

## **Caring Alameda Act: Measure A**

### **The Question**

“Shall an ordinance [called the Caring Alameda Act] [be adopted] confirming the City Council’s actions to permit reuse of vacant federal buildings on a 3.65 - acre parcel on McKay Avenue and allow for the development of a wellness center for senior assisted living and supportive services for homeless individuals by changing the General Plan designation from “Federal Facilities” to “Office,” removing the Government Combining District classification and maintaining the existing zoning district designation?”

### **The Situation**

The Federal Government currently owns a 3.65-acre parcel on McKay Avenue with 11 buildings and security fencing. In April 2017, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determined the Site to be suitable for use as a facility to assist the homeless under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and selected Alameda Point Collaborative (APC) to develop the property for a Wellness Center. In September 2018 the federal government and APC entered a 3-year renewable lease in which the federal government will transfer property ownership to APC as soon as the City and APC complete the required paperwork. In December 2018, the Alameda City Council amended portions of the general plan and the zoning ordinance to allow the federal government to transfer the property. In November 2018, Measure B, an initiative to change the land use designation of the McKay property site to Open Space, qualified for the ballot.

### **The Proposal**

Measure A, the Caring Alameda Act, was placed on the ballot by the Alameda City Council to support the designation of the property to allow for the development of the Wellness Center and to comply with its agreement with the federal government. The Wellness Center would serve as senior assisted living and supportive services for formerly homeless individuals. The Wellness Center is designed to serve 7-10 homeless/day, provide 90 units of permanent supported living, a 50 bed Medical Respite Program and a Health Clinic for the Center population. At least 50% of the services are dedicated to Alameda residents. Approval of The Caring Alameda Act would confirm the change in designation for the property to allow for the Wellness Center or any future use designated by the City Council.

### **Fiscal Effect**

If Measure A is successful and the property is transferred to Alameda Point Collaborative for the Wellness Center no City of Alameda taxpayer dollars are required for its development. The City may choose to provide one-time subsidies in support of the services and on-going service costs (police, fire, EMS) in the amount of approximately \$185,000 per year. Additionally, APC would contribute \$19,000 annually to the City in various taxes and fees. If the federal government continues to own the property the City would incur service costs of \$9,000/year (police, fire, emergency services). If the City purchases the land and builds a public park the capital costs for park are estimated at \$11.7 million and annual general fund costs of \$140,000 for maintenance. If Measure A is not successful, many grants already designated for a Wellness Center would be lost. Additionally, costs to taxpayers for the election are estimated at \$580,000 - \$700,000 rather than \$25,000 if included in the November 2020 election.

### **What a Yes or No Vote Means**

If Measure A receives more **YES** votes than Measure B, the City Council’s designation of the McKay

Avenue property to allow for the development of a Wellness Center is upheld. More Yes votes would also allow the City Council to change the property designation in the future in response to changing conditions or concerns.

If Measure B receives more **YES** votes than Measure A, the land use designation is changed to Open Space but it would not cause the land to be transferred to the City, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) or any other governmental entity for public use as a park; it would not clear and remediate the property; and it would not provide funding to build and maintain a park.

If Measure A and B **both fail** to attain a majority vote, the land use designation approved by City Council in December 2018 will remain in effect.

### **Supporters say**

- A Yes vote will confirm the City Council's decision to make the site available for senior assisted living and supportive services for unsheltered individuals.
- Treating homeless neighbors with a basic level of dignity and respect is an important community value. The Wellness Center is a positive, life-saving solution.
- The Wellness Center will save City money by reducing the costs of emergency response and uncompensated medical care.
- This Measure takes advantage of an opportunity to save money by using existing buildings on surplus government property and to leverage regional and private resources to develop and maintain the Center.

### **Opponents say**

- Measure A is an example of the City Council's fiscal irresponsibility, poor urban planning and misrepresentation.
- The Wellness Center is designed as a regional facility to serve homeless from other Bay Area cities. There is no priority to serve Alameda homeless seniors or veterans.
- The facility will cost \$40- 50 million to build with annual operations of \$8.3 million and competes with other City funding priorities.
- Should this regional homeless facility be located on an island with traffic gridlock?

### **Supporters**

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Mayor, City of Alameda

John Knox White, Vice Mayor, City of Alameda

Jim Franz, Director-Retired, American Red Cross Alameda

Doug Biggs, Executive Director, Alameda Point Collaborative

### **Opponents**

Char Perlas, Vice President of Student Services, Canada College

Trish Spencer, former Mayor and former School Board Member

Jesus Eduardo Vargas, Fitness Instructor/Social Services Advocate

Liza Gabato Morse, Rehabilitation Trainer, Disabled Students Program (DSP)

### **Website**

[www.wecarealameda.com](http://www.wecarealameda.com)