



El Cerrito Democratic Club

Newsletter – March 2021

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ECDC
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1. Agenda for the March 23, 2021 Meeting

March 2021 ECDC Agenda

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84303785299?pwd=bUFyY3VHVXFYTEZaR3YvSIN4dUpQQT09>

ZOOM Meeting ID: 843 0378 5299

Passcode: 111652

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,84303785299# US (San Jose)

+14086380968,,84303785299# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 843 0378 5299

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbSLJabijj>

6:20	Assemble and Mingle
6:30	Call to Order
6:35	Approve Minutes from February Meeting
6:40	Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Events, Newsletter, Website, Secretary
6:50	DPCCC Report
7:00	Program
7:40	Seamless Transit Initiative: <u>Club Action Required</u> , please review article
7:50	Announcements
8:00	Adjourn

2. Preview of the March 23, 2021 Program

ECDC will be celebrating Woman's History Month by welcoming BART Director Rebecca Saltzman to join us! Director Saltzman will talk to us about transportation, BART Developments, housing and the power of being a woman in office!

Rebecca has spent the past two decades as a policy advocate, coalition builder, grassroots organizer, and manager with local, state, and national issue-based organizations. Rebecca has also managed, worked on, and advised several local candidate campaigns, various public transit ballot measures, and a statewide initiative.

Rebecca served as the Deputy Director at Breast Cancer Action, an activist, watchdog, and educational organization that seeks to achieve health justice for all women at risk of and living with breast cancer. Previously, Rebecca served as the Interim Executive Director of the California League of Conservation Voters, the non-partisan political action arm of California's environmental movement. Prior to taking on this role, Rebecca managed CLCV Education Fund's Green California program, a network of more than one hundred organizations with a common environmental, health, and justice agenda, working collaboratively to speak to the legislature with one voice.

Rebecca is an elected member of the BART Board of Directors, representing District 3 in the East Bay, and currently serves as Vice President. Rebecca also serves on the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority and the Alameda County Transportation Commission.

Rebecca served as Vice-Chair and member of the Oakland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee from 2009-2013, where she advised the City of Oakland on pedestrian and bicycle policy and infrastructure. In 2011, Rebecca received the League of Women Voters of Oakland's Making Democracy Work Award in recognition of her work and commitment to increasing citizen engagement in local government.

3. Recap of the February 23, 2021 Meeting

ECDC General Meeting Notes

President Lyman called to order the February meeting of the El Cerrito Democratic at 6:33 pm.

Approval of the January Meeting Minutes

- Chris Peebles and Champagne Brown moved and seconded the January minutes as noticed; motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of 2021 Programs

- Agreement was reached to tie speakers to topics we are interested in. A general set of themes evolved that included topics related to transportation, housing and health.
- As the Poor People's Campaign reflects all these themes and more, they will be contacted in the hope making a future presentation to the Club.

Guest Presenter – Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton

- 7:07 pm: Carolyn Wysinger introduced District Attorney Diana Becton.
- DA Becton spoke until 7:54pm. Highlights included the progress her team has made in her tenure. (Her Zoom presentation was recorded.)

Announcements

- It was announced that Congressman Mark DeSaulnier would be holding a forum on gun violence on Thursday, February 25th at 3 pm. The press release was shared in the Club meeting.
- The California Alliance for Retired Americans is asking for Governor Newsome to support Medicare for All. A link to their petition was shared in the Club meeting and attendees were asked to consider adding their name.

President Lyman adjourned the February meeting of the El Cerrito Democratic Club at 7:58 pm.

4. Recap of District Attorney Diana Becton's presentation to the February 23, 2021 Meeting

Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton was a guest speaker at last month's ECDC General Meeting. DA Becton, a Democrat who was initially appointed as the interim DA in September 2017 when her Republican predecessor resigned amidst a campaign finance and ethics scandal, is the first woman and first person of color ever to serve as Contra Costa's District Attorney. She was elected to a full term in 2018 and is running for re-election in June 2022.

DA Becton spoke with the ECDC about her many accomplishments in criminal justice reform in areas ranging from policing and sentencing, youth interventions that break cycles of crime, reduced reliance on incarceration and increased access to mental health treatment; her priorities going forward; and the progressive vision she brings to the Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office.

The ECDC invites you learn more about District Attorney Diana Becton by visiting her campaign website at www.becton4da.org.

5. Announcement of JoAnn Walker's candidacy for Alameda County Sheriff and Pamela Price's candidacy for Alameda County District Attorney

In neighboring Alameda County, two women of color Democrats, JoAnn Walker and Pamela Price, are also running respectively for sheriff and district attorney. Alameda County District Attorney candidate Pamela Price recently announced that she has joined with Alameda County Sheriff candidate JoAnn Walker to form a criminal justice reform slate.

In her endorsement of Walker’s candidacy, Price notes that

JoAnn Walker is a 25-year police officer, an educator, a graduate of Cal State Hayward and a Master Post-certified Instructor. Walker is well versed in issues surrounding mental and emotional health, suicide, and domestic violence...

(As) a Black female resident of Alameda County for more than 40 years, she is sensitive to the issues of race and gender discrimination that have characterized the Alameda County justice system.

JoAnn Walker knows that jails should not be used to fill the need for drug rehabilitation services, housing, and mental health services. JoAnn Walker believes that we cannot continue to have a “double standard” for residents and law enforcement officers.

I believe that JoAnn Walker will bring leadership with integrity to the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department.

Their election is also in June 2022. ECDC invites you learn more about these two candidates by visiting JoAnn Walker’s website at walker4sheriff.com and Pamela Price’s website at pamelaprice4da.com.

6. Proposed Action for Seamless Bay Area

ECDC Asked to Support Seamless Transit Principles

The Executive Board seeks Club’s permission to send a letter to El Cerrito Mayor and City Council requesting the City pass a resolution supporting the Seamless Transit Principles. The Seamless Transit Principles were developed to guide local, regional, and state decision-makers to pursue a seamlessly integrated, world-class transit system across the San Francisco Bay Area that works for people.

They were compiled by Seamless Bay Area, a non-profit group, with the input of cities and advocacy groups, transit agency staff, and elected officials. By building a coalition of groups and cities supporting the principles, Seamless Bay Area seeks to build public awareness and support for reforms that promote greater regional transit integration and overcome resistance to change. Viewable in full at www.seamlesstansitprinciples.org, the Principles are:

1. **Run all Bay Area transit as one easy-to-use system**
2. **Put riders first**
3. **Make public transit equitable and accessible to all**
4. **Align transit prices to be simple, fair, and affordable**
5. **Connect effortlessly with other sustainable transportation**

6. **Plan communities and transportation together**
7. **Prioritize reforms to create a seamless network**

The Seamless Transit Principles have been endorsed by 9 public agencies, including BART, Alameda County, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and the Cities of Berkeley, Millbrae, San Mateo, and Albany, and 32 organizations and businesses. A petition supporting the principles has also been signed by over 1,850 individuals.

With the approval of the Club, the Executive Vice President will submit the following resolution to the El Cerrito Mayor and City Council.

Draft Resolution

WHEREAS The San Francisco Bay Area, despite being an exceptional place to live, faces an uncertain future due to several interrelated crises -- decreasing housing affordability, increasing congestion, rising pollution, widening inequality, and the recent COVID-19 public health crisis – all of which are exacerbated by an inadequate and poorly-performing public transportation system; and

WHEREAS, Despite billions of dollars of investments in new transportation infrastructure over the past five decades, public transit in the Bay Area has failed to attract large numbers of new riders, and has never been used by more than 12% of the population for commute trips since 1970; by contrast automobiles have always been used for over 75% of commute trips; and

WHEREAS The quality of and usage of public transit in the Bay Area has declined in recent years, with transit trips per capita declining by 10%, average bus speeds declining by 9%, and transit commute times increasing by 11% between 2001 and 2016; and

WHEREAS The City of El Cerrito has two BART stations, including one that is being remodeled; and

WHEREAS The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan promotes transit-oriented development, housing and transit; and

WHEREAS The California Air Resources Board reported in 2018 that no California regions, including the Bay Area, are on track to meet their greenhouse gas reduction targets, with increasing Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and declines in transit ridership cited as a primary factors;

WHEREAS Using public transit in the Bay Area is inconvenient and costly for many types of trips, requiring riders to: use multiple transit systems operated independently with little

coordination; pay multiple separate fares; experience unpredictable transfers; and navigate different wayfinding systems and brand identities;

WHEREAS Low income people, many of whom have experienced displacement and have long commutes requiring multiple transit services, are among the most adversely affected the Bay Area's poorly integrated public transportation system, experiencing a significant financial burden from needing to pay multiple separate transit fares or being forced into costly vehicle ownership;

WHEREAS Regions with high-ridership public transportation systems are, by contrast, characterized by highly integrated networks of quality local and regional transit services that make traveling without a private automobile convenient and easy for all types of trips, featuring aligned routes and schedules, coordinated transfers, high quality transit hubs, common branding and customer information, and other common regional customer experience standards.

WHEREAS Regions that have successfully integrated and simplified transit fares have experienced many broad social benefits, including a shift in travel from private cars to public transit, an increase in overall public transit usage, and expanded mobility options and cost savings for riders.

WHEREAS, A well-functioning and coordinated transit system plays a critical role in supporting public health and safety during an emergency, with 31% of Bay Area essential workers relying off public transit to get to work. It also plays a critical role in supporting an economic recovery. During and in the aftermath of major disruptions to our transit system, close coordination among agencies facilitates prioritization of the most critical needs, efficient deployment of resources, and clear communication to customers.

WHEREAS, the Seamless Transit Principles are 1) Run all Bay Area transit as one easy-to-use system, 2) Put riders first, 2) Make public transit equitable and accessible to all, 3) Align transit prices to be simple, fair, and affordable, 4) Connect effortlessly with other sustainable transportation, 5) Plan communities and transportation together, 6) Prioritize reforms to create a seamless network

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The City of El Cerrito affirms commitment to working collaboratively with State agencies, MTC, municipalities and other public agencies develop a highly integrated regional transportation system that provides convenient, seamless, and affordable transit for customers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of El Cerrito supports the Seamless Transit Principles and agrees to be publicly listed as a supporter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City Council authorizes the Mayor to send letters to our elected officials and regional transit agencies declaring the City's support of the Seamless Transit Principles.

Flyer for the Council

The Seamless Transit Principles Viewable at: www.seamlessbayarea.org/seamless-transit-principles



1) Run all Bay Area transit as one easy-to-use system

Public transit should work as one seamless, connected, and convenient network across the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. Getting around on transit should be as fast and easy as driving a car. Coordinated bus, rail, and ferry routes and schedules should encourage effortless transfers. Consistent and clear customer information, branding, and maps should make using transit simple and dignified.



2) Put riders first

Riders should feel comfortable when using transit and be treated like valued customers. Public transit agencies must do more to listen to riders and continuously improve service. They must prioritize riders' needs above all else, and overcome all operational, political and bureaucratic barriers to provide an excellent and seamless customer experience.



3) Make public transit equitable and accessible to all

People of all income levels, ages, abilities, genders, and backgrounds should have access to world-class public transit. People who are the most reliant on transit are best served by a universal, inclusive, regionally integrated, connected system that is used by all. People with limited means to pay for transit should be provided with discounts.



4) Align transit prices and passes to be simple, fair, and affordable

Transit should provide good value for money. Fares across the region's 27 public transit agencies must be aligned into a consistent, fair, and affordable system that encourages using transit for all types of trips and doesn't punish riders for transferring. Cost-effective monthly passes should work across the Bay Area and should be widely available to individuals, employers, and schools.



5) Connect effortlessly with other sustainable transportation

A person's journey does not end when they get off a bus or exit a station. Excellent pedestrian, bicycle, and other pollution-free transportation options should seamlessly connect public transit to communities and destinations, supporting door-to-door trips that don't require a car.



6) Plan communities and transportation together

High quality public transit should be at the heart of communities across the Bay Area. Transportation should be closely aligned with our region's land use, promoting a connected network of transit-oriented, walkable communities that expands access to affordable housing and job opportunities, and reduces car travel and greenhouse gas emissions.



7) Prioritize reforms to create a seamless network

A regionally integrated, world-class transit system won't happen on its own -- it will take leadership, unprecedented levels of cooperation, and changes to existing local, regional, and state policies. The cities, counties, public transit agencies, regional authorities, business leaders, advocacy groups and elected representatives of the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California megaregion must prioritize the broad public interest and urgently work together collaboratively to advance critical reforms. Our future depends on it!

7. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

Please remember to renew your Club membership – and many thanks to all who have renewed already! Dues are still \$5 for students, \$20 for single members, and \$30 for two adults at same address.

You can renew online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/> or you can mail your check to P.O. Box 192, El Cerrito, CA 94530. Please make checks payable to El Cerrito Democratic Club and provide an email address for all members.

Memberships follow the calendar year, so your renewal now is good through Dec. 31, 2021. If you have questions, please email Neil Tsutsui, ECDC's VP for Membership, at: membership.ecdc@gmail.com. Thank you!

8. Link to ECDC Website and Bylaws (Revised January 2021)

Periodically the Club updates our Bylaws. The bylaws were changed in October 2018 to meet DPCCC requirements. More recently, revisions were proposed and adopted during the January 2021 Club meeting.

The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website: <https://ecdclub.org/>