial institutions and instead rely on predatory lenders, such as check cashers, payday lenders, and pawn shops that drain millions of dollars from communities through high fees and usurious loans. Alameda County supports efforts to encourage safe, affordable financial products that protect income and assets.

- **Expand access to credit and capital.** Difficulty accessing financial services, affordable credit, and investment capital has long been a problem, especially in low-income and historically disinvested communities. Alameda County supports efforts to help low-income individuals and communities gain access to low-cost financial products and services, high-return savings products, and investment capital that meet the specific needs of economically underserved communities.

- **Protect assets and savings.** Alameda County supports policies that preserve assets and protect individuals and families from predatory practices. Specifically, protections for student loan borrowers and policies that promote access to education, lessen student debt burdens, and make loan repayment more manageable. Defaulting on a student loan can ruin a borrower's credit and impact future opportunities.

- **Promote retirement savings.** Less than half of California's private sector workers have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Alameda County supports State and federal policies that promote retirement savings and make it easier to save.

**RESTORE AND ENHANCE BASIC NEEDS PROGRAMS**

**Strengthen Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

Congress created the TANF block grant through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, as part of a federal effort to “end welfare as we know it.” The TANF block grant provides funding to states for assistance programs and a wide range of other benefits and services for low-income families.

- **Reauthorize TANF with a focus on alleviating poverty and preventing material hardship among children and families.** Maintain the overall work focus of the program, while recognizing that “work first” does not mean “work only.” Research indicates that the most successful welfare-to-work programs combine work with
training and supportive services. Specifically:

° **Maintain and expand subsidized employment.** Permanently authorize and appropriate funding for subsidized employment as enacted originally in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

° **Enhance employment and training services.** Create effective pathways to economic opportunity including access to mainstream education, training, and individualized services for those with barriers to employment.

° **Restore and enhance flexibility.** State and county flexibility is vital to tailor work, training and family stabilization activities to families’ individual needs. TANF reauthorization should measure State performance in a fair and comprehensive manner that recognizes multiple potential positive outcomes for families.

° **Eliminate asset limits and tests for TANF.** The current asset limits create a disincentive for families to save and are contrary to the goals of TANF. Eliminating asset tests reduces administrative costs and promotes savings and self-sufficiency.

° **Remove the lifetime ban for anyone convicted of a drug-related felony.** Restoring access to these benefits will not only improve outcomes for very vulnerable families, but also improve public safety by increasing the opportunity for employment and financial stability and reducing the risks of reoffending.

° **Restore benefits to immigrants.** 1996 TANF legislation imposed a five-year ban on federal means-tested benefits for legal immigrants. Alameda County supports restoring those benefits and ensuring documented immigrants have access to basic assistance, including health care and nutrition supports.

° **Increase funding for TANF.** The TANF block grant has been set at $16.5 billion each year since 1996; as a result, its real value has fallen by one-third due to inflation.

° **Eliminate the marriage penalty.** Currently, two-parent households have a higher hourly participation requirement and states are required to achieve a 90 percent work participation rate for these families. Alameda County supports eliminating these additional requirements to allow for more flexibility in serving two-parent families.

° **Maintain contingency funding for TANF.** In times of economic downturn, contingency funds are essential for states to serve all families in need.

### Improve Access to Food

Alameda County supports policies and programs that help children, individuals, and families access healthy, nutritious food. Specifically, streamlining and strengthening enrollment in CalFresh and ensuring this vital program reaches individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. CalFresh is California’s food stamp program, the State’s implementation of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides assistance for households to purchase nutritious food.

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The SNAP/CalFresh program provides monthly benefits to eligible low-income individuals and families to purchase food. Alameda County supports strengthening SNAP and ensuring this vital program reaches families struggling with food insecurity. Specifically:

- **Increase SNAP benefits and ensure access to critical nutrition support.** Oppose any cuts to SNAP and support benefit levels increases.

- **Identify opportunities to streamline and simplify.** Support efforts to streamline and simplify federal SNAP requirements to enhance enrollment and retention.

- **Increase the minimum allotment.** This is especially important for elderly and low-income households and should be increased.

- **Remove existing bans for certain individuals.** Support restoring eligibility to all documented immigrants, dropping the lifetime ban on benefits for individuals with drug or violent crime felonies, and removing the time limits on receipt of SNAP for jobless adults.

- **Increase outreach and nutrition education funding.** Provide adequate resources to states and community
partners for administration of SNAP outreach and nutrition education and the SNAP-Education program.

- **Promote increased access to nutritious and affordable food in neighborhoods.** Specifically, the efforts to develop additional supermarkets and outlets in “food deserts” and to equip all farmers’ markets with electronic benefits capability.

- **Maintain and provide additional flexibility.** Allow states to align SNAP eligibility and processes with State TANF programs (and Medicaid). Support program rules that allow State flexibility and streamlining, such as the expanded categorical eligibility rules that California has implemented.

- **Restore free electronic benefits (EBT) Point of Sale (POS) equipment for all retailers.** As a result of cuts made in the 2014 Farm Bill, retailers are no longer offered free EBT equipment, supplies, and related services to participate in SNAP/CalFresh. Alameda County supports restoring access to EBT equipment to ensure SNAP recipients can access their benefits at a variety of retailers.

**Child Nutrition Programs**

- **Expand access to summer meals.** When school is not in session, many low-income children lose access to free and reduced-price school breakfasts, lunches, and afterschool snacks they rely on during the regular school year. Support policies to coordinate and expand access to free meals during the summer months and connect kids to healthy nutrition assistance.

- **Reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act.** This legislation oversees critical child nutrition programs, including school meals, summer meals, afterschool meal programs, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Support policies that make it easier for children and families to access nutrition programs and ensure adequate funding.

**Food Banks**

- **Support food banks.** Support efforts to help local food banks secure nutritious food. Specifically, expanding The Emergency Food Assistance Program bonus buys.

**Better Assist Refugees and Asylees**

- **Additional supports and services for refugees and asylees.** Support additional State and federal funding to expand services available to refugees and asylees. Specifically, increasing Refugee Cash Assistance payment levels, providing homelessness and housing supports, expanding employment and vocational training programs, and increasing other supportive services.

**ADVANCE FOSTER YOUTH WELL-BEING BY STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

The Alameda County Social Services Agency’s Department of Children and Family Services serves children and youth who have experienced, or are at-risk of experiencing, abuse, or neglect. For all children and youth, Alameda County is committed to improving outcomes in the following areas:

- **Safety** - By preventing and responding to maltreatment.
- **Permanency** - By helping children remain with their family and out of foster care whenever possible, by preserving family relationships and connections, and by establishing guardianships and adoptions when it is unsafe for children and youth to return home.
- **Well-Being** - By partnering with families as they improve their capacity for meeting their children’s physical, mental health, and educational needs.

**Enhance Child Welfare Systems and Programs**

- **Update Title IV-E eligibility requirements.** Specifically, update the eligibility requirements associated with the so-called 1996 “look-back” provision of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, so that more children are eligible for federal foster care assistance. Currently, children are only eligible for federal assistance if the family from which they are being removed would have been eligible for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) under the program rules in 1996. Alameda County supports policy changes that update the requirements (perhaps through using an income limit that is based on the federal poverty level, for example).
Reform child welfare financing to focus on prevention activities. Alameda County supports changes to federal funding to provide states with the flexibility to make front-end investments in family services in order to reduce stays in foster care, rather than only funding services for children after they are placed in out-of-home care.

Increase funding and supportive services for child welfare programs. Alameda County supports increases in child welfare funding to improve the well-being of children, including:

- Providing adequate funding for services and income supports needed by parents seeking to reunify with their children who are in foster care. This could include funding for child care and housing and funding and policies in support of family residential substance abuse programs that allow for an entire family, including both parents, to reside together, and single fathers to reside in the program with their children. Typically, residential programs do not allow the family to remain together, which causes additional trauma to children who must separate from one or both parents.

- Providing additional resources that could promote better outcomes for children. Examples include culturally relevant mental health services, educational supports, employment/linked learning opportunities, matched-savings accounts, developmental child care (including post-permanency), respite services for relative and foster caregivers, services and resources promoting father engagement, and housing subsidies.

Increase funding to support counties in monitoring and providing services to foster youth who are authorized by the court to receive psychotropic medications. Children served by the foster care system have experienced severe trauma; for some, medication is appropriate when thoughtfully prescribed as part of an overall treatment plan that includes non-pharmacological interventions as well. Alameda County supports additional funding for behavioral health services for youth and to support counties in providing oversight and monitoring of psychotropic medications prescribed to foster youth.

Expand child welfare funding and resources to populations with unique needs:

- Youth in foster care who are also parents. Parenting foster youth are in particular need of services that promote their educational attainment, parenting skills, and resources, and support their transition to independence.

- Undocumented children of undocumented parents who are under child welfare supervision. Additional resources are needed to ensure that these families receive the necessary services to prevent the child from entering into or remaining in foster care.

- Support for children of incarcerated parents. Alameda County supports additional funding and programs that promote the health, safety, and well-being of the children of incarcerated parents and the efforts of parents to reunify with their children.

- Parents and children with disabilities. Foster children with disabilities, their parents, and their caregivers need additional support to navigate systems and services that may meet their developmental, educational, and medical needs. Disabled parents also may need additional resources and supports to access needed services.

- Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (see section below located on page 89).

Allow a foster youth’s Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits to remain in suspense for the duration of their stay in foster care. Alameda County supports policy changes that ensure youth over 16½ years of age maintain their SSI eligibility throughout their involvement in foster care without the need for an annual temporary suspension of the Title IV-E or federal payment, regardless of whether they receive SSI benefits or have high federal payments.

Support Caregivers and Permanency for Foster Youth

- Increase funding for foster and adoptive parent recruitment, training, and retention. Encourage additional support, funding, and other resources designed to increase the number of qualified caregivers available to provide stable and loving foster and adoptive homes for children and youth. These changes will help to address what licensed foster parents and relative caregivers often cite as critical factors in deciding whether or not to
serve as a foster parent: inadequate reimbursement rates, high costs of child care, and the lack of supportive services. Examples of potential supports and resources include:

- Increased funding for subsidized child care and respite care, and funding for one-time expenses such as a bed for a foster child or youth when placed with a relative caregiver who lacks the funds needed to purchase the necessary items.
- Increased funding for additional specialized training and targeted support services for caregivers of foster youth age 13 and older with acute mental health needs and commercially sexually exploited children.
- A statewide public education campaign led by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to promote an interest in foster parenting.
- A refundable tax credit to foster parents who have provided foster care in their home for at least one calendar month during the taxable year.

- **Expand funding for post-placement services for children reunifying with a parent.** Policies should help maintain the child in their home and prevent reentry to foster care. For example, housing and child care assistance to help parents provide a safe and stable environment as well as supervision for their children while they are at work or school. There are limited housing and child care slots available through existing resources, and additional resources should be targeted specifically to these families.

- **Provide Kin-GAP benefits to children whose relative guardianship was established in Probate Court.** Although Probate Court guardianships with a non-relative can be eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Foster Care payments, relative guardianships established in Probate Court do not qualify for Kin-GAP, even though many of these children have needs similar to youth who have a guardianship established in Juvenile Court. Providing Kin-GAP benefits to these probate guardianship youth will improve their transition to adulthood and may reduce their need for social services as an adult.

- **Allow for continued benefits after age 18 for youth whose relative guardianship was established or adoption was finalized prior to the youth’s 16th birthday.** Support changes in federal law to extend Kin-GAP and Adoption Assistance Program benefits past age 18. Under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, only youth whose adoption or relative guardianship was established at age 16 or older continue to receive these payments after age 18. The current restriction on benefits after age 18 is a disincentive for permanency for these children.

### Improve Assistance and Services for Transition-Age Youth

- **Additional supports and programs for transition-age foster youth (ages 14 - 21).** In October 2010, California passed AB 12, also known as the California Fostering Connections to Success Act, in response to the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Public Law 110-351). AB 12 made significant changes in foster care by optionally extending foster care until age 21. Although some transition-age foster youth now have the benefit of extended foster care, these youth often remain in need of additional funding, policies, and programs that support their transition to independent adulthood. Specifically, Alameda County supports:
  - **Additional funding for safe and stable housing and supportive services such as substance abuse or mental health treatment.** There is a specific need for financial support for a continuum of care providing a range of services and programs for these youth.
  - **Flexibility with placement requirements for non-minor dependents (NMDs) in Extended Foster Care who are in need of in-patient substance abuse treatment.** If a NMD’s temporary stay in an in-patient facility could be considered a Supervised Independent Living Placement, for example, this would allow the otherwise eligible youth to remain in Extended Foster Care and receive related services that support their transition to independence, rather than forcing their exit from care.
  - **Increased financial support for programs that assist foster youth in the transition to financial stability.** Examples include post-emancipation assistance such as secondary education, job training, housing, and access to health care.

- **Expand Independent Living Program (ILP) eligibility to include older youth in Family Maintenance.** Youth
who are nearing adulthood (age 16-18) and receiving in-home child welfare services such as Family Maintenance are in need of services supporting their transition to independence as healthy and responsible adults. An expansion of eligibility requirements for ILP funds could allow for the provision of services to these youth.

- **Provide counties funding to fulfill credit report monitoring and assistance activities to foster youth.** Identity theft is a major concern for youth in foster care and can destroy their credit. For foster youth who "age out" of the system as young adults, the consequences of identity theft are particularly devastating and can make it difficult to rent an apartment or obtain educational loans. Alameda County supports additional funding for counties to assist their efforts in monitoring credit reports on behalf of foster youth and ensuring that youth receive assistance in interpreting their reports and clearing any inaccuracies, as required by State and federal law.

**Ensure the Safety and Well-being of Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)**

- **Additional funding and supports for CSEC.** The commercial and sexual exploitation of children is a national and statewide epidemic and additional support is needed to strengthen capacity of child welfare agencies to effectively meet the needs of this population. These children/youth have unique needs that require coordination and support from other systems, including mental health, public health, law enforcement, community providers, and probation. Responding to CSEC requires a multi-pronged response that includes prevention, intervention, and after care. Alameda County supports additional funding and resources, beyond what is currently provided to counties, to expand training, tailor services, and support collaborative work with other systems. More funding is needed to address the immediate needs of victims, including clothing and safe shelter, and to provide long-term services to assist CSEC victims in achieving positive outcomes of permanency and well-being.

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PLANNING COUNCIL**

The child care system is meant to fulfill the dual economic goals of supporting parental employment and laying the groundwork for children’s lifelong success. The child care field has struggled to maintain capacity given multiple years of funding cuts at the State and federal levels. It strongly supports President Obama’s ongoing efforts to improve early care and education funding, ensuring the availability of quality child care, increasing subsidies and expanding home visiting. The following are priorities:

**Stabilize and increase federal funding, and attain new resources for Early Care and Education (ECE):** The ECE Planning Council supports an array of federal funding streams that augment Alameda County ECE programs including Child and Adult Care Food Program, Early Head Start and Head Start, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

**Take positions on federal initiatives and budget appropriations that positively impact ECE quality, access and affordability.**

**Advocate for family centered, inclusive, developmentally and culturally appropriate practices for all children in care as well as those in transitional kindergarten.**

**Streamlining and efficiencies such as coordinated regulatory, contracting and reimbursement processes within the current federal and State programs:** The Administration for Children and Families has recently issued Child Care and Development Block Grant regulations that are laudable and create significant resource needs.

**Increase ECE reinvestment:** Adjusted for inflation federal ECE expenditures are much lower than the preceding decade.

**Increase ECE professional development and wage supports.**
SUPPORT ADULTS, SENIORS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

It is projected that the Alameda County senior population will increase by over 40 percent in the next ten years and approximately 50 percent of all seniors in Alameda County do not have adequate financial resources to address their daily needs. In addition, approximately one in five people with disabilities in Alameda County live below the federal poverty line. Local affordable housing resources are severely limited, which is adversely impacting the health, care, and quality of life of seniors and people with disabilities.

Enhance Systems and Programs

- **Increase funding available to develop and support affordable housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities.** Older adults and persons with disabilities often live on fixed incomes and appropriate housing options available are becoming scarcer while their incomes are not increasing at the same rate as housing prices. Specifically, Alameda County supports the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (H)UD Supportive Housing for the Elderly, or Section 202 program.

- **Support and expand programs for equitable access to advance care planning (ACP) and end-of-life services at any age.** Too often clinicians, patients, and families embark upon treatment options for a serious disease without important information and understanding of the illness and its likely course. Good ACP gives people a way to think about death and dying allowing them to confront dying directly instead of being a “vague, unmanageable concept” or leaving the end of life decisions up to others once the patient is unable to meaningfully participate in the process. Supporting programs that provide culturally relevant outreach and understanding of palliative care and hospice to our diverse populations will increase equitable access and utilization of end-of-life services.

- **Reform and improve Supplemental Security Income (SSI).** Alameda County supports restoring the original intent of the SSI program (protecting seniors and people with disabilities from the harms of living in poverty) by raising the asset limit, updating earned and unearned income disregard rules, and modernizing financial eligibility rules.

Coordinate the System of Care for Older Adults

Alameda County supports a coordinated service delivery system that protects, supports, and advocates for an aging population. Specifically, the integration and simplification of the complex system of senior services to ensure policies and programs are consumer-focused and that residents have access to and receive the services they need.

- **Support Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization.** OAA provides the federal mandate to fund Area Agencies on Aging. Alameda County would like to see an increased appropriation to the OAA Titles and additional local flexibility in Title III funding. Alameda County supports strengthening the Aging Network’s role and capacity in the coordination and provision of long-term services and supports, expanding local evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention activities, improving community preparedness for an aging population, and setting adequate authorized funding levels.

- **Support and expand programs and policies that promote Healthy Aging/Aging in Place.** Older adults often lack access to information and resources about social service and health issues, or are unaware of preventative measures they can take to remain healthier for longer. Alameda County supports policies that promote healthy aging, independence, and well-being of seniors who wish to age in place, or who wish to remain in their homes as they age.

- **Increase Funding for Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Programs.** The services that the AAA provides to residents age 60 and older are often underfunded or restricted. Alameda County supports increased federal funding and flexibility.

- **Reduce food insecurity for seniors.** According to the Alameda County Community Food Bank, residents over 50 years old now make up more than one-third of the clients. This need is only expected to increase as older adults are the fastest growing segment of the population in Alameda County; however, State and federal
funding for senior nutrition is limited and restrictive. Alameda County supports increased funding and greater funding flexibility for senior nutrition programs and services.

- **Support and funding for Elder Courts.** Many seniors find the legal system complicated and difficult to navigate, which creates a barrier to remediation of legal issues such as elder abuse, housing disputes, and more. Elder Courts facilitate legal issues specifically for seniors, including coordinating, scheduling, and making referrals to providers. Alameda County supports the establishment of Elder Courts as well as additional funding for existing Elder Courts.

- **Expand and fund programs that support caregivers.** Families are the major provider of long-term care for older adults, but research has shown that caregiving exacts a heavy emotional and financial toll. Almost half of all caregivers are over age 50, making them more vulnerable to a decline in their own health, and one-third describe their own health as fair to poor. Alameda County supports increased efforts to support caregivers through creation of a Blue-Ribbon Caregiver Council and restoration of funding to Caregiver Resource Centers.

- **Promote retirement savings.** Less than half of California’s private sector workers have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Support State and federal policies that promote retirement savings and make it easier to save.

- **Increase funding for programs that support the integration of health care and social services focused on aging and advance care planning.** Funding a whole person approach to care and reducing barriers to the integration of health and social service systems will increase the coordination of services and allow sharing of vital health information. The integration of advance care planning into a health and social services regimen allows time to put social supports in place before self-care and mobility are limited by the downward trajectory of a terminal illness. The ability to stay at home with integrated health care and social services may reduce hospital readmissions, futile treatments, and suffering from symptom burdens, while also improving the quality of care at the end of life.

- **Restore and increase funding for community-based programs for seniors.** Over the past few years, senior safety net funding for multiple programs under the Older Californians Act and Older Americans Act has been eliminated or severely reduced. Alameda County supports reinstating and increasing funding for these and other programs that support seniors.

- **Increase funding and support for Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).** ADRCs serve as single points of access into the long-term supports and services system for older adults and people with disabilities. Alameda County supports increased appropriations to the ADRCs as well as any measures that can strengthen the structure and resources available to ADRCs.

- **Support expansion of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).** SCSEP is the largest federally-funded program specifically targeting older adults seeking employment and training assistance.

- **Increase funding to expand services specifically for older adults with mental health and co-occurring substance abuse issues.** Behavioral health concerns are not a normal part of the aging process. Mental illness and substance use disorders are major impediments to living well in old age; they cause considerable personal suffering and make it difficult for older people to achieve their potential. Older adults who become disabled by mental illness deserve the same guarantee of care already extended to those who face other kinds of disabilities.

For more information on these issues, please see the Behavioral Health Services section in the Health Chapter starting on page 94.

**Protect Vulnerable Adults**

Alameda County Division of Adult Protection consists of Adult Protective Services (APS), Office of the Public Guardian-Conservator (PG/PC), and the Public Administrator’s Office (PA). Together these programs provide a continuum of services that form a safety net for vulnerable adults.

- **Institute a federal mandate for Adult Protective Services (APS) that includes increased funding.** Currently there is only a State mandate for APS. Alameda County supports a federal mandate for these services and increased funding to protect and serve our vulnerable adult population.
• **Appropriate $100 million authorized under the Elder Justice Act.** This funding would help provide vital adult protective services in states and counties.

• **Restore and fully fund the Social Services Block Grant.** In California this funding is used primarily to augment County and State funded services for seniors and adults and children with disabilities.

• **Increase funding for APS training.** Training for APS workers and their partner agencies is severely underfunded and has not increased in recent years despite rising cases. APS workers receive a small fraction (four cents for every dollar) of the funding provided to child welfare workers who deal with similar situations. It is imperative that APS workers receive comprehensive training so that they may provide elder and dependent adult victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation with the same types of essential services that child abuse victims receive. Alameda County supports increased federal and State funding for APS training.

• **Increase services and supports for elderly or dependent adults who are victims of financial abuse.** Financial abuse is estimated to account for 40 percent of all forms of reported abuse against seniors. Dependent adults also face similar challenges. Additional services and supports are needed for education, prevention, and investigation of financial abuse and exploitation of these populations.

**Better Serve Veterans**

Alameda County supports policies that assist veterans with accessing benefits, housing, and stable employment.

• **Increase employment opportunities for veterans.** Support policies that help veterans access employment in the public and private sectors. Specifically, support funding for prior-learning assessments that allow veterans to earn college credit for their military training and skills learned in service.

• **Reduce veteran homelessness and provide supportive treatment and services.** Support a range of policies that address the root causes of veteran homelessness. Specifically, policies that improve employment opportunities, increase substance abuse prevention and treatment programs, establish affordable housing, and improve rehabilitation efforts for homeless veterans.

• **Protect veterans funding.** Support efforts to ensure that Veterans Affairs services have timely, predictable funding in an era where continuing resolutions and threats of government shutdowns are all too frequent.

• **Ensure veterans access the benefits for which they are eligible.** Support legislation that supports the Department of Veterans Affairs in providing outreach services that educate veterans on the benefits for which they are eligible. In addition, support increased funding and support for County Veteran Service Offices that assist veterans in need of compensation, medical, rehabilitative, educational, and employment services.

**ALAMEDA COUNTY INTERAGENCY CHILDREN’S POLICY COUNCIL (ICPC) FEDERAL HUMAN SERVICES**

The Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council (ICPC) is comprised of County agencies and department directors and leaders. The ICPC mission is to engage in cross system collaboration by improving interagency communication, developing child friendly policies and practices and initiating systems changes that result in safe, healthy and thriving children and families throughout Alameda County. ICPC provides advocacy leadership in the development of legislative policies that improve and enhance service delivery and outcomes for children and youth. ICPC’s goal is to work together to advocate for legislation that improves the lives of children in Alameda County.

• Support a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization that increases the capacity of states to provide social services for low-income, working families. TANF is a federally funded block grant program that allows states to create and administer their own assistance programs. TANF replaces the federal programs previously known as “welfare,” and enables states to offer a wide variety of social services.

• Support expansion and increased funding for Home Visiting, an evidence-based program focused on improving the wellbeing of families with young children, under the Affordable Care Act.

• Oppose any further efforts to cut the SNAP (food stamp) program in Congress.

• Support legislation that encourages healthy food choices by offering incentives for SNAP/CalFresh participants to buy nutritious foods (such as fruits and vegetables) and expanding capacity for the use of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards at farmers’ markets.
• Support President Obama’s Early Childcare proposal, which forges a new state-federal partnership to provide high quality preschool for every child. The proposal also supports growing the supply of effective learning opportunities for young children, as well as extending and expanding evidence-based, voluntary home visiting.

HEALTH

HEALTH CARE ACCESS, QUALITY, AND AFFORDABILITY

All key provisions of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) are in place as of January 2014, and the legislation has been successful in reducing the rates of uninsured. According to the US Census Bureau, U.S. residents who were uninsured fell from 13.3% to 10.4%. In California, the rate fell from 17.2% in 2013 to 12.4% in 2014, a decline of almost 5 percentage points. In the County, the rate fell from 12.6% in 2013 to 8.2% in 2014. However, there were still approximately 65,000 people with incomes less than 200% of federal poverty (FPL) who were uninsured in the County.

The County embraces the “triple aim” in its healthcare system: improving patient experience and quality, the health of populations, and cost-effectiveness. For health care reform to succeed, we must maximize eligibility, enrollment and retention in health insurance and access to appropriate and high quality health care. Special attention should be paid to policies that:

• Simplify the health insurance application process for all, especially hard-to-reach and underserved populations.
• Increase access to care. Provide lower cost and more accessible treatment alternatives in community settings; promote efficiency; incentivize physicians to go into primary care; incentivize expanded medical staffing, including use of advanced-practice nurses where there are physician shortages and use of a wider range of healthcare team members, such as community health workers.
• Expand dental care access and preventive services for low-income Californians. Dental health is an integral part of overall health and can impact children’s growth, development, self-esteem, and learning. The County supports policies that would increase prevention services and new, more efficient models of care, such as the virtual dental home and expanded dental teams.
• Promote federal payment reform that increases the ability to provide preventive services and establishes risk-sharing between hospitals and primary care. Support payment reform that incentivizes positive health outcomes, not just the ability to bill for more tests or visits. It should promote health education and allow same-day visits for better integrated care, and enable doctors to spend more time with patients at the initial visit to improve the quality of overall care.
• Ensure maintenance and enhancement of the safety net system. Increase provider rates, improve transitions of care (e.g. from acute or specialty care to primary care medical homes), and support policies that provide coverage to those with part-time or temporary employment. Use the opportunities provided by the 1115 Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver to enhance integration and effectiveness of the safety net healthcare system. Support adequate Per Member Per Month payments for health home services under Affordable Care Act Section 2703.

MEDICAID AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) allowed states to expand Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California). Medi-Cal is California's health insurance program for eligible low-income individuals and families. Beginning in January 2014, Medi-Cal was expanded to include income-eligible childless, non-disabled, adults. Enrollment locally and across the State exceeded all predictions and one-third of California residents are currently receiving Medi-Cal. Alameda County supports efforts to leverage health care reform to enroll children, individuals and families in the full range of benefits for which they are eligible. For more information on public benefits (SNAP and TANF), please see the Human Services Chapter starting on page 83.
**Medicaid**

Medicaid provides free or low-cost health insurance for eligible low-income individuals and families. Alameda County supports the following policy recommendations:

- **Support and improve ACA.** Alameda County supports rules and requirements for Medicaid enrollment and Exchange enrollment under ACA that reduce program complexity, recognize the county role in eligibility and enrollment, and support Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) consortia information technology modernization efforts.

- **Protect Medicaid Funding.** Alameda County opposes efforts to block grant the Medicaid program or other initiatives that would reduce funding for program administration or benefits.

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Behavioral health problems (mental health and/or substance use disorders) are an important public health concern, both in their own right and because these conditions are associated with other chronic diseases and the resulting morbidity and mortality. The effects of mental illness range from minor disruptions in daily functioning to incapacitating personal, social, and occupational impairments and premature death.

Utilizing a health equity lens, support for the following will assist Alameda County in providing a fiscally sound, comprehensive continuum of behavioral health services ranging from prevention/early intervention to treatment and recovery/support that will foster increased access to services, a reduction in stigma and discrimination and improved health outcomes for Alameda County residents with behavioral health conditions:

- **Develop a consolidated billing structure for Medicaid and Medicare:** Currently, there exists separate reimbursement criteria and methodology for Medicaid and Medicare. This is becoming increasingly problematic and costly as the number of individuals covered under both Medicaid and Medicare (dual eligible) rises. Having two separate and distinct systems, with different reimbursement criteria, contributes to confusing, cumbersome, and time intensive billing processes and drive up the cost of care. Having one consolidated billing system would decrease costs as well as increase billing ease and efficiency.

- **End the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion for individuals 21-64 years of age who are being served in institutions for mental diseases with 17 beds or more:** Under this exclusion, federal Medicaid law prohibits federal contribution to the cost of medically necessary care to enrolled program beneficiaries ages 21-64 who receive care in certain institutions that are defined as an “institution for mental disease”. An IMD is defined as “a hospital, nursing facility, or other institution of more than 16 beds, that is primarily engaged in providing diagnosis, treatment, or care of persons with mental diseases, including medical attention, nursing care and related services.” As a consequence of this exclusion it has become increasingly difficult for the most severely mentally ill to get inpatient treatment services.

**REDUCING INEQUITIES IN HIV**

There are currently an estimated 5,751 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the County. The annual incidence rate of new HIV infections has not fallen in nearly two decades. The impact of this trend on risk groups and minority populations is significant. The HIV epidemic disproportionately impacts African American, Latino and Asian residents of the County. HIV also affects marginalized communities such as intravenous drug users, other substance users, especially those using crack cocaine and sex workers. Cuts to prevention and testing programs from the California State Department of Health will have devastating consequences for some of our most vulnerable populations.

- **Support Needle Exchange Programs:** Injection drug use is the second leading cause of HIV transmission and the leading cause of Hepatitis C infection in California. In the County, injection drug use accounts for 24% of all AIDS cases among African Americans and 35% of all AIDS cases among women. Studies of needle exchange programs have repeatedly shown that these efforts are successful in reducing the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C while showing no increase in the use of injection drugs. The County therefore supports policy and legislative
efforts to support these needle exchange programs.

- **Increase Condom Distribution and HIV Testing in Jails and Prisons:** At present, the distribution of condoms is prohibited within the County jail and federal prisons. Rates of many diseases are higher for the incarcerated than for the total US population. Condom distribution and routine, non-mandatory, HIV testing should be allowed in jails and prisons in order to prevent the spread of these diseases within the inmate population and among their partners in the community.

- **Assist Formerly Incarcerated Individuals:** The County supports any legislation that facilitates the rapid and effective transition of HIV care services for people going in or coming out of State prisons and County jails.

- **Support HIV Testing:** Routine HIV testing should be offered in all medical settings so that HIV testing can be administered in the same manner as diabetes and tuberculosis screenings. The County supports the easing of restrictions on who can perform HIV Rapid Testing. Currently, State funded programs only allow licensed medical practitioners and State-trained HIV test counselors to administer the HIV Rapid Test. This restriction is not required in most other states or by the test manufacturer, and severely limits California’s statewide HIV testing efforts.

- **Maintain Support for AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP):** ADAP, part of Ryan White Program funding, pays for prescription drugs for people who have limited or no coverage for HIV medications and otherwise cannot afford these medications. ADAP is managed by states, and most states also contribute to the funding for this program. ADAP benefits and eligibility requirements vary widely state by state. Across the country, programs have experienced a funding crisis and the County supports efforts to maintain this coverage.

- **Increase Comprehensive Reproductive and Sexual Health Programs for Teens:** Create a legislative process to fund comprehensive reproductive and sexual health programs for teens. The number of some Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in young women under the age of 20 is almost equivalent to the numbers reported for all other women over the age of 20. This illustrates the high levels of unprotected sexual activity occurring among teens which creates greater opportunities for HIV transmission. Current AIDS data reflects that young people 13-19 represent .4% of the cases. It is important to fund comprehensive reproductive and sexual health programs that educate young people about contraception, family communication, responsible negotiating and decision-making skills.

- **Simplify and Assist Health Care Reform (Affordable Care Act) Enrollment:** The County supports policies and/or legislation that simplifies and streamlines the enrollment of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS into appropriate health care coverage. People Living with HIV have been overwhelmed with choices about insurance coverage. The County supports efforts that keep PLWHA from falling out of care or having disruptions in their HIV treatment that could lead to viral resistance to treatment.

- **Make HIV Care Funding More Responsive to the Actual Needs:** With the advent of Affordable Care Act (ACA), The County supports efforts to maintain federal funding for HIV supportive care services such as case management, food, housing and legal services that are not covered by ACA. These services assist and enable people to maintain connections to medical treatment for HIV. We support legislation and policies that provide care funding for HIV positive individuals not covered by the Affordable Care Act, such as undocumented people.
SYSTEMS OF CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Children and adults with disabilities in California rely on systems of care that have been chronically underfunded, and severely compromised by cuts due to our recent State fiscal crisis. The economic recession and recurring budget cuts have resulted in a loss of over $10 billion to California safety net services. The California economy has recovered, leaving a State surplus, but essential and necessary restorations to safety net services have not been made. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that nearly 250,000 people, ages five years and older, are living with disabilities in Alameda County, and represent 15.7% of the County population of 1,594,569 (January 2015). The U.S. Census Bureau also reports that of the 28% of people with disabilities, more than 1 in 4, live in poverty. The Centers for Disease Control reports that nearly half of the adults with an annual household income of less than $15,000 reported a disability, one in three adults able to work reported a disability, and four in ten adults who have not completed high school reported a disability.

Adults living with disabilities are more likely to be obese, smoke, have high blood pressure, be inactive, and are three times more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. Disability results in health care expenditures of $400 billion dollars per year, costs that could be reduced substantially with adequate access to prevention and care. We need to develop services that serve all our residents, and we need to adopt policies that result in better outcomes for children and adults with disabilities. Restoration of funding and reinvestment in new services are essential to the stabilization of our compromised systems of care and to provide a quality of life beyond institutionalized poverty for children and adults with disabilities.

Reform SSI/ SSP Payment Structure. Support legislation that increases Supplemental Security Income payments, raises asset limits and updates the earned and general income disregard for individuals with disabilities. The Supplemental Security Income program designed and signed into law in 1972 provides income that is below the poverty line. Financial constraints contained in the program discourage savings, work and financial security through restrictions on income and asset limits. In Alameda County, over 53,000 people rely on SSI/SSP as their sole source of income to meet their basic needs.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Many more women, children, youth and families now have access to quality medical care thanks to years of education efforts, provider outreach and advances in medical technology. The Affordable Care Act has also expanded access to care and preventive services for many Alameda County residents. Access to medical care is important and has likely contributed to improvement in some maternal and child health outcomes – infant mortality, for example, has been declining steadily over the last two decades – and yet women, children, youth and families in many of our communities still experience less than optimal health. The low birth weight rate for example, a key maternal and child health indicator, has remained constant over the last ten years. Low birth weight not only contributes to significant newborn and infant health problems, but can also result in long-term illness and disability, including chronic disease and developmental delays. And there are deep inequities in maternal and child health by race: infant mortality rates among African-Americans are two times higher than Whites and African-American women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women.

Additionally women now face challenges to their reproductive freedom in a way that we have not seen since the initial debates that led to the passage of Roe v Wade in 1973. Ensuring access to comprehensive, low-cost reproductive, prenatal and primary care – including case management services where appropriate – will continue to be important, but attention should also be paid to policies that 1) do not limit the range of options available, especially in the arena of family planning services; 2) ensure access to accurate, unbiased information about reproductive and sexual health for youth and adults; and 3) take into account and attempt to remedy the impact of neighborhood and social conditions on the health of women, their children, their partners and their families,
thereby securing the health and wellbeing of current and future generations.

- **Support level or increased funding for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services block grant.** For the last eighty years, Title V has provided a foundation for ensuring the health of the nation’s mothers, women, children and youth, including children and youth with special health care needs. It is the only federal source of funds for population-based maternal and child health improvement efforts. In Alameda County, Title V supports the Black Infant Health program, the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review program, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Education, and other health education and promotion efforts.

- **Support full funding of the Title X Family Planning Program.** For more than 40 years, Title X family planning clinics have played a critical role in ensuring access to a broad range of family planning and related preventive health services for millions of low-income or uninsured individuals and others. Title X clinics are often the main source of primary care for low-income women between pregnancies who do not qualify for Medi-Cal, and have been a critical partner in ensuring the health of reproductive-aged women.

- **Support the reauthorization of the Federal Healthy Start Act and continued implementation of the Healthy Start program.** The Healthy Start program is an initiative mandated to reduce the rate of infant mortality, reduce disparities in perinatal health, and improve perinatal outcomes through grants to project areas with high rates of infant mortality. In Alameda County, the Healthy Start program has been in place since 1991. It provides case management, navigation and support services, health education and empowerment groups and neighborhood-based interventions for low income, multi-stressed African-American women, children and families in the zip codes with the highest infant mortality rates.

- **Support legislation to ensure access to comprehensive contraceptive services and accurate information about reproductive health for both men and women.** Oppose any efforts to restrict access to abortion and family planning services based on age, stage of pregnancy or any other criteria. When women have control over their reproductive health and rates of unplanned pregnancies are lower, their health and wellbeing is ensured, the health and life trajectory of their children is optimized and the social and economic conditions in which they are living are improved.

- **Support continued funding for the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program made available through the Affordable Care Act.** MIECHV funding supports the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) program in Alameda County. NFP is an evidence-based home visitation model, which has been shown to lead to better pregnancy outcomes, improved child health and development, and increased economic self-sufficiency - outcomes that contribute to preventing child abuse, reducing juvenile crime, and increasing school readiness. NFP is an integral and expanding part of Alameda County’s home visiting system of care.

### DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The recent fires in California, emerging communicable diseases, projections of more frequent and severe extreme weather events, and a potential earthquake on the Hayward Fault clearly demonstrate the need to ensure that Alameda County has a coordinated system in place to respond to any disaster. Coordinated response to build the capacity of public health and health care systems includes planning for a “surge” of patients. The Public Health Department and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) continue to work in collaboration with County, State and federal agencies, local health care providers and other institutions to strengthen our collaboration, communications and responsiveness. The following will ensure that our State and local disaster response systems are adequately prepared to respond in an emergency, prepared to respond to long-term health issues from disaster, and prepared to maintain continuity of operations:

- **Support Funding for Regional Communications.** Regional planning must take place to develop communication systems that are functional in a mutual aid response situation. Clear leadership provided by the State Department of Public Health and EMS Authority should promote improved communication with the public and private sector. Funding is needed to support robust and redundant systems. Enhance existing communications and information management systems.

- **Develop Systems for Vulnerable Populations.** Develop systems to ensure that services are delivered in a timely and efficient manner to vulnerable populations with special consideration for children and adults with
disabilities requiring functional or access support services, as well as low-income populations, seniors, children, and individuals with language barriers. Pre-planning for disaster response must be focused on those who are dependent on others such as caretakers in the event of a large-scale public health emergency.

- **Secure Funding for Pre-Disaster Mitigation.** Support legislation which promotes funding opportunities for pre-disaster mitigation to protect and support disaster responders.
- **Enhance existing communications and information management systems.**

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

Communicable diseases are the fourth leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of death worldwide. Control of communicable disease is a core public safety function of government at the local, State, and federal levels. Fulfilling this function requires a sustained, adequately funded infrastructure that monitors, evaluates, and responds to communicable disease threats.

Communicable diseases are kept in control only by continuing vigilance and ongoing effort, even when a threat may not be apparent. In addition, the threat of bioterrorism requires Health Officers to be prepared to recognize and respond to possible cases or intentional outbreaks of unusual diseases such as smallpox, plague, anthrax, or botulism.

The three key areas for Communicable Disease Control and Prevention are epidemiology and surveillance, communicable disease response, and vaccine-preventable disease programs. Support for these key areas will help to protect the public health infrastructure and capacity to control and prevent communicable diseases in the County.

Key federal priorities in 2016 are:

- Support and restore adequate funding for personnel capacity for communicable disease control and prevention including epidemiology, investigation, laboratory detection for outbreak detection, emerging infectious diseases, and bioterrorism events.
- Support increased funding for prevention programs dealing with Sexually Transmitted Disease and HIV such as partner services, pre-exposure prophylaxis, early HIV testing, and education and outreach.
- Maintain Ryan White funding for HIV services not covered in the Affordable Care Act and ongoing local support and technical assistance.
- Support adequate funding for tuberculosis (TB) control and prevention, including increased resources for treatment of latent tuberculosis infection as prevention of disease, and adequate health care access and insurance coverage for all persons requiring tuberculosis assessment and treatment.
- Support improved systems and funding for screening and treatment of TB prior to the arrival of new immigrants in the United States as well as for follow up and accessible health care access for evaluation and treatment once new immigrants have arrived.
- Support policies and funding that assure access to immunizations, public education and outreach regarding immunizations, and improve immunization rates or require immunizations in key settings such as schools and other settings with vulnerable populations.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

To ensure environmental quality and food safety in the community, the County supports policies and legislation
that would prioritize the following:

• **Policies and funding that promotes environmental health and justice.** People of color and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution and climate change, particularly children and elderly. Environmental pollution, including conditions of blight and climate change degrades and poses added risks to the environment and public health, particularly to vulnerable populations. The County supports policies and funding that uses a "precautionary approach," prevents and mitigates environmental pollution, increases monitoring and enforcement action, creates green jobs and spurs the green economy, and seeks to meaningfully involve community residents most impacted by pollution decision-making in order to address health disparities, cumulative health impacts and further environmental justice.

• **Legislation that regulates the shipment and processing of fossil fuels for local use or export to reduce local impacts to health and safety.** Changes in the fossil fuel industry have resulted in plans by producers to increase exports of coal and liquid petroleum products by rail to seaports. Rail incidents involving crude oil jumped nearly sixteen fold nationally between 2010 and 2014. Fossil fuels transported by rail to port facilities in Alameda County would disproportionately impact the health of low-income communities of color but provide little benefit to those communities. Greater federal oversight is needed to regulate shipments in order to ensure the safety and health of all County residents.

• **Effective Product Stewardship/Extended Producer Responsibility legislation.** Product Stewardship/Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a strategy that shifts the responsibility for end of life/residual management to the producers by internalizing the cost of collection and disposal in the price of the product. This includes but is not limited to existing and emerging waste streams such as pharmaceuticals, sharps, household batteries, fluorescent lamps and marine flares. Effective product stewardship legislation should apply to all manufacturers across a particular product spectrum, have required minimum collection rates, increasing collection goals over the course of the program, and no local preemption clause.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

In partnership with community and law enforcement agencies, the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office is responsible for the prosecution of crimes in the County of Alameda, California. The District Attorney’s Office is dedicated to serving the community through the ethical prosecution of criminal offenses and the vigorous protection of victims’ rights.

The District Attorney’s Office supports policies and legislation on the following:

• **Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.)** Funding for the Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) Watch to enhance services to victims of human trafficking and commercially sexually exploited minors. To combat human trafficking this program needs funds to educate the community, provide effective community outreach and train law enforcement. Stronger laws are also needed to prosecute human traffickers, and services for victims need to be expanded.
  • Improve legislation and resources for those who are victims of human labor trafficking.

• **DNA Backlog.** Funding to eliminate the current backlog of untested rape kits in partnership with other law enforcement agencies and private entities to provide a streamlined model throughout the State to prevent future backlogs. DNA evidence can be used to eliminate or confirm suspects, and develop investigative leads to solve a number of unsolved cases.

• **Victims of Crime.** Enhancement of the rights and protections of all victims of crime, and increased funding to expand services to all victims of crime, especially victims of violent crime including: homicide, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and commercially exploited minors. Funding to aggressively collect restitution of behalf of all victims of crime.
  • Strengthen the process for seeking and securing restitution for victims of crime.

• **Mental Health.** Advocate for strong funding streams for treating and assisting people with mental health
issues.

- **Realignment.** Realigning lower level offenders to community corrections programs strengthened through community-based punishment, improved supervision strategies and evidence-based practices, and supervision practices demonstrated by research to reduce recidivism. This includes employing proven alternatives to incarceration for low-risk offenders and systemic reforms in the Alameda County court system to establish a centralized process to help individuals file revocation petitions.

- **Reducing Serious/Violent Crimes.** Initiatives to reduce violent crimes by proposing the formation of the regional multi-agencies task force to combat violence. The task force would provide meaningful alternatives to individuals engaged in criminal behavior who are amenable to various treatment strategies.

- **Enhancing Community-Based Support for Formerly Incarcerated.** Support funding for community programs that aid incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals through their rehabilitation efforts and process. Funding can provide programs for individuals as an alternative to incarceration or through the expansion of District Attorney driven Diversion Programs wherein charges are dismissed after successful completion of the Program. Funding can provide programs and support for individuals under supervision of the Probation Department following conviction as well as for individuals after they return from jail or prison. Community programs include access to health care, job training and education to provide tools to support themselves and reduce recidivism.

- **Youth Empowerment and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention.** More programs and funding for youth to provide work experience so that youth can gain real-world skills and experience to help them become self-sufficient in a positive way and prevent them from entering the juvenile and/or criminal justice systems. Stronger intervention and prevention programs for commercially exploited minors as well as funding for resources for minors and transitioning youth who have been victims of human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation.

- **Youth Violence Prevention and Education Programs.** Funding for violence prevention and education programs and/or counseling programs for youth who are at risk for or who have been involved in crime to provide information about the juvenile justice system; teach about healthy relationships and decision-making, and assist youth to achieve their dreams. Also more partnerships with additional groups to provide counseling, mentorship, case management, life skills, employment and training.

- **Alternative Programs to Incarceration.** Advocate for continued funding for alternative programs to incarceration.

- **Enhancing Public Safety.** Evaluate and propose changes in the law that protect innocent bystanders and children from mutual gun combat.

- **Consumer Protection, Environmental Protection, and Worker Protection.** Increase efforts in Consumer Protection, Environmental Protection, and Worker Protection, particularly labor trafficking.

- **Collaboration.** Advocate for and create a legislative platform to require county agencies to work with community agencies collaboratively to combat human trafficking, specifically the sex trafficking of minors and labor trafficking.

**PROBATION**

Probation engages in department-wide efforts to initiate and maintain strong partnerships with all government and community agencies. We establish and maintain community and government partnerships in order to provide a cohesive system of support for our clients. This partnership includes cross-jurisdictional collaboration with State and County agencies, community and faith-based organizations, therapists, and social workers.

The Probation Department supports policies and legislation as follows:

- Elimination of disparities among boys and men of color which lead to their disproportionate representation in the juvenile justice system.

- Commitment to serving vulnerable youth and families and reducing the number of youth crossing over between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
• Expand and build support services aimed at improving system changes that meet the identified Title IV-E goals, which are to reduce the number of youth in out-of-home placements, provide the least restrictive level of placement when out-of-home placement is necessary and promote family preservation and family reunification.

• Continue to improve supervision strategies using Smart Supervision to better identify, supervise and treat high-risk/high-needs clients.

• Continue to improve probation success rates thereby increasing public safety, reducing admissions to prisons and jails, and saving taxpayer dollars.

• Continue to support public safety measures such as adopting the use of body-worn cameras.

PUBLIC DEFENDER’S OFFICE

The Public Defender’s Office supports:

• Protecting and expanding the rights to liberty, privacy, and due process.

• Protecting all members of the community from unreasonable search, seizure, arrest, detention, and surveillance.

• Preserving and expanding the right to a fair trial.

• Strengthening Evidence Code requirements concerning the competency and trustworthiness of evidence to be introduced at trial.

• Diversion programs and other programs designed to prevent people from coming into the criminal justice system.

• The decriminalization of non-violent drug possession offenses and a shift of resources from incarceration and criminalization to treatment and harm-reduction practices.

• Sentencing reform aimed at reducing jail and prison populations, eliminating disproportional sentences, and promoting more just outcomes for those convicted of crimes.

• Removing barriers to successful reintegration of people into communities after incarceration, such as unnecessary barriers to education, employment, housing, and health and social services.

• Increasing funding for criminal defense investigation, the retention of experts, and the litigation of complex and/or particularly sensitive cases.

• Programs designed for rehabilitation, the restoration of rights, and the expungement of criminal records.

• Increasing the availability of rehabilitation services both for in-custody defendants and those who have been released from custody.

• Initiatives to promote effective, ethical, and accountable police and law enforcement agencies. Specifically, instituting non-suggestive policies regarding identification procedures, such as double-blind photo line-ups.

• Increasing treatment program funding for drug and alcohol abuse.

• Increasing the funding for mental health treatment programs. Promoting ways to divert those with mental illness out of the criminal justice system.

• Reducing the number of people under supervision by the courts, State, and/or County by agencies including parole and probation.

• Providing effective health care services to all those incarcerated at either the state or county level.

• Providing social services to impoverished communities, particularly those aimed at preventing criminal behavior, including recidivism.

• Policies promoting the health and welfare of indigent clients.

• Principles of Restorative Justice and policies designed to implement those principles.

• Initiatives promoting racial justice at all levels of the criminal justice system.
PLANNING LAND USE AND HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HOMELESSNESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The County, like many other Bay Area communities, is experiencing a severe housing crisis. To address this crisis, The County supports policies that:

- **Increase federal funding** from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Veterans Administration and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMSHA) for programs supporting stable and affordable housing for low-income and homeless populations. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs that fund affordable housing development have been severely reduced in the last several budget years and continue to be threatened by additional funding reductions. Further decreases to HUD programs will impact local government’s ability to respond to the current housing crisis, and an increase in homelessness is the likely result. Stable housing for the lowest-income population has a proven track record of benefits to the community, including: improvements in housing stability, employment, mental and physical health, school attendance, reduction in active substance use, and helps to build strong, healthy communities by improving the safety of neighborhoods, beautifying city blocks with new or rehabilitated properties, and increasing or stabilizing property values over time.

- **Support increased and coordinated funding to prevent and end homelessness**: Higher funding levels and increased coordination between funding for services and housing is needed to create and sustain supportive housing for highest need and individuals and families who are disabled and homeless. Affordable and supportive housing are critical to preventing and ending homelessness and cost the same or less than shelter, incarceration, hospitalization and other crisis response interventions.

- **Support funding and policies to protect homeowners from foreclosure and protect the rights of tenants living in foreclosed properties**: Communities and neighborhoods in The County are still suffering the effects of high foreclosure rates and resident displacement. The County supports legislative efforts to prevent foreclosures and ameliorate their impacts.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To create more livable and economically vibrant communities for everyone, the County supports the following policies:

- **Increase funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program** and oppose any efforts to decrease the cap on administrative costs for the program. This program provides essential and flexible funding to support the improvement of lower income communities and provide services and benefits to lower income households. It has a long track record of success and is a flexible funding source which allows localities to target funds to the most needy communities and households and to address highest types of needs.

- **Extension of the Federal Production Tax Credit**: Extension of the federal Production Tax Credit for the expansion of repowering efforts for wind energy.

- **Access to Open Space**: An increase in funding for and access to safe and quality parks, trails, green and open space and recreation centers. Policies should ensure that these opportunities are made available in all communities. A person’s neighborhood shapes their opportunities to play, exercise, enjoy nature, and be healthy.

- **Accessible Communities**: Promote the use of universal design to ensure accessibility of spaces for every one of all abilities. Communities that are designed to be accessible to seniors, children, and people with disabilities will be accessible for everyone. This includes street and sidewalk design, as well as wheelchair accessible public spaces such as parks and community centers, lighting, and other safety issues.

- **Prioritize Reinvestment to Improve Low-income Communities**: Increased funding to develop community infrastructure such as community centers and day care centers, affordable housing, affordable, reliable transit
and infrastructure in local communities.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**SUPPORT FUNDING THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Support funding through the Department of Energy that enables innovative regional initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage local government development of renewable energy, support electric vehicle infrastructure, battery storage, energy and water efficiency, and green purchasing programs for government facilities.

**TRANSPORTATION**

**TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING**

The federal government is an important partner in delivering locally-developed transportation projects. At the local level, counties see the direct impact of federal dollars spent on transportation. In addition to moving goods and people, federal transportation investments are major economic drivers for local communities. However, in order to plan and execute large and small-scale transportation projects that are critical to commerce and the American quality of life, counties need long-term funding certainty and a reliable federal partner.

The highest priority for Alameda County is the federal government’s actions to ensure the financial integrity of the Highway Trust Fund for the future.

It is critical that the Congress provides long-term funding certainty by raising the federal gas tax or finding alternative sources of revenue to make the Highway Trust Fund solvent. The ability of local jurisdictions to effectively plan, maintain and deliver projects for the country’s transportation infrastructure system requires the assurance of a reliable and robust Highway Trust Fund in the coming years. Alameda County also supports the thoughtful examination of opportunities for innovative financing structures for the future of the Highway Trust Fund.

The County recommends the following:

- **Provide Long-Term Funding Certainty.** Alameda County’s top priority remains identifying and providing long-term funding certainty by raising the federal gas tax or by finding alternative sources of revenue to ensure the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund. Alameda County supports legislation which protects local receipt of federal transportation and infrastructure funds and enhances revenues for investments in the national transportation infrastructure.

- **Rural Road Safety.** Alameda County support legislation which increases funding for safety improvements and infrastructure projects on the existing transportation system, with emphasis on programs/projects focused on reducing fatalities, and ensuring that rural roads have a dedicated funding source.

- **Streamline Project Delivery.** Regulatory inefficiencies continue to hamper the effective and timely delivery of local transportation projects. Alameda County supports legislation that builds on reforms from MAP-21 that strive to expedite project delivery, that continue and expand efforts to streamline and expedite project delivery by maintaining the categorical exclusion for projects receiving limited federal assistance ($5 million or less), and that simplify the process for pursuing categorical exclusions. Alameda County also supports the approval of a state-federal “reciprocity” pilot program which allows the State of California and the local transportation agencies to carry out federal environmental review processes to streamline and expedite delivery of federally funded projects.

- **Innovative Funding and Financing Methods.** Declining transportation revenues require innovating solutions to help local governments stretch federal, State and local investments farther. Alameda County supports the...
approval of a state-federal environmental “reciprocity” pilot program which would allow the State of California and the local transportation agencies to carry out federal environmental provide regulatory streamlining and expedite project delivery of federally funded projects. Alameda County also supports maximizing the use and flexibility of federal funds by not requiring minimum federal matches, eliminating the need to program multiple phases for small projects, and eliminating the need for TIP programming for air quality neutral projects.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUNDING REQUESTS

A significant benefit of Alameda County’s capital improvement projects is its contribution towards the area economy; specifically, its contribution to employment opportunities. The Public Works Agency implemented over $50 million of infrastructure improvements over the past two fiscal years. According to a publication titled “Highway Infrastructure Investment and Job Creation,” every $1 billion of investment in public infrastructure would supports approximately 42,100 full-time jobs. Therefore, the $50 million of improvements implemented by Alameda County’s Public Works Agency translates to approximately 2,105 private sector jobs created or saved in the area economy.

To continue supporting regional economic and jobs development, Alameda County will continue to apply for available funding opportunities with the Department of Transportation, the Army Corps of Engineers, and others for the high-priority projects listed below.

- **Rural Road Studies (Estimated Total: $15.4M; Federal Funding Requested: $11.8M):** Implementation of these safety improvement studies will save lives, prevent injuries and improve the livability along this major rural arterial roadway. Design and construction work will also contribute to improving the economic vitality of the Bay Area by providing employment opportunities in construction jobs and improving access and encouraging businesses to expand in the Bay Area.

- **East Lewelling Boulevard Streetscape Improvement Project, Phase II (Estimated Total: $12.2M; Federal Funding Requested: $10.2M)** Implementation of this phase of the project will continue the community transformation benefits achieved in the Phase I project. The improved sidewalks and bicycle lanes will connect the complete streets elements to other regional multi-modal facilities. Design and construction work will also contribute to improving the economic vitality of the Bay Area by providing employment opportunities in construction jobs and improving access for goods movement. The revitalized roadway and aesthetics encourage businesses to expand into the Lewelling Boulevard area.

- **School Area Sidewalk and Safety Projects (Estimated Total/Federal Funding Requested: $14,100,000):** Implementation of these projects will continue with our program to facilitate safe routes to schools in unincorporated Alameda County. Additional benefits include increased revenues and jobs for local businesses, reduced congestion, better air quality, safer travel routes, and improved health outcomes. The unincorporated areas of Alameda County have over $400 million in needed sidewalk improvements to address community and pedestrian safety, especially near schools. Funding for the design and construction of the much-needed active transportation sidewalks in unincorporated Alameda County is critical.

- **Castro Valley Boulevard Pedestrian Enhancement Project (Estimated Total: $12M; Federal Funding Requested: $10M)** The Castro Valley Downtown Area Strategic Plan identifies roadway, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements are necessary to transform the Castro Valley downtown area into a safe pedestrian oriented retail area. This project is part of the Castro Valley Downtown Streetscape Master Plan and is a high priority for the Castro Valley community to revitalize the downtown commercial business district. Funding and implementation of this project will contribute to improving the economic vitality of Castro Valley by providing a variety of employment opportunities and encouraging businesses to expand in the area.

- **Fruitvale Bridge Lifeline Seismic Retrofit Project (Estimated Total/Federal Funding Requested: $40M):** As an island, the City of Alameda depends upon four estuary bridges (owned, operated and maintained by Alameda County) and two tubes (owned, operated and maintained by Caltrans) for access. In the event of a catastrophic seismic event, one Alameda County estuary bridge needs to be upgraded to a “lifeline status” so that supplies and services can be provided to the City of Alameda in case all other access to/from the city is significantly damaged. A feasibility study has been completed, and the Fruitvale Avenue Bridge was determined
to be the most feasible bridge for lifeline seismic retrofitting. Alameda County seeks funding to proceed with the Design and Environmental clearance (estimate: $3M) so that this project is construction-ready when funds become available. Funding and implementation of this project will generate positive economic actions and growth including the creation of over 1,500 job opportunities from the design and environmental phases through project completion.

- **Tesla Road Safety Improvement Projects (Estimated Total: $15.4M; Federal Funding Requested: $11.8M):**
  During 2013-14, the Alameda County Public Works Agency conducted a safety study on Tesla Road to identify and prioritize safety needs along the roadway while also preserving the environment, natural waterways and land. Several safety improvement projects were identified, but there is no identified funding source. Implementation of these safety improvement projects will save lives, prevent injuries and improve the livability along this major rural arterial roadway. Design and construction work will also contribute to improving the economic vitality of the Bay Area by providing employment in construction jobs, and improving access and encouraging businesses to expand in the Bay Area.
GOODS MOVEMENT

Alameda County is a gateway to the world for goods movement. Its airport, Oakland International, is one of three in the region. The Port of Oakland, the nation’s 5th busiest container port, is one of three Pacific Coast gateways with maritime, rail and aviation freight activities. The Port of Oakland is a key economic asset for Alameda County, the greater San Francisco Bay Region and neighboring regions. It supports more than 73,000 jobs in the region and its activities are connected to 827,000 jobs across the United States. As an intermodal operation, port activities impact regional and inter-regional streets, rural roads and highway, rail corridors and waterways.

Planning and implementation is underway for future expansion of the Port of Oakland to support its activities and for improvements to the transportation network system. The Alameda County Transportation Commission is developing the first Countywide Goods Movement Plan. The Plan outlines a long-range strategy for how to move goods efficiently, reliably and sustainably within, to, from and through Alameda County by roads, rail, air and water.

Because a substantial amount of goods movement occurs on local streets and roads throughout Alameda County, the plan also addresses impacts to transportation infrastructure. Challenges faced on the local streets and roads include lack of truck route connectivity across city boundaries, providing safe access by all local streets and road users (autos, pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit) and cut through traffic on rural roads to avoid congestion on major corridors. Additionally, truck traffic on local streets and rural roads designed to accommodate vehicles is resulting in pavement damage and impacting the livability and quality of life for the residents living adjacent to these goods movement corridors.

The County recommends the following:

- Support policies that preserve and strengthen an integrated and connected multimodal goods movement system that supports freight mobility and access and is coordinated with passenger transportation systems and local land use decisions.
- Support legislation, policies and funding to study, plan, fund and implement improvements for a safe, efficient, resilient and well-maintained goods movement facilities and corridors;
- Support legislation, policies and funding to study, plan and design safety improvements along local streets and rural roads to accommodate the increasing goods movement traffic, including driveway consolidation for truck access to wineries, left-turn pockets and truck deceleration lanes;
- Support legislation, policies and funding for programs that reduce and mitigate impacts from goods movement operations to create a healthy and clean environment and support improved quality of life for people most impacted by goods movement; and,
- Ensure that Bay Area transportation systems are included in and prioritized in state and federal planning and funding processes.

ONGOING FUNDING FOR I-580 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The I-580 corridor in the Tri-Valley is one of the most traffic congested in the Bay Area region. It serves as a key inter-regional gateway between the Bay Area and the Central Valley for goods movement and workforce commute travel. This chronic condition has resulted in I-580’s designation in the top five most congested Bay Area corridors identified in the annual report jointly published by Caltrans and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). This congestion will worsen as traffic volumes in this corridor are projected to increase 90 percent by 2030.

To respond to the existing and projected congestion, Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) has identified a series of planned improvements for this corridor. Over the years, a number of these improvements have been implemented, including construction of an eastbound High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and a new interchange at Isabel/SR 84 in Livermore. Improvements currently underway include a westbound HOV lane,
completion of the auxiliary lane system, the conversion of the HOV lanes to express/HOT(toll) lanes an eastbound truck climbing lane. Projects in the planning stage include the reconstruction of the existing I-580/I-680 interchange and a BART connection to the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) inter-regional passenger rail, with a Phase 1 extension at I-580 and Isabel Avenue/SR 84 in Livermore.

Alameda County continues its support of the ongoing funding for the I-580 Corridor improvement projects.

**SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL AND INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS**

With 20% percent of the population, Alameda County experiences 40% of the traffic congestion within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area region. Intersected by numerous inter-regional rail and highway corridors which serve as gateways into the region, Alameda County has a robust transportation infrastructure including local streets and roads, freight corridors, express lane implementation and transit systems. Through regional coordination and funding partnerships at all levels of government, a significant investment to improve transportation infrastructure occurred county-wide in recent years. Alameda County supports and encourages continued cross-jurisdictional partnerships to deliver transportation projects and programs to its constituents. Since 1986, Alameda County and its 14 cities have been recipients of a county-wide, voter-approved sales tax measure dedicated to transportation investments throughout Alameda County.

The County recommends support for the following:

- Legislation that encourages and facilitates the establishment of public-private partnerships and low-cost financing strategies
- Efforts that encourage and promote regional cooperation and coordination to develop, promote and fund solutions to transportation infrastructure improvement and support governmental efficiencies and cost savings in transportation. This is essential to complete planning and development of important regional transportation projects that benefit the state and local road system including Crow Canyon Road, Vasco Road, Tesla Road and Patterson Pass Road in unincorporated Alameda County;
- Policy development to influence transportation planning, policy and funding at the county, regional, state and federal levels’
- Legislation that promotes efficiency and cost-savings in transportation infrastructure; and,
- Express/HOT Lane expansion in Alameda County and the Bay Area.

**PUBLIC TRANSIT**

With the passage of AB 32 and SB 375 that require the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) and the integration of transportation, land use and housing planning, California is at the forefront of built environment policies. The implementation of these two bills at the regional and local level can have an impact on planning decisions in local communities to reduce GHG and improve health. Transportation funding should support all modes and all user, not highway expansions, to ensure the long-term effectiveness in reducing GHG and improving overall health.

In addition to reducing the number of vehicle miles driven, public transit also encourages more active transportation like walking and biking as people get to and from their bus or train, which may have a positive impact on the obesity epidemic. Access to affordable and reliable public transit is particularly vital to health for low-income communities, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities to get to jobs, school, and medical appointments and to visit family members and other support systems. The opportunity for social interaction and access to jobs increases and the reliance on air polluting vehicles decreases when jobs and services are placed close to homes with accessible and affordable public transit options.

The County supports the following policies to increase access to public transit:

- **Prioritize Increased Funding for Public Transit.** Dedicate a higher proportion of existing transportation funding streams to increase the availability, accessibility, reliability, and affordability of public transit options,
particularly local buses, as well as connectivity to regional rail systems and walking and biking opportunities.

- **Prioritize Funding for Low-Income and Transit Dependent Populations.** Direct public transit funds to uses which benefit low-income populations and transit-dependent populations, including maintaining and improving local transit service levels, maintaining and improving affordability through free and discounted fare programs, and the coordination of alternative transportation options as part of a mobility management strategy. Low-income people, seniors, youth, and people with disabilities are much more likely to not own a car and be completely public transit-dependent.

- **Prioritize Transit-Oriented Development over Urban Sprawl.** Increase housing density in urban areas, rather than suburban and rural areas, increasing housing and transit affordability for low-income communities with anti-displacement protections, and locating housing and jobs near rail and bus lines. Concentrating the growth of housing, jobs, and services in public transit hubs makes it easier and more natural to choose public transit over driving and provides a reliable customer base for public transit systems. In addition, the County supports the inclusion of anti-displacement provisions and protections in transit-oriented development projects, in order to support the ability of existing residents to stay and benefit from improvements in their neighborhoods.

- **Prioritize Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds for Vulnerable Communities.** Dedicate state level greenhouse gas reduction funds to projects that benefit health and well-being in communities facing environmental hazards, health burdens, and high levels of neighborhood poverty, in addition to other indicators of vulnerability. In addition, the County supports prioritizing projects which have greater benefits than burdens for vulnerable communities and which minimize unintended consequences, including displacement.
EDUCATION

To promote equity and ensure a bright future for all of our children, the County supports federal-level education policies that achieve the following across the life course:

- **Increase funding in the Federal Budget for primary and secondary education, and prioritize resources for low-income students of color.** The County supports policies that create increased and more equitable funding for education to increase reading proficiency, particularly for third-grade students of color, and increase transparency and promote family engagement, while ensuring fair taxation for residents and businesses. Elementary school investment should include increased funding for arts, music, physical education, college mentoring, parent engagement, academic tutoring, and after-school enrichment programs. Secondary school investments should focus on creating and expanding programs and partnerships with higher education and the public and private employment sectors to increase internships and college and career preparedness with special emphasis on policies that support adopting and funding Linked Learning. The County supports increased funding for IDEA (funding for special education) and for Common Core Standards Implementation and SBAC (school testing method).

- **Increase funding to ensure all high school students graduate and that graduates are college and career ready.** The County supports policies that prepare high school students for college and career while providing wraparound support, reduce disproportionate graduation and drop-out rates and expand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education in low-income communities and communities of color. State and federal efforts to increase access to math, science, and technology education, starting in primary education environments are increasingly critical to prepare future job seekers for competition in the job market to improve education and health outcomes, particularly for communities of color who are underrepresented in these fields. The County supports creating more opportunities for sustainable funding streams for Linked Learning, career pathways and career technical training, such as the California Career Pathway Trust Fund, particularly for low-income students of color, foster youth, and boys of color.

- **Increase funding, access and affordability of post-secondary education and provide debt management assistance.** The County supports policies and funding to strengthen the community college system and remove barriers to educational opportunities, including policies that ensure affordable tuition and reduce the burden of student debt. The County supports solutions such as permanent instatement of the American Opportunity Tax Credit, expansion of the Pell Grant program, increased access to Income-Based Repayment for federal student loans, incentives for community colleges to participate in the federal loan program, expansion of loan forgiveness programs, and stronger consumer protections for private student loan borrowers. Additionally, the County supports policies that protect undocumented youth who want to attend higher education from deportation and that secure funding for their education, such as the DREAM Act. The demand for higher education in California exceeds the capacity of State and community college systems. Community college systems are particularly critical for low income communities and students of color, as they are a gateway to higher education and economic opportunity.

- **Eliminate inequities in funding and access to quality teachers, particularly for teachers of early childhood, special education, and Dual Language Learners.** The County supports policies to increase investments in recruitment, retention and support of teachers through competitive salaries, high-quality mentoring, and ongoing professional development, especially among teachers of special education, those in low-income schools, and teachers of English Language Learners and special education. Support policies that increase professional development of administrators and teachers including training on restorative justice, diversity and inclusion, and mental health. The County supports efforts to protect, stabilize and increase funding for Early Care and Education (ECE) and ECE professional development, with a focus on dedicated paid days of training for staff at Title V contracted centers. Students who are learning English face unique challenges to school success, as do special education students, and teachers for these populations are currently not required to have basic teaching credentials.

- **Eliminate inequities in access to quality early childhood education.** The County supports policies and efforts
that increase funding for early childhood education. The County supports increased state and federal efforts to subsidize early childhood programs and increase and update the link between reimbursement rates for State contracted programs and those funded with vouchers and continuing to expand efforts to fund a Quality Rating and Improvement System for all Early Childhood Education programs. Access to quality early childhood education, Pre-K, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten are shown to be vital building blocks for students ages birth to eight years and important to educational attainment and achievement and health outcomes for all children, particularly boys of color.

**Increase funding to promote full service community schools and ensure all students are healthy and ready to learn.** The County supports the adoption of full service community schools and promotes partnerships between schools, community-based organizations, businesses, and other entities. Support increased funding for full service community schools through the adoption of a comprehensive education revenue and reform package that establishes an equitable and adequate finance system, ensures transparency, continues to enable greater local decision-making flexibility, and strengthens human capital and accountability. The County supports efforts that will increase access to violence prevention programs and services, including programs that promote healthy relationships. Full-service community schools reach beyond the traditional boundaries of public education and mobilize all available community resources to reduce the negative impact of poverty on student achievement, address the needs of students and truly educate the whole child.

**Provide funding for programs and services that reduce chronic student absenteeism and truancy and ensure students attend school ready to learn, particularly in schools with low academic performance, low income students of color, particularly for African American and Latino males.** The County supports policies that address absenteeism by providing family and community support services, such as coordinated medical care, behavioral and mental health services, youth development programs, and parent, family and community engagement programs. Efforts to reduce absenteeism should include funded mandates for schools to track attendance data to create an absenteeism and truancy early warning system that identifies frequently absent children and connects them and their families with comprehensive, wraparound interventions. The County supports efforts that will increase funding for programs that aim to reduce disparities for low-income students and students of color, particularly boys of color, in early literacy skills, graduation rates, and dropout rates, such as male involvement programs and mentoring.

**Ensure students with disabilities (including learning, emotional and physical) have equal access to educational opportunities.** The County supports efforts to improve the identification rate of students with disabilities so that they can have equal access to education and reinstating teaching credential requirements for special education teachers. The County supports strengthening the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1974 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In California, students with disabilities ranked 48th among all states in their math and reading assessments (2011). Furthermore, California has one of the lowest identification rates of students with disabilities in the nation, according to a 2012 report from the American Institutes for Research.

**Eliminate the disproportionate impact of suspension and expulsion rates on students of color and students with disabilities.** The County supports policies that eliminate practices that contribute to disproportionately high suspension and expulsion rates, including the use of punitive and zero tolerance policies among boys and young men of color, students with disabilities, and preschool suspensions. The County further supports legislation that calls for training in alternatives to expulsion and in-school and out-of-school suspension, and for reforms in suspension policies for defiance, particularly for African American males and females, and Latino and Pacific Islander males. The County also supports policies that increase professional development of administrators and teachers including training on restorative justice, diversity and inclusion and mental health.

**Promote health and wellness among students and healthy school environments.** The County supports policies that increase access to safe and appropriate health, dental and mental health services in schools, including school-based health centers, particularly for students of color and students in families with mixed immigration status. The County supports policies that reduce chronic diseases (such as asthma and diabetes), communicable disease (such as sexually transmitted infections (STI’s)), and promote programs aimed at decreasing teen pregnancy and STI’s, particularly among youth of color who experience disproportionate rates
of STI’s, and policies that reduce childhood obesity and other physical activity and diet-related diseases, such as comprehensive Wellness Policies. The County supports policies that create healthy school environments both on-campus and the surrounding neighborhoods, including policies that improve access to fresh and nutritious food in and around schools; prohibit unhealthy food vendors at or near schools; increase access to clean drinking water in schools, and preventing unnecessary exposure to environmental toxins.

**IMMIGRATION**

The County supports federal-level policies that achieve the following:

- **Pass comprehensive immigration reform with a clear path to citizenship:** The County supports immigration reform that provides an expedited, common-sense route to citizenship for new Americans who aspire to be citizens, recognizes the contribution of immigrants, and keeps families together in this country. The County was supportive of the spirit of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013, passed by the Senate (S.744), and is supportive of future legislation that addresses concerns related to the affordability of the Registered Immigrant Status program for undocumented immigrants, as well as some of the other barriers that will narrow the number of people actually able to take advantage of the program. The County supports prioritizing the needs and welfare of children by including the following principles: prioritizing keeping families together, resources for unaccompanied minor immigrants, appropriate and accountable training policies and protocols for interacting with and screening children that reflects a humanitarian approach.

- **Protect the health and welfare of children and children whose parents are being detained or deported by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Border Patrol:** The County supports efforts that protect children of parents detained or deported within the current system.

- **End Secure Communities and all detention and deportation programs, including Priority Enforcement Program (PEP), which contains the same flaws:** The County supports reforms that will reduce the negative impact of detention and deportation programs on public safety, civil liberties, public health, and the conditions of detainees. PEP, similar to the Secure Communities program before it, entangles local law enforcement with federal detention and deportation, damaging confidence in law enforcement, separating families, causing civil liberties violations, including double-punishment, and undermining rehabilitation.

- **Increase access to education, particularly higher education:** The County supports legislation that increases primary and secondary school resources for students with Limited English Proficiency. The County supports policies that increase access to post-secondary education through legislation such as the DREAM Act. Alameda County also supports legislation that extends the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals to more people.

- **Protect against racial profiling based on “perceived” immigration status, ethnicity, religion, or national origin:** The County supports legislation that identifies and eliminates racial profiling in the public and private sectors.

- **Increase access to language appropriate behavioral health and health care for immigrants:** The County supports legislation that increases access to quality, affordable health care coverage and services, including among undocumented immigrants not covered by ACA, and that promotes culturally and linguistically appropriate care.

- **Promote public safety by ensuring that reporting crimes, including reporting domestic violence, to local authorities, does not lead to deportation proceedings:** Support funding for an evaluation of the new license program established through AB 60 to ensure that it is not used by local law enforcement for racial profiling.

- **Protect and promote the well-being of immigrant workers, including undocumented workers:** The County supports legislation that protects immigrant workers, especially the vulnerable undocumented population, from wage theft, and extends important labor standards to jobs predominantly occupied by immigrants, such as migrant workers. Federal immigration laws should reflect our country’s core values of fairness and respect for work and protect all workers’ labor and civil rights. The County supports policies restricting, rather than building on, a burdensome “employer sanctions framework.” Immigration I-9 audits and the unjust E-Verify program are of major concern as they put workers at risk for being fired.
• Ensure nondiscriminatory, equal treatment under the law, and protect the confidentiality and privacy of individuals: The County supports actions that affirmatively extend access to public services and benefits to all residents, regardless of immigration status, and prohibits social services providers from reporting suspected undocumented immigrants to authorities. Due process should be ensured for immigrants in federal and local detention facilities and those facing deportation.

• Restore benefits to legal immigrants that were lost in 1996 legislation that imposed a 5-year ban on federal means-tested benefits for documented immigrants: The County supports restoring benefits and ensuring legal immigrants have access to basic assistance, including language appropriate behavioral health, health care, and nutrition supports.

JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CREATE A STRONG AND ROBUST JOB-DRIVEN SYSTEM

Invest in Systems and Policies that Support Workers and Employers

• Successfully implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The new law reauthorizes the nation’s employment, training, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation programs created under the Workforce Investment Act. WIOA improves connections to employment and training opportunities that lead to economic prosperity for workers and their families by strengthening existing workforce development and adult education programs. These positive policy developments create an opportunity for leaders and advocates to rethink, reshape, and expand workforce systems, policies, and practices to improve the education and employability of many, most especially low-income people and individuals with barriers to employment.

• Invest in education that prepares individuals for the 21st century workforce. Alameda County supports the alignment of the education and workforce investment systems to meet the needs of the 21st century workforce and the promotion and development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. A special effort should be made to support education in the Science, Technology, Education, and Math (STEM) areas and pathways to careers in high-growth sectors.

• Support fair and sustainable wages. Alameda County supports policies that aim to create livable wages, promote income mobility, and close the gender and racial wage gap.

• Promote job creation and economic development. Alameda County supports policies and programs that create local jobs. Specifically, tax incentives, innovative funding mechanisms for more public/private partnerships, waivers, support for small businesses and entrepreneurs, and policies that promote/support locally-made products. Policies should increase resources for “proactive” business assistance programs that prevent closures and mitigate job loss.

• Support the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board (ACWIB) Platform. Alameda County supports and reaffirms the Legislative Platform of the ACWIB.

Support Individuals with Barriers to Employment

• Support policies that create work and educational opportunities for long-term unemployed workers, low-income adults, and at-risk youth. Alameda County supports subsidized employment, supportive services for adults, summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth, and competitive grants to help low-income adults and youth obtain education and training leading to jobs and credentials.

• Expand workforce programs. Programs should be targeted to hard-to-serve populations, i.e. CalWORKs clients, formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, youth transitioning out of foster care, limited English speakers, and residents of neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.

• Support and expand workforce development efforts that promote career pathways and address racial, cultural, and economic disparities in employment and achievement. Alameda County supports programs and policies that help prepare and integrate individuals who are known to face barriers to employment into the workforce including communities of color, low-income immigrant and migrant workers, older workers, individuals with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and
others.

- **Expand support of Adult Schools and programs that offer basic and remedial skill attainment for individuals who need on-ramps into sustainable-wage careers.** Alameda County supports programs and initiatives that aim to help individuals who need basic skills training in order to be successful.

- **Increase employment opportunities for older adults.** Alameda County supports policies such as subsidized employment or tax incentives that encourage employers to hire older adults. In addition, training and programs should be coordinated and targeted to help seniors who want or need to remain in the workforce so that they can be self-sufficient.

- **Extend and expand the Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).** The WOTC is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire and retain veterans and individuals from other target groups with significant barriers to employment. Alameda County supports extending and expanding the WOTC and other similar tax incentives for employers.

- **Support access to federal financial aid for individuals with previous drug-related offenses.** The opportunity to go to college and improve one’s economic position is limited for those with previous drug offenses who do not have access to federal student aid. Evidence shows that recidivism is greatest when individuals do not have access to employment and educational opportunities.

- **Remove the criminal background check requirement from initial job application requirements.** Economic opportunity is greatly diminished for formerly incarcerated individuals (who are disproportionately people of color) because of employment discrimination against people with criminal records. The federal government should pass “Ban the Box” legislation that requires an employer to determine a job applicant’s minimum qualifications before obtaining and considering information regarding the applicant’s conviction history.

### Expand Opportunities for Youth

- **Reinstate a federal summer youth employment program.** While so many youth are eager to work and begin building their skills, few resources are available to initiate programs specifically focused on populations in low-income communities or distressed neighborhoods, where job opportunities are declining. Summer jobs programs traditionally strive to deliver the first work experience to young adults and prepare them for work as they learn soft skills, career awareness, and some basic skills.

- **Invest in intensive summer programs geared toward work readiness and STEM-related occupations.** Work-readiness programs geared toward STEM-related occupations, and/or other in-demand occupations, combines work with learning and provides valuable opportunities for youth to stay engaged in summer learning. Additionally, when youth are engaged in the summer, they may gain exposure to a variety of industries and career paths, while also learning skills that can help them succeed during the academic school.

- **Support and expand programs that serve young people.** Alameda County supports investments in programs and services targeted at young people both in and out-of-school to assist them in their career and educational development. Specifically, programs should target young people who have left school, foster youth, homeless youth, juvenile justice involved youth, and other youth with barriers to employment.

### INVEST IN PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES

Many social service programs and public policies focus on vital individual supports, such as cash aid or food assistance. However, we also know that people are impacted by the places in which they live and work. Too many children in our communities are growing up in neighborhoods with no grocery stores, closed parks, and struggling schools. Recognizing that people and place are inextricably linked, place-based initiatives take a comprehensive approach to community development and aim to revitalize multiple aspects of neighborhood to create lasting change for its residents.

- **Promote and expand place-based strategies that concentrate resources and investment in communities with the highest levels of need.** Alameda County supports place-based economic investments that increase opportunity in low-income communities and communities of color. A place-based approach should include
strategies to bring public benefits and services out into the community and to provide wealth building, wage subsidies, and job supports to residents. In addition, place-based strategies could facilitate the flow of capital into high need, disinvested communities by having government serve as an intermediary, leveraging government-owned land, employment, and procurement, as well as relationships government may have with financial institutions, businesses, and foundations.

- **Support place-based initiatives.** Alameda County supports increased place-based funding, specifically the Partnership for Sustainable Communities’ Integrated Planning and Investment Grants Initiative, Promise Neighborhoods, Choice Neighborhoods, the Community Economic Development Program, the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grants, and the broader Promise Zones Initiative.

- **Support neighborhood revitalization through the Promise Zone Initiative.** This initiative aims to revitalize high-poverty communities by creating local jobs, spurring economic activity, improving educational opportunities, leveraging private investment, and reducing violent crime. Alameda County supports measures that create coordinated efforts to benefit designated Promise Zones, including:
  - Priority for relevant federal funding opportunities from the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Justice, Education, Agriculture, Labor, Commerce, and Transportation, Treasury, and others.
  - Tax deductions for business property located within a community designated as a Promise Zone and employment tax credits for businesses that locate within Promise Zones and/or hire residents living in Promise Zones.

**IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES BY ADDRESSING SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS**

The County supports the following policies in order to improve the economic and health outcomes of all its residents:

- **Enact a higher federal minimum wage:** Increasing the income of low-wage workers is fundamental to positive health outcomes because it provides access to important health-enabling resources, including proper nutrition, good medical care, stable health insurance, and favorable housing — all of which can be leveraged to avoid risks and protect health. Create a policy that closes loopholes and includes cost of living increases. Federal services that are dependent on fixed rates should be adequately funded to ensure continued service provision.

- **Protect worker health and safety:** Strengthen existing laws and enforcement for worker health and safety. Mandate paid sick days for all workers.

- **Protect and expand worker’s rights:** Enact federal legislation that protects and strengthens the worker right to organize and collectively bargain, such as labor peace agreements and card-check and neutrality agreements. In addition, many hourly employees have to live off too few hours on too little notice that prevents them from caring for their families. The County supports enacting policies requiring fair, stable work schedules.

- **Restore civil rights protections and reduce barriers for formerly incarcerated people in the workplace:** Formerly incarcerated individuals often struggle to access quality employment because of barriers maintained by State policy. The County supports policies that enable formerly incarcerated individuals to access quality jobs and economic stability.

- **Protect temporary and contingent workers:** The growing populations of temporary and contingent workers are often at higher risk of suffering from employer exploitation and rights violations. The county supports policies that protect these workers by holding companies responsible for paying excessively low wages and relying on taxpayer-subsidized benefits for their workers.

- **Increase access to entrepreneurship opportunities:** Policies that help expand access to business opportunities include: (1) Support microenterprise through policies that support community-based non-profit microenterprise and financial organizations that support entrepreneurs, expand access to private markets and sources of capital, establish supportive tax environments, and allow microenterprise to serve as an eligible activity for recipients for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Social Security Disability
Insurance; (2) Support co-operatives and creating incentives for employee ownership through State policies that promote sound business conversion to cooperative business models, including but not limited to Employee Stock Option Plans (ESOPs), through tax incentives and mandated assistance, as well as those policies that remove barriers to starting co-operative businesses; and (3) Support policies that expand access to capital among entrepreneurs of color and persons with disabilities, such as adapting the New Markets Tax Credit and the Small Business Administration loans program to target those businesses.

- **End discrimination in employment, education, and job training and enforce labor laws:** One major issue is the intentional misclassification of workers which relieves employers of having to make contributions to Social Security, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, health insurance, and even avoidance of minimum wage and overtime laws. The County supports the proper staffing of the Equal Opportunity Commission in order to enforce existing law, especially Title IX, the expansion of the Fair Labor Standards Act to include domestic workers, day laborers, and farm workers, and the Labor Department’s effort to work with law enforcement, the IRS, and leaders from seven states to address the misclassification of workers. Undocumented workers have the highest rates of wage and hour violations and must be included in prevention efforts.

- **Expand and reform Unemployment Insurance:** In an increasingly volatile economy, working families need a strong unemployment insurance program. However, the unemployment insurance safety net has failed to keep pace with the changing labor force, especially the growth in women, part-time and low-wage workers.

- **Use government purchasing and contracting to promote living wage work:** Government spending can be used to shift more industries towards providing better wages and benefits. Through approaches like living wage standards and “best value” bid evaluation systems that recognize the benefits to both taxpayers and working families when businesses invest in their workforces, state spending can incentivize more employers to provide family-supporting wages and benefits.

- **Ensure equitable taxation:** Many tax preferences are expensive and regressive and as such are of little help to low- and moderate-income households trying to become more financially secure. Tax code benefits accrue to the wealthiest 5 percent of taxpayers and largely miss the asset-poor majority in this country. Meaningful incentives to save for residents of all income groups should be provided, and the tax system should benefit all residents equally. Successful tax credits that reward work, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) should be expanded to continue lifting people out of poverty across the nation.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**LOCAL REVENUE AND ECONOMIC INCENTIVES**

- Support requiring federal agencies to create “Economic Inclusion Plans” which mandate agencies to create spending plans to create jobs in low-income communities and communities of color.
- Support equitable taxation, a tax system to benefit all residents equally, and reduce poverty by implementing the following approaches:
  1. Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, the country’s most successful anti-poverty program, to increase access and create more work incentives and benefits for single fathers and childless adults, to build upon the successes of the program.
  2. Reduce the tax burden on the lowest income earners by reforming tax codes rather than cutting services, specifically through measures such as those laid out as part of President Obama’s proposed American Jobs Act of 2011 and his annual budget requests.
  3. Permanently raise taxes on high-income individuals, limit deductions for wealthier filers, target tax loopholes, and end certain corporate tax breaks and subsidies used by large corporations.
  4. Spare retirees from any changes in Social Security and direct most of the cuts in MediCare spending to health care providers instead of beneficiaries.
- Oppose the imposition of federal mandates for which funding is not fully provided and budget actions that result in a negative impact to Alameda County.
FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER RESOURCES

INCREASED FUNDING FOR FLOOD PROTECTION

Continued protection from flooding and protecting its natural resources in Alameda County requires legislative remedies including increased funding for flood protection, levee repair and wetland restoration projects, and developing adaptive strategies to climate change and sea level rise. To address new requirements being imposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), funding is needed for both the planning and the construction of capital improvement projects. Alameda County, in partnership with other local bay area agencies, also requires designated funding to study and design coastal flood protection solutions.

The County recommends support for the following:

- Legislation that ensures consistency between federal and State definitions of wetlands and results in a reasonable requirement that will have the least impact on the development, operation, and maintenance of essential public works projects and facilities;
- Legislation which identifies additional funding opportunities for levee maintenance, including repair and reconstruction after a flood event; and,
- Legislation designating federal funding to study and design coastal flood protection solutions to protect Alameda County's residents from effects of sea level rise, extreme tide and climate change; and,
- Legislation that facilitates and establishes partnerships and collaboration among local and regional partners to ensure flood control infrastructure is resilient in the face of climate change.

STREAMLINE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORY AND PROJECT DELIVERY PROCESS

Regulatory inefficiencies continue to hamper the effective and timely delivery of flood control projects. Delivery of flood control projects is bogged down by multiple redundant and overlapping regulatory agency approval processes, long time frames, and required reports and mitigation that do not add significantly to improving the environment yet result in costly project delivery costs. To this end, Alameda County seeks legislative remedies to eliminate regulatory redundancies, streamline regulatory burdens and advocate for funding support to adequate staffing levels at the local, state, and federal regulatory agencies.

The County recommends the following:

- Support legislation that improves environmental streamlining, including requiring specific time frames for federal reviews and approvals to expedite project delivery while ensuring appropriate environmental protection and mitigation;
- Support mandating federal permitting agencies to meet the already prescribed schedule and deadlines specified in the environmental review process, reduce overhead, and eliminate waste and redundant documentation;
- Support legislation that would allow and encourage state and federal regulatory agencies to offer service agreements to public entity applicants and permittees to fund additional personnel or contractors needed for expeditious permit processing;
- Support legislation related to reciprocity between the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in order to expedite flood control project delivery; and,
- Support legislation that improves the ability to deliver projects and programs in a timely and cost-effective manner, including adequate funding at local, state and federal levels.

FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT FUNDING REQUEST - SAN LORENZO CREEK FLOOD

Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) will begin preliminary engineering for a project to implement improvements using Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) funding in the amount of
$500,000 which will provide increased flood protection to contain the updated 100-year design flow within San Lorenzo Creek. This project will reduce potential for future flooding, enable the District to apply to FEMA with a Letter of Map Revision to remove the 100-year floodplain designation, and eliminate the mandatory requirement to purchase expensive flood insurance for affected residents.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) constructed thousands of miles of levees throughout the United States to help reduce the threat of flooding. In many communities, the local sponsors of these levees are flood control districts. The USACE began reassessing its levee maintenance policies after the levee failures in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, resulting in new Vegetation Variance policy guidelines for vegetation on levees. These new variance guidelines, if adopted, would eliminate storm damage recovery funding for flood control districts without an approved Vegetation Variance. If the Alameda County Flood Control District is deemed to be out of compliance due to vegetation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will likely map the adjacent communities into flood plain needlessly requiring residents to obtain expensive flood insurance for mortgages and flood plain permits for construction.

The Vegetation Variance guidelines, as proposed, do not take into account regional differences in hydrology and unique California climate. Furthermore, the variance policy conflicts with federal and State Endangered Species Acts that protects habitats and federally listed species and would be prohibitively costly to mitigate the associated impacts to federal and state listed species. Centralizing the variance approvals in Washington DC rather than in local Corps of Engineers district offices, which are more familiar with the unique characteristics of Alameda County’s creeks and watersheds, will result in conflicting and lengthy approval process of variance requests. Finally, the cost of developing and gathering information to support the variance request application is prohibitive with no guarantee of approval.

The County supports the proposed modifications to the Army Corps of Engineers policy on vegetation management of Corp-built flood control levees to be consistent with congressional direction in the Water Resources Development Act 1996 (WRDA) of 1996.
Appendix
County Department Summaries
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

President, Scott Haggerty, Supervisor, District 1
Vice President, Wilma Chan, Supervisor, District 3
Richard Valle, Supervisor, District 2
Nate Miley, Supervisor, District 4
Keith Carson, Supervisor, District 5

MISSION STATEMENT
To enrich the lives of Alameda County residents through visionary policies and accessible, responsive and effective services.

VISION
Alameda County is recognized as one of the best counties in which to live, work and do business.

VALUES
- Integrity, honesty and respect fostering mutual trust.
- Transparency and accountability achieved through open communications and involvement of diverse community voices.
- Fiscal stewardship reflecting the responsible management of resources.
- Customer service built on commitment, accessibility and responsiveness.
- Excellence in performance based on strong leadership, teamwork and a willingness to take risks.
- Diversity recognizing the unique qualities of every individual and his or her perspective.
- Environmental stewardship to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources.
- Social responsibility promoting self-sufficiency, economic independence and an interdependent system of care and support.
- Compassion, ensuring all people are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of Alameda County and also serves as the governing board of the Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Alameda County Fire Department, and a number of other public entities. In addition, Board members serve on policy boards of regional and district organizations.

Roles and Responsibilities
The Board of Supervisors sets policy for County government, subject to a variety of changing demands and expectations. Each Board member shares a responsibility to represent the county as a whole, while representing a specific district from which he or she is elected.
Fiscal Responsibilities

The Board of Supervisors is responsible for helping to develop, adopt and oversee the County budget, balancing expenses against revenues and reflecting mandated obligations as well as locally-identified priorities. As a primary management tool, the budget serves as a reflection of values and is subject to adjustment as conditions warrant and collective policy decisions dictate.

Management Responsibilities

A fundamental responsibility of each Supervisor is participation in the development and, from time to time, modification of policy. While a myriad of factors and forces influence the legislative process, key resources for advice and counsel are available from the County agency/department heads who possess professional knowledge and procedural skill in evaluating policy options. An extension of this key function is the oversight of County operations to assure that policy, once adopted, is fully and appropriately carried out by the department heads, in collaboration with the County Administrator. By working with department heads, both elected and appointed, the Supervisors can assure themselves and their constituents that policy intent is fulfilled.

Community

The needs and interests of constituents represent a significant area of responsibility for a Board member. Being available and responsive to their constituents is a high priority for all Supervisors and consistent with the tradition of good government in Alameda County.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Susan S. Muranishi

County Administrator

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide professional, innovative, and proactive leadership to the Board of Supervisors, agency/department heads, and the public through responsible fiscal and administrative policy development and program oversight.

MANDATED SERVICES

The County Administrator’s Office provides a number of mandated services including developing and managing the annual countywide budget, administering Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs, and developing Affirmative Action Plans. The level of mandated services provided by the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is determined by specific statutes, ordinances, policies, and the Board of Supervisors and includes, but is not limited to, attending all Board of Supervisors, Assessment Appeals Board, and Legal Hearing Officer meetings; codifying the Ordinance Code, County Charter, and Administrative Code; receiving and filing claims, lawsuits, and various petitions; processing property tax administration matters; setting for hearing and processing of planning and other types of appeals; and providing access to information for Board members, County departments, news media, and the general public regarding the actions and hearings of the Board of Supervisors, Assessment Appeals Board, and the Legal Hearing Officer.
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Discretionary services include providing policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, monitoring and reviewing all budgetary expenditures and revenues, initiating studies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of County programs, and administering the County's Risk Management, Capital Projects, Debt Financing, Economic Development, Legislation, Public Information, and Cable Television Franchise Authority for the unincorporated areas. Formerly a mandated County function, Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) services are now contracted with the County.

ASSESSOR

Ron Thomsen
Assessor

MISSION STATEMENT

- To improve services and increase productivity
- To provide a cohesive and unified organization
- To maintain a professional and knowledgeable staff
- To develop and maintain an effective communication system
- To provide informative and responsive services to the public
- To be dedicated in leadership in the field of assessor administration
- To be dedicated in leadership in the field of taxpayer services and taxpayer information
- To provide fair, firm, and uniform treatment to the public; and to perform these functions with quality and efficiency
- To maintain a staff of knowledgeable professionals who demonstrate integrity, honesty and courtesy towards the Office of Assessor, its employees, and the general public

MANDATED SERVICES

The Assessor’s mandated services are performed in accordance with the California Constitution, Revenue and Taxation Code, Government Code, and State Board of Equalization guidelines and directives. The primary mandated services of the Assessor’s Office include: locate and identify the ownership of all taxable property in Alameda County, and determine the taxability of all property; determine the reappraisability of property changing ownership or having new construction added, annually assessing all real estate in accordance with the provisions of Article XIII A of the State Constitution (Proposition 13); annually assess all taxable personal property at its fair market value, determine and apply all legal exemptions against these assessments, and surrendering an accurate assessment roll to the Auditor’s Office prior to July 1 each year.

Other major functions of the Assessor’s Office include: perform local and out-of-state business personal property audits of taxpayers who own business personal property located in Alameda County; re-map all real estate parcels when lot-line adjustments, splits, or combinations of parcels are initiated; timely process assessment appeal and calamity applications to determine if assessment reductions are warranted; and appraise real estate to issue supplemental assessments when property changes ownership or has new construction added. Support services and assessment information are provided to the Auditor-Controller,
Treasurer-Tax Collector, Public Works Agency, Clerk of the Board, Registrar of Voters, school districts, special assessment districts, and other governmental agencies as required by law.

**DISCRETIONARY SERVICES**

The Assessor maintains a knowledgeable public information staff to respond accurately to all inquiries regarding property assessments in a timely and courteous manner. The Department’s website explains the Assessor’s functions and has links to provide property assessments and many assessment-related forms over the Internet.

---

**AUDITOR-CONTROLLER AGENCY**

Steve Manning

_Auditor-Controller/Clerk-Recorder_

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Auditor-Controller Agency, through the efforts of its employees, shall provide the highest degree of accountability and service when administering public funds and in the protection of official public records.

**MANDATED SERVICES**

The mandate of the Auditor-Controller Agency is to develop and maintain the County’s accounting, payroll, audit, tax analysis, budget and grants, contract compliance, and cost plan systems and procedures. The level of these services is determined by federal and State laws, the County Charter, Administrative Code, ordinances and resolutions, and departmental policy set by the Auditor-Controller, an elected official.

Mandated services include the collection of court-related fines and restitutions, Social Services Agency overpayments, and other receivables mandated by State and federal laws and regulations. County resolutions, ordinances, and policies govern the mandate to collect other receivables, such as hospital, Public Defender, and environmental fees.

The Office of the Clerk-Recorder provides mandated services established by statute. These include the recording of all recordable documents and maps, collection and distribution of fees and taxes from recording documents, and maintenance of the vital statistics register, which includes birth, death, and marriage records.

**DISCRETIONARY SERVICES**

The Auditor-Controller/Clerk-Recorder does not provide any discretionary services.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Chris Bazar

Agency Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance the quality-of-life of County residents and plan for the future well-being of the County's diverse communities; to balance the physical, economic, and social needs of County residents through land use planning, environmental management, neighborhood improvement, affordable housing, and community development; and to promote and protect agriculture, the environment, economic vitality and human health.

MANDATED SERVICES

Provide staff support to the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Boards of Zoning Adjustment, Airport Land Use Commission, Lead Abatement Program Joint Powers Authority, and Redevelopment Successor Agency Oversight Board.

Administer the Surplus Property Authority and Redevelopment Successor Agency.

Prepare, update, and implement the County’s General Plan; administer and update applicable County ordinances.

Conduct environmental, design, and policy review of proposed development projects pursuant to County and State development and planning laws and procedures.

Issue and enforce required land use permits and monitor required environmental mitigation measures.

Enforce the Food and Agriculture Codes and the Business and Professions Codes related to agriculture and weights and measures.

Verify accuracy of commercial weighing and measuring devices, including point-of-sale terminals.

Provide financing, project administration, and construction management for housing, community development, rehabilitation, and homeless programs.

EveryOne Home Plan implementation; administer supportive services, shelter, housing operations, and rental assistance programs for homeless and at-risk individuals and families.

Provide case management and environmental investigation of lead-exposed children and ensure remediation of lead hazards and compliance with lead-safe work practices.

Provide education, training, and lead hazard reduction strategies to prevent lead exposure of pre-1978 residential properties in the four Lead Abatement Program Joint Powers Authority County Service Area cities.

Manage the County’s demographic and census programs, including redistricting.

Implement Mineral Resource Management and Surface Mining Permit Administration. Process applications and permit amendments. Conduct annual and periodic inspections and reviews for compliance, protection, and development of mineral resources through the land-use planning process as mandated by the State’s Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) and the County’s Surface Mining Ordinance.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Manage/staff Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Committee; Sunol Citizens' Advisory Committee;
Agricultural Advisory Committee; Parks, Recreation, and Historical Commission Alcohol Policy Committee; Ordinance Review Advisory Committee; District 4 Advisory Committee; and Altamont Open Space Committee. Provide technical expertise at Board of Supervisors’ community and sub-committee meetings.

Enforce Zoning, Neighborhood Preservation, Junk Vehicle, Mobile Home Park Space Rent Stabilization, and other ordinances; protect County interests in regional transportation and land-use/planning efforts.

Support County commissions: Local Agency Formation Commission; Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee; Transportation Commission (formerly Congestion Management Agency); Climate Action Plan Team; BART to Livermore, Bayfair BART Transit Oriented Development and Bayfair BART Safety Study Technical Advisory Committees; Tri-Valley Regional Rail Policy Working Group; Technical Advisory Working Group; Regional Advisory Working Group; and, Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Authority.

Participate in regular community and regional meetings: District 1 Rural Roads; District 4 Agriculture/Canyonlands; East Alameda County Conservation Strategy (EACCS) Implementation Committee; Fire Commission Committee; Cherryland Community Association; San Lorenzo Homes Association; and, Unincorporated Areas Technical Advisory Committee.

Participate on state, regional, countywide, and local boards, committees, and task forces in areas related to the agency's responsibilities and staff expertise.

Provide the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, other County departments, and the public with affordable housing development expertise and economic/demographic data.

Carry out local economic and civic development activities consistent with Board policy on reinvestment of former redevelopment funds in Alameda County in order to promote sustainable property development and job creation opportunities.

Develop and implement affordable housing programs and policies for the County, including the unincorporated areas of the County.

Support strategic vision priorities and carry out environmental/sustainability goals that maximize the value of county resources, thriving communities, transportation services, and affordable housing stock.

Remediate environmental and safety hazards in homes of children diagnosed with asthma or respiratory distress, while increasing awareness of the importance of proper ventilation, moisture control, allergen reduction, integrated pest management, and home safety.

Develop affordable clean energy programs for the unincorporated areas of the County.

---

**COUNTY COUNSEL**

Donna Ziegler

*County Counsel*

---

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide effective, efficient, and cost-effective legal representation, advocacy, and advice to County agencies and departments, thereby advancing the objectives and protecting the financial resources of the County of Alameda.
MANDATED SERVICES

The Office of the County Counsel is required by law to provide legal representation to County Agencies, Departments, and Officers in civil matters. The Office of the County Counsel provides cost-effective services that reduce the County’s exposure and financial liability. The Office has demonstrated that its familiarity with the County processes and procedures as well as its knowledge of governmental issues enables it to provide greater service. Agencies seek County Counsel services across a broad spectrum of matters in recognition of the value added by the Office’s involvement.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

County Agencies and Departments request a variety of legal services from the Office of the County Counsel. Services include legal advice in governmental, corporate, and other areas of specialized law, litigation and pre-litigation representation, loss prevention, personnel advice and counseling, the Diversity Programs and ongoing training. Many of these services result in reduced liability exposure and litigation expenses. The Office strives to remain fully informed about the goals and activities of the County, to provide services that are relevant, and to assist in solving problems proactively.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

Maureen Lenahan

Interim Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To establish paternity, medical, and child support orders and to collect support payments in an efficient and cost effective manner while maintaining the respect and dignity of the public we serve.

MANDATED SERVICES

California Family Code §17000 et seq. mandates a separate County Department of Child Support Services to provide a variety of child support services free of charge including location of non-custodial parents; establishment of paternity and medical support orders; and enforcement, collection, and distribution of child support orders.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) provides no discretionary services.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Nancy O’Malley

District Attorney

MISSION STATEMENT

The Alameda County District Attorney’s Office maintains the highest standards of excellence, professionalism and integrity. The mission of the District Attorney’s Office is to ensure, protect, and promote public safety in Alameda County. The District Attorney’s Office shall review and prosecute criminal cases in both the adult and juvenile systems in an ethical manner; shall protect consumers and the environment, shall preserve and protect public integrity; shall uphold the rights of victims of crime; and shall support and protect victims of and witnesses to crime.

MANDATED SERVICES

The Alameda County District Attorney’s Office reviews, charges and prosecutes criminal violations of the laws of California. In addition, the District Attorney’s Office:

- Prosecutes actions in the Juvenile Justice system;
- Brings civil and criminal actions to protect consumers from fraud, including real estate fraud, insurance fraud, mortgage fraud, medical and financial fraud, public assistance fraud and financial crimes against elders and dependent adults;
- Brings legal actions to protect the environment;
- Notifies every crime victim of their rights under the California Constitution and ensures that those rights are upheld and enforced; and
- Advocates for the court to order legally appropriate restitution on behalf of crime victims and the State of California Victims of Crime Fund.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

The District Attorney’s (DA’s) Office engages in a number of discretionary services to better serve the citizens of Alameda County:

- The Alameda County Family Justice Center (ACFJC) is a one-stop shop providing comprehensive and collaborative services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, child abuse, dependent abuse, and elder abuse. Victims have access to a host of services and service providers from our community. ACFJC houses Natalie’s Nook, a reading/learning center for children ages 0-7; Homework Helper, for school-age children and teens; KidZone, a safe space that allows for play, reading, computer learning, art, and healthy snacks; "Camp Hope" and "Camp Can" summer programs, as well as counseling services for children affected by these crimes.
- The DA’s Office educates, mentors, and employs local teens through the District Attorney’s Justice Academy, Project Search, and the DA’s Summer Youth Employment Programs, “Pipeline to Justice," "Legal Beginnings,” and Earl Warren Fellowships.
- Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) Watch, the District Attorney’s award-winning collaboration to combat human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of minors, has trained thousands of law enforcement officers and victim advocates on prosecution policy, marshalling community resources, and best practices to end human trafficking. H.E.A.T. Watch conducts informational outreach through billboard and bus stop advertising, radio programs and podcasts, and an
educational graphic novel, all of which are designed to raise awareness and assist victims of exploitation. In addition, the District Attorney’s Office has created the Young Women’s Saturday Program, a 16-week program to enhance self-esteem and develop life skills for girls who have been victims of trafficking or are at risk for trafficking.

- The DA’s Office creates numerous original training programs, including "Points and Authorities," "Point of View" and "California Criminal Investigation," that inform and educate thousands of district attorneys, defense attorneys, judges and peace officers throughout California about recent developments in the law and best practices for law enforcement.

- The Truancy Unit works closely with school districts and parents/guardians to improve student attendance.

- The Victim Witness Division provides victim support services and processes claims to the State Victims of Crime (VOC) Program on behalf of crime victims.

---

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*David Rocha*

*Fire Chief*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide the highest level of service to the community by valuing our members, promoting positive leadership, and dedicating ourselves to excellence.

**MANDATED SERVICES**

As set forth in the State Health and Safety Code and the Uniform Fire Code, the County has a responsibility to provide fire protection, fire prevention, and arson investigation services to all the unincorporated areas. The Alameda County Fire Department (ACFD), a dependent special district under the governance of the Alameda County Board of Directors, has been designated to carry out these mandated functions and, in addition, to act as the sworn agent for the State Fire Marshal. The Uniform Fire Code and local ordinances, as adopted by the County, provide unincorporated area residents and businesses with the same degree of fire and life safety services as those found in surrounding cities.

**DISCRETIONARY SERVICES**

While the existence of the ACFD is mandated, its specific functions, operations, and service levels are discretionary, thereby providing the Department with the flexibility to address essential safety and health service demands within the communities it serves. The ACFD provides first-responder paramedic services 24 hours per day, 365 days per year throughout the unincorporated areas of the County as well as to its contract partners of Dublin, San Leandro, Newark, Union City, Emeryville, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Through automatic aid, mutual aid, and contractual agreements, the ACFD and surrounding jurisdictions ensure the highest level of emergency fire and medical response in the event of local or regional disasters. The ACFD is also responsible for the administration and operation of the Alameda County Regional Emergency Communications Center (ACRECC).
GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY

Willie A. Hopkins Jr.
Agency Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide high quality services that are on time, fiscally responsible, environmentally sustainable, and convenient for our customers.

MANDATED SERVICES

Mandated services under State and federal laws include early childcare education programs, building maintenance of 130 facilities including Glenn Dyer and Santa Rita Jails, County Veterans’ Memorial buildings, hazardous materials abatement and compliance, provision of facilities and services to Courts, Real Property (real property leasing, acquisition, sale, property management); Property and Salvage (surplus of County property); and environmental protection/sustainability per AB 32 and 939 (State mandates); and activities mandated through County ordinances including countywide purchasing activities, preference for local businesses, Green Building, and waste reduction and recycling.

The following support services are provided to County departments that are providing mandated services: Technical Services (architectural/engineering services, construction management, energy and environmental management and sustainable programs management); and Portfolio Management (capital planning and asset management).

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Discretionary Services include Motor Vehicle, Parking, Office of Acquisition Policy, Messenger Services and Administration.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY

Alex Briscoe
Agency Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide fully integrated health care services through a comprehensive network of public and private partnerships that ensures optimal health and well-being and respects the diversity of residents.

MANDATED SERVICES

Major services include Behavioral Health Care, Environmental Health and Public Health programs, primary care services provided by community-based organizations (CBOs), health care services for County residents qualifying as medically indigent, and Health Care Administration. In addition, the Health Care Services Agency (HCSA) administers the County portion of Measure A funds and two special districts for Vector Control and Emergency Medical Services.
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Discretionary services are designed to provide leadership and advocacy in the expansion of services to Alameda County’s indigent and underserved populations. These programs and services include: One-e-App, a web-based system that streamlines enrollment in a range of health insurance programs; the First 5 Alameda County early childhood development initiative; Center for Healthy Schools and Communities; Interagency Children’s Policy Council; Youth Uprising; County Appointed Special Advocates; Healthy Families/Medi-Cal policy, outreach and enrollment activities; Lead government agency for the Medi-Cal Administrative/Targeted Case Management claiming program; Safe Passages/Our KIDS; Healthy Smiles Dental Program; administration of the Tobacco Master Settlement Fund and the County Measure A fund and implementation of the federal Medicaid Section 1115 waiver.

HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES

Mary Welch
Interim Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To deliver high quality and timely human resource services in partnership with County agencies, departments, and special districts to enable our customers to reach their organizational goals.

MANDATED SERVICES

Human Resource Services (HRS) provides State and locally mandated services to County agencies, departments, and special districts. Under the Civil Service Commission, HRS administers merit-based examinations, classifies positions, certifies eligible candidates, and conducts disciplinary appeals. Under the Board of Supervisors, HRS provides support services including: labor negotiations, employee relations, unemployment insurance, countywide administration and negotiation of medical, dental and life insurance and all employee benefits, Temporary Assignment Pool (TAP) Program, and the Step-Up Program to recruit and employ individuals with disabilities.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

HRS provides discretionary technical support services, advising operating departments in all areas of human resources management, work and family programs, and training and development, including management of the Alameda County Training and Education Center. HRS also provides ongoing end user support of Human Resource Information Systems.
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Tim Dupuis
Chief Information Officer

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide information technology consulting, system development, Internet and Intranet connectivity, strategic planning, data center services, application support, and network services to County departments and agencies.

MANDATED SERVICES

The Information Technology Department provides support services to departments in carrying out their mandated services.

All services are discretionary.

COUNTY LIBRARY

Carmen L. Martinez
Interim County Librarian

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Alameda County Library is to offer opportunities and resources for lifelong learning that support individual and community growth and enrichment. We remain responsive by providing welcoming spaces, outreach, materials, personal expertise, technology, partnership, and innovation.

MANDATED SERVICES

According to Education Code 19100-19116, “The boards of supervisors of the several counties may establish and maintain, within their respective counties, county free libraries.”

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Alameda County Library provides services to children, teens, and adults. Our reach extends to five participating cities: Albany, Dublin, Newark, Union City, and Fremont with satellites at Centerville, Irvington, and Niles. San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, and the Bookmobile service unincorporated Alameda County. The Library provides literacy support to other county programs such as Juvenile Hall, the Family Justice Center, Camp Sweeney, REACH Ashland Youth Center and the Santa Rita Jail. WiFi-enabled Pop Up Library Service for Everyone is extending that reach to community-based organizations (CBOs) such as Abode Housing.
PROBATION DEPARTMENT

LaDonna Harris
Chief Probation Officer

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Alameda County Probation Department is to protect the public’s safety by providing supervision, services, support, and opportunities to clients on behalf of the people of Alameda County through quality supervision, leadership, services, and effective partnerships.

MANDATED SERVICES

The Probation Department responds to statutory and judicial mandates. Service mandates include detention of youth determined by the Juvenile Court to be a risk to themselves or others; provision of detention intake reviews and recommendations to the Juvenile Court, including a social study of the youth and his or her family; investigations of adult offenders and recommendations to the court for sentencing; and community supervision of juvenile and adult offenders.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

The Community Probation Program is funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and provides collaborative opportunities for the Probation Department, in concert with other law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations, to provide services that meet the needs of youth throughout the County and directly to the communities where clients live.

Camp Wilmont Sweeney is a minimum security residential treatment facility serving male youth ages 15-19. Camp Sweeney is a local alternative to group home placement or the California Division of Juvenile Justice. The Camp Sweeney program is six to twelve months in duration, and is designed after the Missouri Model whereby youth participating in this program are offered a wide variety of services intended to address their individual criminogenic risk factors and prepare them for successful transition back in their neighborhoods and families.

Prevention Services are funded by the Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding Program, enabling the Probation Department to provide services to at-risk youth. The Probation Department contracts with community-based organizations that serve at-risk youth described as pre-delinquent offenders, in addition to a limited number of youth on probation.

Mentor Diversion is a non-statutory pre-plea diversion program for non-violent first-time drug offenders 18-24 years of age who are charged with various drug-related violations of the California Health and Safety Code.

The Training Unit is a staff development program that coordinates training for staff and ensures compliance with the Board of State and Community Corrections Standards and Training for Corrections.

The Volunteers in Probation Program recruits volunteers from our diverse community to assist probation officers in serving adult and juvenile probationers, as well as to provide services and programs at the juvenile facilities.
PUBLIC DEFENDER

Brendon Woods
Public Defender

MISSION STATEMENT

To zealously protect and defend the rights of our clients through compassionate and inspired legal representation of the highest quality, in pursuit of a fair and unbiased system of justice for all.

MANDATED SERVICES

The Public Defender is the primary defense attorney for indigent individuals accused of crimes or otherwise facing potential loss of liberty. For these individuals, legal representation at public expense is mandated by the United States and California Constitutions, as well as by statute and County Charter. All core services are statutorily mandated.

Cases in which the Public Defender has a legal conflict of interest are referred to the Court Appointed Attorneys Program (CAAP), which operates pursuant to a contract administered by the County Administrator. The Indigent Defense budget also includes court-ordered defense expenses for indigent defendants represented by CAAP, and the Alternative Dispute Resolution services contracts.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

The Public Defender provides discretionary representation in the Clean Slate Program, Parolee Reentry Court and Homeless and Caring Court, important portals to community reentry for many individuals and their families.

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY

Daniel Woldeesenbet
Agency Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance the quality of life for the people of Alameda County by providing a safe, well-maintained and lasting public works infrastructure through accessible, responsive and effective services.

MANDATED SERVICES

Mandated services include building inspection, processing of land development and subdivision requests, County Surveyor functions, flood control, control of storm water pollution, road services, street lighting, and transportation planning. The level of services provided by the Public Works Agency (PWA) is determined by specific statutes, ordinances, or the Board of Supervisors.
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES
Discretionary services and programs carried out by the PWA include the School Crossing Guard Program and the annual radar speed survey.

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

Tim Dupuis
Registrar

MISSION STATEMENT

To encourage all eligible residents to exercise their right to vote; conduct elections in a fair, accurate, and efficient manner that inspires public confidence in the County elections process; maintain a continuous professional level of service to the public; and develop new techniques to improve outreach services that acknowledge the diversity of Alameda County.

MANDATED SERVICES

All services provided by the Registrar of Voters Department (ROV) are mandated by the California Elections Code, the California Government Code, and the California Constitution. These mandated services include voter registration, voter outreach, candidate services, elections services and vote by mail, and petition checking for all federal, State, County, special, and local elections conducted in the County. Additional information on these mandated services is in the Major Service Areas section later in this chapter.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES
None.

SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Gregory Ahern
Sheriff

MISSION STATEMENT

Since 1853, the Alameda County Sheriff's Office has protected life and property while providing humane treatment to those in custody. Each day the mission of the Sheriff’s Office is to demonstrate ability to enforce the law fairly, commitment to professionalism, service to the community with integrity and trust, and obligation to duty with honor and pride.
MANDATED SERVICES

California Government Code, Section 24000, identifies the Sheriff as an elected officer of the County and defines the qualifications required to hold office. California Government Code, Section 26600, outlines the duties of the Sheriff and states that the Sheriff shall preserve peace, arrest all persons who attempt to commit public offenses, exercise the authority to keep the County jail and the prisoners in it, and serve all process and notices in the manner prescribed by law. In addition to being a Constitutional Officer of the County, the Sheriff also acts as the Coroner, Director of Emergency Services, and an officer of the courts. The level of services is determined by specific statute or judicial mandate.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Discretionary services include emergency dispatch, contract police services, crime laboratory services, and programs designed as alternatives to incarceration, such as the Weekender program. The services provided by the Crime Prevention Unit, such as School Resource Officers, the Youth and Family Services Bureau, and the Deputy Sheriff’s Activities League, are also discretionary.

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

Lori A. Cox
Agency Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the economic and social well-being of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities.

MAJOR SERVICE AREAS AND MANDATED SERVICES

The Social Services Agency consists of the following four departments whose mandated services include the following:

- Administration and Finance provides Agency administrative direction, oversight, coordination, and outreach as well as management for the distribution of assistance payments to clients, and prepares claims for reimbursement.

- Adult, Aging and Medi-Cal Services provides Adult Protective, Public Guardian/Conservator/Administrator, and Older American/Californian Acts services. AAMS also administers In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Medi-Cal programs and operates the Area Agency on Aging.

- Children and Family Services provides emergency response and shelter services as well as investigative, maintenance, reunification, and permanent placement services and administers the Foster Care Program.

- Workforce and Benefits Administration administers the eligibility for and disbursement of mandated assistance programs and provides the required employment and support services for public assistance recipients.
TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR

Donna L. Whit
d Treasurer-Tax Collector

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide Alameda County departments and all other depositing agencies with a secure and convenient countywide central banking facility and treasury administration services, including the investment of monies on deposit in the Treasurer’s Investment Pool; to provide timely and accurate real estate and personal property tax billing and collection services; to provide efficient business licensing services in the unincorporated areas of the County; and to provide comprehensive in-house administration of the County’s deferred compensation plan programs for eligible employees.

MANDATED SERVICES

The California Revenue and Taxation Code (Section 2602) and the County Charter require the Treasurer-Tax Collector to collect and process all property taxes and to receive and secure County revenues from all other sources. The County Ordinance Code (Chapter 3.04, Section 550) requires that the Tax Collector issue annual business licenses in the County’s unincorporated areas and collect and process business license taxes.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

The investment of monies in the Treasurer’s safekeeping until required to fund operations is a discretionary activity that the County undertakes to earn interest revenues. The Treasurer’s investment function/activities are governed by Section 53601 of the California Government Code.

The administration of the County’s deferred compensation plan, a voluntary employee-contributory tax-deferred savings plan, is a discretionary activity that the County sponsors in order to provide County employees with another means to supplement their retirement income. The County’s deferred compensation plan is authorized and governed by Section 457(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Treasurer also administers the County’s 401(a) supplemental retirement plan for certain qualified employee groups.

ZONE 7 FLOOD CONTROL WATER AGENCY

Jill Duerig

General Manager

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a reliable supply of high-quality water and an effective flood control system to the Livermore-Amador Valley Area, and to develop and manage the water resources in a fiscally responsible, innovative, proactive, and environmentally-sensitive way.
MANDATED SERVICES

Zone 7 provides treated and untreated water for municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses, and develops and maintains adequate facilities to prevent property loss and damage from floods in the Livermore-Amador Valley Area.

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

Zone 7 provides no discretionary services or programs.