Alameda County
CommunityConnection
A Community Newsletter from the Alameda County Administrator's Office

Progress in Reducing Opioid Overdose Deaths

Alameda County had seen a 49% decrease in opioid overdose deaths since 2015, according to new statistics cited by the Health Care Services Agency (HCSA). The numbers suggest that a multi-front effort involving HCSA and numerous partners is seeing success in reducing the misuse of opioid medications and curbing overdoses.

"The collective effort of providers from the entire medical community is making a life-saving difference. Especially with the growing threat of fentanyl, now is the time to re-double our efforts to improve access to Medication Assisted Treatment and help individuals suffering from addiction walk the road to recovery," said Thomas Sugarman, MD, President of the Alameda-Contra Costa Medical Association (ACCMA).

The problem of opioid abuse has become a national crisis. On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control. ACSA and its Safety Net Coalition are working with partners including ACCMA and the Alameda County MEDS Coalition to address the issue of opioid abuse in the County.

Kathleen Clanon, MD, the HCSA Medical Director, said an encouraging sign in Alameda County is that prescriptions for Buprenorphine – an opioid used to treat opioid addiction – increased 16% since 2015. Buprenorphine has shown to support addiction recovery by curbing a vicious cycle of addiction and withdrawal.

"The increase in availability in Buprenorphine makes life-saving treatment more accessible for patients; contributing to the decrease in overdoses and prescriptions in Alameda County," she said.

Other statistics showing the success of efforts to curb opioid overdoses include:
• Prescriptions of opioids decreased 12% since 2015 in Alameda County.
• An estimated 300 lives in Alameda County have been saved through the use of Naloxone, an antidote to opioid overdose.

First responders are being regularly trained and equipped with Naloxone, which in California is available in pharmacies without a prescription. Other efforts, including intervention through needle exchange programs and street medicine, also appear to be helping local residents vulnerable to opioid abuse. The number of doctors who will prescribe Buprenorphine for patients is also increasing.
For more information, view this **PowerPoint presentation**.

Inside This Issue

CAO's Corner

By Susan S. Muranishi
County Administrator

On June 29, the Board of Supervisors approved a $3.2 billion Alameda County Budget for FY 2018-19 that is balanced and closes a $65.9 million funding gap without significant reductions to services or staff. The Final Budget – developed by my office in collaboration with County elected leaders and appointed department heads – includes funding increases to community service providers, allows the County to continue building its financial reserves and supports a workforce of more than 9,700 employees. It also reflects numerous priorities set out in **Vision 2026**, the updated Alameda County strategic vision recently approved by the Board.

We remain concerned about what lies ahead as we look to the coming year and beyond. Many economists are predicting a recession within the next two years, which would create significant challenges in funding services for County residents. Throughout hearings and deliberations on a Final Budget, the Board supported the $3.2 billion proposed spending plan presented by my office on June 12. The Final Budget included additional commitments advanced by individual Board members to address priority issues, including:

• **Homelessness and Housing.** The Board declared a "shelter crisis" in Alameda County to access additional State funding to deal with the growing problem of homelessness. The County will contribute additional tax increment funding to address the problem: $2.5 million annually for three years to the County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund and $5 million annually over two years to a new Capital Project Fund to provide housing for unsheltered residents. The Board also acted to require local cities to match all County-administered homelessness funds they receive.

• **Economic Development/Infrastructure.** The Board established a new Economic Development/Infrastructure Fund for East Alameda County to be administered by the Public Works and Community Development agencies in collaboration with the District One Board office. The fund will receive $5 million annually starting in FY 2018-19 for projects that will be approved by the full Board.

Though resources are limited, the strength of the local economy is allowing the County to fund some modest service enhancements and to forge ahead with innovative programs reflecting priorities outlined in the **Vision 2026** plan. For instance, we are moving ahead on several fronts to address the regional housing crisis by leveraging resources generated by the Measure A1 Affordable Housing General Obligation Bond passed by voters in 2016. In addition, the Health Care Services Agency will continue to expand a safety net dental care program for youth and young adults, as well as a palliative care initiative to expand access to end-of-life planning services and care.

As in the past, this year's budget process illustrated the difficult task we face in addressing emerging challenges with the need to conserve resources and prepare for tougher times ahead. Our open and inclusive Budget process reflects Alameda County's commitment to providing first-rate local services – now and into the future.

June Primary Sees Nearly 40 Percent Turnout in Alameda County

On June 21, the Registrar of Voters Office certified Alameda County's results for the June 5 Primary Election, once again making Alameda County one of the first large counties in California to complete its tally of the votes in a major statewide election.

In all, 339,627 voters cast ballots in the June election, which represents nearly 40 percent of Alameda County's 854,766 voters. This figure is above the 37 percent statewide turnout and is significantly greater than the 25.8 percent voter turnout in Alameda County for the same election four years ago.

Measure A, the half-cent sales tax measure to fund countywide childcare and pre-school programs, fell just short of the required 66.7 percent needed to pass.

In countywide election contests, Melissa Wilk was elected Alameda County Auditor-Controller/Clerk-Recorder; Nancy O'Malley was re-elected Alameda County District Attorney; and Phong La and James "Jim" Johnson topped a 4-person race for Alameda County Assessor and will head to a November runoff.

County Celebrates Program
Supporting Local Veterans Through Art

*County Supervisor Richard Valle presents commendation to Oakland Vet Center Director Dr. David Joseph with local Veterans, Oakland Vet Center Staff, Alameda County Leadership, and Alameda County Arts Commissioners and Staff. Pictured (from left) are Rachel Osajima, County Arts Commission Director; Violet Juno, Arts Commission Coordinator; Melissa Wilk, County Chief Deputy Auditor Controller; Willie Hopkins Jr., County General Services Director; Sarah Oddie, County Supervisor Chan's Staff; Jim Palmer, Veteran; Carlos Garcia, Veteran; Cris Gomez, Cal Vets Academic Counselor; Luis Hernandez, Cal Vets Academic Counselor; Raul Valle, Veteran and father of Supervisor Valle; Paul Wilson Jr., Veteran; Richard Valle, County Supervisor; Jack Morton, Veteran; Dr. David Joseph, Oakland Vet Center Director; Matt Lutz, Oakland Vet Center Counselor; Fanny Garcia, Oakland Vet Center Assistant Manager; Richard Garber, Oakland Vet Center Counselor; Noel Perry, 100 Families Program Founder; Local Veteran; Miguel Ochoa, Veteran; Stan Roth, Veteran; Jose Nino, Veteran; Andrew Johnstone, Arts Commissioner; Eric Murphy, Arts Commissioner; Sean Stephens, Marin County Veterans Service Officer. **Photograph by Paul Kuroda.***

On July 25, Alameda County Supervisor Richard Valle presented a commendation to honor local veterans and the Oakland Vet Center for their participation in the Veterans Art Program, which brings creative expression workshops to the Vet Center to support Alameda County veterans and their families.

"I am pleased to present this commendation to the Oakland Vet Center to celebrate the artistic accomplishments of local Veterans participating in the Veterans Art Project and to honor the Oakland Vet Center's commitment to providing innovative care for our Veterans," said Supervisor Valle. "This partnership project demonstrates that creativity and art are a vital part of every successful, healthy, and thriving community."

The Veterans Art Project is coordinated by the Alameda County Arts Commission in partnership with the Oakland Vet Center. The project provides veterans with opportunities to express themselves in a supportive environment, explore visual art making techniques, and engage in community building. This innovative program is part of a statewide initiative for Veterans and active military funded by the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Artworks created through this program have been on view as part of the Arts Commission's Art In Public Spaces program in the Board of Supervisors Lobby Gallery on the 5th Floor of the Alameda County Administration Building at 1221 Oak St., Oakland.

This exhibition features three projects conducted at the Oakland Vet Center in Oakland and at the Cal Veteran Services Center on the UC Berkeley campus. Participants include 11 Veterans who served during the Vietnam War and 24 Veterans who served during the Global War on Terrorism. Art projects on display include watercolor, photography, collage and writing.

Assessor Delivers 2018-19 Fiscal Year Assessments

The Alameda County Assessor's Office has completed the 2018-2019 local assessment roll of $300.1 billion, reflecting a $19.9 billion or 7.11% increase over last year's assessment roll. The net local roll, after all legal exemptions were applied, totaled $288.2 billion. The primary reason for this year's assessed value growth is the continued recovery in real estate market values. Properties that were afforded temporary reduced assessments in prior years due to market value declines are now receiving increases in their assessed value due to market values increases.

Other factors leading to this year's total assessed value growth included the 1.02% mandatory inflation index being applied to all properties' assessed values that were not affected by assessment declines in prior years. This factor added $5.1 billion. Sales/transfers of real estate also added $10.8 billion, new construction activity added $1.7 billion, and business personal property assessments increased by $1.5 billion.

The 2018-19 assessment roll accurately reflects assessments of more than 515,000 taxable properties.

In July, the Assessor began mailing this year's individual assessments to all secured roll Alameda County property owners. If property owners have questions regarding their property assessment, they are encouraged to call the Assessor's Office at (510) 272-3787 (real estate assessments) or (510) 272-3836 (business personal property assessments).

For your convenience, the application and instruction booklet can be viewed and printed from their webpage at http://www.acgov.org/clerk/assessment.htm.

Vision 2026 Website Unveiled

A dozen years ago, Alameda County leaders met with a leading futurist and engaged in extensive brainstorming sessions, outreach and public discus-sion to create a long-term "Vision" for the future in which our communities remain vibrant, prosperous, safe, healthy and inclusive.

Earlier this year, the Board of Supervisors approved an updated version of that Strategic Vision, known as Vision 2026. The details are now accessible to everyone via the **ACGOV Vision 2026** website that was officially launched in June.

The new website gives shape to a comprehensive effort by County leadership to set a course for the next decade that anticipates community challenges and maximizes our ability to meet residents' needs in a rapidly changing world.

It provides in engaging detail Alameda County's vision of the future and the goals and guiding principles crafted through extensive collaboration involving County leaders, other local officials and concerned residents. Together, Vision 2026 represents the priorities of a community that is "facing forward" to promote an Alameda County that is a great place to live, work and do business far into the future.

ACGOV Vision 2026 renews the County-led initiative Vision 2016, launched in 2006, to anticipate emerging challenges – and dramatic technological and demographic shifts – so that local government continues to lead the way in enhancing the high quality of life in our communities.

With Vision 2016, Alameda County launched an innovation journey that included Town Hall meetings, our Data Sharing Initiative, community hackathons and other efforts to remake our organization in ways that better enable us to meet emerging challenges.

We continue those efforts with **Vision 2026**, positioning Alameda County better than ever before to advance our communities toward a brighter future. Town Hall meetings to be held as part of our Vision 2026 implementation will be announced soon.

We hope you take the time to review the website to see how **Vision 2026** drives the priorities that guide our Alameda County team as we seek to maximize resources and strive always to break new ground in terms of providing great government service.

We also hope that the ideas and concepts presented in **Vision 2026** inspire you to offer your own ideas about what we can do to maintain and enhance Alameda County's reputation as a place that is second to none.

Bright Ideas - A Feature Focusing on Innovation
New Automated System Improves Library Service

The Fremont Main Library branch of the Alameda County Library has installed an Automated Materials Handling System (AMHS), to automate the check-in and sorting of library materials. The AMHS speeds up the time it takes to get books and other library materials back on the shelves and into the hands of patrons.

The Fremont Main Library has an annual circulation of more than 1.2 million items. With this automation, library staff will have more time to interact with patrons and better serve our communities. "This is just one of the ways that the Alameda County Library is leveraging technology to enhance the customer experience for patrons," said Cindy Chadwick, County Librarian.

For patrons' convenience, there are three book return chutes; two located outside of the library and one inside. Upon returning items, patrons have the option of receiving a receipt by email, text, or paper. With the expedited check-in of materials, patrons' library accounts are updated with greater speed and accuracy. As re-shelving of books happens more quickly, it is anticipated that circulation of library materials will increase.

"This technology reduces repetitive tasks that can lead to injuries among staff and frees up staff time to focus on the evolving needs of our communities," said Brian Edwards, Principal Librarian of the Fremont Main Library. To continue to keep pace with library circulation, the AMHS is expandable to process 10% annual growth. It is capable of processing 2,000 check-ins per hour and handling an annual circulation of 1.5 million materials.