



El Cerrito Democratic Club

March 2025 Newsletter

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ECDC
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1. El Cerrito Democratic Club General Information

Since 1952, the El Cerrito Democratic Club (ECDC)—one of the oldest Democratic clubs in the state—has provided a forum for area residents to discuss and take action on issues and campaigns of local, national, and international importance. Our General Membership Meetings are open to all and usually held on the fourth Tuesday of each month except October and December, when we typically have our annual dinner and holiday party.

Our monthly General Membership Meetings are generally in a hybrid format accessible both in person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom.

For monthly meeting and calendar reminders, you are invited to download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) invites to your computer:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZUpOCvqDkpEtH10GiVZ7NcegZqDI_tJeMI/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGpqjwjHdKXsxGCRpwcBo_CXe3wpnpej7d1zU_CChZpNS31M-V4I5ZWl8z6

For those of us who've been able to come to Hana Gardens, it's been wonderful to be in community and gather in person. Whether you join us in person or by Zoom, we encourage you to come a few minutes early to mix-and-mingle with fellow ECDC members.

The El Cerrito Democratic Club and its activities are supported by volunteers and the annual dues of members. Please see the "Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions" section towards the end of this newsletter for directions on how to join the ECDC or renew your membership. El Cerrito Democratic Club executive board officer elections occur annually each January.

Special thanks to our 2025 volunteer officers:

El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2025)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ● President – Neil Tsutsui | ● VP Programs – Ruthie Abelson Olivas |
| ● Past President – Champagne Brown | ● VP Publications – Courtney Helion |
| ● Executive Vice President – William Ktsanes | ● VP Records – Leslie Reckler |
| ● VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg | ● VP Treasurer – Ed Crowley |
| ● VP Membership – Greg Lyman | |

The specific duties of officer positions are described in section "VII. Officers" of the Bylaws posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.

If you're interested in participating more actively in the ECDC, please consider volunteering with the Club and/or joining the Executive Board.

Help is always greatly appreciated!

- Courtney Helion, VP Publications

2. Information and Zoom Link for the Tuesday, March 25th El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting

Our General Membership Meetings are generally in a hybrid format, accessible both in person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and via Zoom.

To join the monthly ECDC General Membership Meetings via Zoom, please use this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Zoom Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Zoom Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial In by Phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968;

Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Phone Passcode: 920761

Please note that the Passcode is different if you dial in by phone rather than join through Zoom.

March Meeting Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle, Zoom Logins

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:31 pm – Review and Approve the March 2025 Meeting Agenda **(Action Item)**

6:33 pm – Review and Approve the February 2025 Membership Meeting Minutes **(Action Item)**

6:35 pm – Officer Reports:

Membership (Greg Lyman)

Media (Madeline Kronenberg)

Publications (Courtney Helion)

Treasurer (Ed Crowley)

Records (Leslie Reckler)

Programs (Ruthie Abelson Olivas)

Records (Leslie Reckler)

6:40 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report (Champagne Brown)

6:45 pm – ECDC Budget Report (Ed Crowley) **(Action Item)**

7:00 pm – March Program: *“Different Perspectives About the Redesign of Richmond Street”*

7:45 pm – Announcements (please limit to 2 minutes)

7:55 pm – Good of the Order

8:00 pm – Adjourn

- Neil Tsutsui, ECDC President

3. Minutes from the February 25th El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting

El Cerrito Democratic Club
General Membership Meeting Minutes
6:30 PM, Tuesday, February 25, 2025
(in person at Hana Gardens, 10860 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito; and via Zoom)

Call to Order

Neil Called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Review and Approve the February 2025 Meeting Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved.

Review and Approve the January 2025 Membership Meeting Minutes

On the motion of Akacic and the second of Mark, the minutes are approved unanimously as presented.

Officer Reports:

- Membership (Greg Lyman)
 - Currently 94 members.
- Media (Madeline Kronenberg)
- Publications (Courtney Helion)
- Treasury (Ed Crowley)
 - Profit and Loss for 2024 was presented.
 - The Balance Sheet for 2024 was presented.
- Records (Lesie Reckler)
- Programs (Ruthie Abelson Olivas)

Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

- Presentation by Contra Costa County Public Defender Ellen McDonnell. Possible budget cuts at state and federal. She can help with "Know your Rights" presentations. There is a new deportation court in Concord and it is ramping up.
- ADEMS voting has ended.
- Convention CADEM May 30-June 1 in Anaheim.
- Eight delegates were awarded. The number of delegates is based upon how many Democrats in your area. We were awarded the second highest. There may be changes based upon who wins ADEM.

February Program: Selection of Program Topics for the El Cerrito Democratic Club

Choose Eight.

The winners:

1. How Will Trump Affect Us?
2. The Plan for a El Cerrito Plaza BART Station Library: What are the Latest Updates?
2025 Monthly Membership Meetings (Action Item)
3. What's the Future of Streets in El Cerrito? (Specific to El Cerrito)
5. Protecting Immigrants / "Know your Rights" Seminar
6. The Hillside Natural Area Plan
7. The Veterans Building and Potential Partnerships between El Cerrito and Contra Costa County
9. Election Landscape for the Midyear (2026 and Beyond)
10. Fire Safety

Announcements

DPCCC "Know your Rights" trainings are starting soon.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Financials Fiscal Year End 2024

4. ADEM Update by Neil Tsutsui



ECDC Members Elected as Delegates to the California State Democratic Party

Congratulations to ECDC members Y'Anad Burrell, Nick Pilch, and Neil Tsutsui who won seats as ADEM Delegates in the February election! And a BIG THANK YOU to those of you who voted in this election!

For the next two years, these Delegates will communicate and advocate for our interests to the California State Democratic Party, and will represent our region at the State Convention, May 30-June 1, 2025. They will be joined by ECDC members Maria Alegria, Michael Nye, Katie Ricklefs, and Cheryl Sudduth, who were elected as Delegates via the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC).

State-wide election results can be found on the ADEM page [HERE](#).

- Neil Tsutsui, ECDC President

5. Different Perspectives about the Redesign of Richmond Street

The ECDC is honored to have guest speakers share their perspectives, and background about this ongoing community project.

For more information about those perspectives and the project please visit:

<https://el-cerrito.org/1674/Richmond-Street-Complete-Streets-Project> : “The City is partnering with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) to deliver the Richmond Street Complete Streets Improvement Project from Fairmount Avenue to Elm Street. The project is partially funded by the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal grant and will implement pedestrian safety and accessibility improvements to the entire length of Richmond Street.

Project elements include high-visibility crosswalks, flashing beacons at unsignalized crosswalks, roadway safety lighting, ADA-compliant curb ramps, repairing or replacing non-conforming sidewalks, enhanced traffic signing, high-visibility green pavement markings, signs to enhance the existing shared-lane bike facility, traffic signal safety upgrades at key intersections, pavement rehabilitation, painted tear-drop medians, and in-fill of street trees to create a continuous tree canopy.

The project is in the initial design phase and construction is scheduled to start after the EBMUD Wildcat Pipeline Improvement Project on Richmond Street is completed in 2025.”

<https://www.richmondstreetforall.com/> : “The Richmond Street Neighbors Association is a community organization of neighbors, volunteers and friends, dedicated to encouraging democracy and integrity in local planning and decision making to ensure our representatives act in the best interests of our community. We believe in livability for everyone, no matter who you are, where you live or what form of transportation you choose.

Community participation creates empowerment, which can lead to people making positive change. The future of the community we inhabit matters to all of us in very tangible ways. In this future, we strive to balance a diversity of people’s needs and preferences with concerns for the community’s health and well-being. The power of a strong, supportive community, where people help each other practically, emotionally and socially, enables the entire community to thrive.”

6. Global Elon Musk Boycott

Now is time for thoughtful action, let's meaningfully and mindfully put our money where our mouth is. The following action items have been suggested by the Rainbow Warriors:

CALL TO ACTION! BOYCOTT HIS BUSINESSES!

- **ACTIONS:**
 - Stop the purchase of his business products
 - Stop buying services from his businesses
 - Peacefully convince others to join this boycott
 - Demand no contracts with the US Government
- **BUSINESSES/COMPANIES TO BOYCOTT:**
 - <https://www.thomasnet.com/insights/elon-musk-companies/>
 - Tesla - Cars, vehicles, and solar systems
 - Solar City - solar systems
 - SpaceX - space vehicles and Starlink
 - X- previously Twitter - stop using it and do not place advertisements - do not sign up for any financial offerings
 - XAI - An artificial intelligence company - do not use their products
 - The Boring Company - building tunnels - deny them from getting any construction, infrastructure or transportation projects
 - Neuralink Corporation - Implantable brain-machine devices - do not purchase or encourage.

*Rainbow Warriors is a group with no online or media presence but has chapters all over the USA.

7. Future Events - *Mark Your Calendar!*

El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings and Events

ECDC March Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, March 25, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: Different Perspectives About the Redesign of Richmond Street

ECDC April Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, April 22, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC May General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, May 27, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Monthly Program: Scheduling for 2025

ECDC June General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, June 24, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC July General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 22, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC August General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, August 26, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC September General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, September 23, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC Annual October Dinner – 73rd Annual Dinner; time, date and location TBD;

no General Membership Meeting in October; guest speaker and topic TBD

ECDC November 2025 General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, November 25, 2025;

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Preliminary Monthly Program: TBD

ECDC Annual Holiday Party – time, date and location TBD; no General Membership Meeting in December

** There are no El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings in October or December; ECDC's Annual Dinner is in October and its Holiday Party is in December.*

ECDC Executive Board Calendar – The El Cerrito Democratic Club's Executive Board (E-Board) meets monthly via Zoom for about an hour to handle routine club business, plan programs for the monthly General Membership Meetings and discuss newsletter content. As with the General Membership Meetings, the E-Board meetings are open to the public. The Zoom Link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89264608412?pwd=c2sySEI5ZEplL1hVUM5bERCZGpEQTO9>.

Below is the ECDC E-Board Calendar through June 2025:

2025 El Cerrito Democratic Club Executive-Board Calendar (E-Board)					
Monthly ECDC Executive Board Meeting (E-Board)	Deadline for Submitting the General Membership Meeting Agenda and Articles for the ECDC Newsletter	Monthly Newsletter Completed	Monthly ECDC Newsletter Postal Mailed (to those who have paid extra for USPS delivery)	Monthly ECDC Newsletter Emailed (by 6:00 pm)	General Membership Meeting Date
Thursday, 3/6/2025	Saturday, 3/15/2025	Tuesday, 3/18/2025	Wednesday, 3/19/2025	Saturday, 3/22/2025	Tuesday, 3/25/2025
Thursday, 4/3/2025	Sunday, <u>4/13/2025</u>	Tuesday, 4/15/2025	Wednesday, 4/16/2025	Saturday, 4/19/2025	Tuesday, 4/22/2025
Thursday, 5/1/2025	Thursday, 5/15/2025	Tuesday, 5/20/2025	Wednesday, 5/21/2025	Saturday, 5/24/2025	Tuesday, 5/27/2025
Thursday, 6/5/2025	Sunday, 6/15/2025	Tuesday, 6/17/2025	Wednesday, 6/18/2025	Saturday, 6/21/2025	Tuesday, 6/24/2025

Other Community Events

El Cerrito City Council Meetings – 6:00-9:00 pm, first and third Tuesday of most months; hybrid format; in the City Council Chambers at City Hall (10890 San Pablo Avenue) and via Zoom; agendas and recordings available; <https://www.el-cerrito.org/113/City-Council>

El Cerrito Farmers Market – 9:00 am-1:00 pm, every Tuesday and Saturday; El Cerrito Plaza, 9000 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530; southwest corner parking lot between Trader Joe's and Wells Fargo Bank; www.contracosta.ca.gov/7549/Contra-Costa-Certified-Farmers-Markets



Library Commissioner Office Hours – Various dates and times (below) at the El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave, El Cerrito. Are you curious about the workings of the El Cerrito Library, or do you have suggestions on how it can better serve the community? El Cerrito Library Commissioner Michael Fisher and Alternate Commissioner Bethany Woods are eager to listen and engage in informal discussions with you during their new Office Hours (drop-in; no appointment required). These sessions are a perfect opportunity to voice your thoughts, ask questions, and become more involved in your local library community!

- Saturday, April 5th: 1- 3 pm
- Tuesday, April 8th: 6-8 pm
- Thursday, April 24th: 10 am-12 noon

DPCCC and West County Dem Events

<https://contracostadems.com/events/>

West County Dems Monthly meeting - 6:00 - 7:30 pm, second Tuesday of the month; This is a local Democratic club chartered by DPCCC. Meetings are via Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83146226722?pwd=cHRneSsxYkVnWWdTcTNQRnBBTmhzd09>

For more info, contact the club. <https://www.westcountymdemocraticclub.com>

DPCCC General Membership Meeting - 7:00 - 10:00 pm, April 17th, 2025; If you are not a DPCCC member and wish to attend, please RSVP to the DPCCC Secretary at secretary@contracostadems.com.

If you are a DPCCC member, you should have received an email with details for the meeting about seven days in advance. If you did not, please email the DPCCC Secretary at secretary@contracostadems.com.

If you know of other community events that may be of interest to our members, please submit them to Courtney Helion at ecdc.pubs@gmail.com for publication in future newsletters!

- Courtney Helion, VP Publications

8. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

REMINDER! – ECDC annual memberships expire annually on **September 30th**. If you have not yet done so, please renew for 2025. **Now is the time!**

You can do so online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

Or by mailing a check to: ECDC Membership
PO Box 192
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dues are \$5 for students, \$20 for individual members, and \$30 for two adults at the same address. The newsletter comes with membership and is delivered electronically by email. The added cost for a printed, hard-copy, postal mailed newsletter is \$18 (in addition to dues). Please make checks payable to “El Cerrito Democratic Club” and provide an email address for all individual members.

If you have membership questions, please email Greg Lyman at membership.ecdc@gmail.com.

Thank you!

- Greg Lyman, VP Membership

9. Call for Newsletter Submissions

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Newsletter is published eleven months a year (each month with the exception of a combined December-January issue) in advance of the General Membership meetings. ECDC members, friends and supporters are invited to submit articles and announcements regarding local issues and events of interest. Submissions should be emailed to ecdc.pubs@gmail.com for review and editing.

- Courtney Helion, VP Publications

10. Link to the ECDC Website and Bylaws

Periodically the Club updates our Bylaws. The bylaws were changed in October 2018 to meet DPCCC requirements; revisions were proposed and adopted during the January 2021, August 2022 and March 2023 ECDC meetings. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.