

**Macdonald Avenue Corridor Task Force
Regular Meeting Minutes
In-Person Meeting
Friday, November 21, 2025, 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Point Molate Room, 450 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor
Richmond, California**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Call to order: 1:30 p.m. by Jesson de Leon, Senior Business Assistance Officer.

2. Roll Call & Check In

Present: Mayor Eduardo Martinez, Councilmember Claudia Jimenez, Councilmember Doria Robinson* and Richmond Main Street Initiative (RMSI) Executive Director, Sarah Wally
*Arrived after Roll Call

Absent: Richmond Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Vernon Whitmore

Staff Present: Jesson de Leon, Senior Business Assistance Officer; Junne Garcia, Management Analyst; Nannette Beacham, Economic Development Director; Patrick Seals, Administrative Chief, Children and Youth; and Tony Tamayo, Chief of Staff Mayor's Office

3. Agenda Review and Adoption

No changes were made to the meeting agenda.

4. City Staff Reports (Verbal)

Jesson de Leon, Senior Business Assistance Officer, reported this was the first official meeting of the Macdonald Avenue Corridor (MAC) Task Force.

5. Public Comments

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, invited the MAC Task Force to the Contra Costa Mayors Conference on December 4, 2025 at the City of Pinole Senior Center, R.S.V.P. required by November 25, 2025, \$70 per person; to the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council Hug a Bear Dinner on December 10, 2025 at the Galileo Club, from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m., \$50 per person with participants asked to bring their own bear and name them; and to the Commission on Aging Senior Winter Ball on December 13, 2025, \$50 per person with Top Shelf to perform and with El Sol Restaurant & Catering to cater the event.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. October 2, 2025 – Special Meeting – Downtown Richmond Walking Tour

1st - Robinson, 2nd – Wally, approved unanimously by a voice vote.

At this time, Task Force members provided feedback on the Downtown Richmond Walking Tour.

Sarah Wally, Executive Director, Richmond Main Street Initiative (RMSI), reported the Downtown Richmond Walking Tour had been well received. Assemblymember Matt Haney spent three hours with the team along with ABC News. The recommendations and asks put forward articulated the things that were achievable and there were also short term asks and interest in longer term planning and potential legislative asks. There was a follow-up with Assemblymember Buffy Wicks' Office, Real Estate Specialist, who was asked to follow-up on surplus lands and what a potential carve out may look like to adjust requirements to be able to accommodate mixed income. Assemblymember Haney had been very receptive and could be looking for a follow-up from the Task Force, which had put on a well-organized and precise tour. She recommended the Task Force follow-up with Assemblymembers Haney and Wicks.

Councilmember Robinson suggested the tour was great with one of the highlights the visit to the East Bay Center to see how investing in a historical resource and anchor institution could transform the Macdonald Avenue Corridor. She suggested a future tour focus more on Macdonald Avenue and not on Nevin Avenue, which was not an impactful economic argument, although it had nice historical elements such as signage but there was similar signage on Macdonald Avenue. There should also be more focus on the 12th Street property and East Bay Center opportunity zones and City-owned properties. She wanted to see the Task Force discuss Macdonald Avenue as the epicenter of economic activity, housing and related other things that could go off of the epicenter.

Ms. Wally agreed that as the Task Force mapped out its tasks in the area, it look at the 8th to 16th Street lots, City-owned property on Macdonald Avenue and Harbour Way, the Kaiser Permanente property and private properties. The possibility of public-private partnerships had been raised with Assemblymember Haney since the situation included a number of "hop scotch" properties, with the only contiguous property that was City-owned on 12th Street, with the rest spot lots.

Councilmember Jimenez acknowledged the comments but wanted the Task Force to also consider the whole area to see a bigger impact, and she looked forward to the discussion of the goals of the Task Force. She also wanted a greater discussion on the opportunities in the Macdonald Avenue Corridor, such as addressing empty lots. The goal of the City was to build 20,000 units of housing, although such development would not just be built in the downtown corridor. She wanted the Task Force to consider that when discussing the Macdonald Avenue Corridor.

Councilmember Robinson and Ms. Wally explained that the first focal effort for the Task Force had been determined to be Macdonald Avenue from 8th to 16th Streets, with a bigger mass from 23rd Street to the parkway and Bissell to Barrett Avenues, and with the intent to narrow the focus to have a larger impact beyond the Macdonald Avenue Corridor.

Mayor Martinez recalled the Task Force was to look at the area holistically and then focus on a particular area.

7. Presentations, Discussions & Action Items

- a. Standing Meeting Schedule. DISCUSS and CONSIDER a Schedule for the Task Force

Tony Tamayo, Chief of Staff Mayor's Office, commented there had been discussions that the meetings of the Task Force not be held on the same date as City Council meetings.

Economic Development Director Nannette Beacham recommended the Task Force meetings be held twice a month beginning the month of January, given the limited term for the first phase and possibly reduce the meeting length to one hour for each meeting.

The Task Force discussed the meeting schedule, date and time, and there was consensus to have the MAC Task Force meeting dates be scheduled on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month starting in January 2026, and with a meeting start time of 11:00 a.m. The meetings would run approximately one hour for each meeting with more time available if needed.

- b. Membership. DISCUSS and CONSIDER Additional Stakeholders for the Task Force

Councilmember Robinson understood Ms. Wally and Vernon Whitmore, Executive Director, Richmond Chamber of Commerce (RCOC) planned to discuss with business owners' possible membership on the Task Force and return with recommendations.

Ms. Beacham reported a flyer had been prepared for the Task Force to review prior to posting on the City website to solicit interest in serving on the Task Force.

The Task Force clarified the intent to have between 12 and 15 stakeholders to ensure presentations from property owners, business owners and residents of the area, representation from the Arts Corridor, East Bay Center, Kaiser Permanente, possibly Lifelong and BART. Some of those businesses had already been contacted and had expressed interest. It was acknowledged that prospective business owners and property owners were not always necessarily the same person and what that combination would look like was noted. It was recommended that AC Transit also be added to the list of stakeholders, and the recommendations for two property owners, two business owners and two residents as members prompted a discussion about reducing the overall number of stakeholders.

Mr. Tamayo added that some state partners and staff had also expressed interest in joining the Task Force as stakeholders including Assemblymember Wicks and Senator Jesse Arreguin.

Mayor Martinez reported he wanted to float the idea for a floating quorum for all City Commissions and task forces, which would allow a quorum to be achieved depending on the number of people attending, particularly since many City Commissions had been unable to conduct business given challenges achieving a quorum.

Councilmember Robinson expressed concern with the concept because it was possible a small group of people may end up making decisions for the whole.

Mayor Martinez summarized the potential stakeholder list as follows: Sarah Wally – RMSI; Vernon Whitmore – RCOC; two property owners; representation from BART; Kaiser Permanente; East Bay Center; Arts Corridor; two business people; two residents; AC Transit; two State representatives (Assemblymember Wicks and Senator Arreguin); and possibly include LifeLong Medical Care.

The Task Force discussed the potential stakeholder list and there was concern given the number of members whether there would be difficulties achieving a quorum. It was suggested the Task Force not designate seats and continue as a five-member Task Force until it was known how many people might apply as a stakeholder. The City Council could consider appointing more members to the Task Force if needed. The Task Force also discussed the possibility of removing LifeLong Medical Center from the list of stakeholders.

Patrick Seals, Administrative Chief, Children and Youth, commented with that expanded number and possibly based on a rolling quorum, as an example, if there were 12 members/seats, the quorum would be seven, and if at any point two members were no longer active or decided to discontinue, even if there were 12 total seats on the Task Force, only ten would be filled and the quorum would then drop to six. Staff confirmed the City Council would have to determine whether or not there could be a rolling quorum.

Mr. de Leon clarified the direction from the Task Force was for an open invitation for an interested party to apply to the Task Force. He also clarified with the Task Force that the intent was to have new members by January 27, 2026, and have more structure in place such as establishing a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Mayor Martinez explained the Task Force had not established the bylaws dictating the number of members on the Task Force and establishing the role of the Task Force, which would require an agenda item. He commented that the alternative was to amend the bylaws until more members were appointed to the Task Force.

Mayor Martinez suggested that way more members could immediately be worked in without requiring City Council amendments to the bylaws, particularly given the upcoming holidays and the fact the bylaws would not be able to be amended before that time. He wanted to have at least two more members on the Task Force.

In response to Councilmember Jimenez, Mayor Martinez emphasized the intent to have the Task Force filled as quickly as possible, with at least two more members as soon as possible. If over the holiday applications came in for membership on the Task Force, those applications could be vetted and those members could be approved as a Consent Calendar item at a future City Council meeting in January. He clarified his office would do the vetting but he would let the current Task Force know so they would all be in agreement.

Councilmember Robinson understood the City Council could consider an amendment to the bylaws at its December 16, 2025 meeting, or consider an item that defined the number of seats on the Task Force and increase the membership at least four additional seats. In the meantime, notice would be sent out encouraging people to apply to the Task Force through the regular process. Anyone making application would go through the Mayor's Office and the Mayor's Office would bring recommendations to the Task Force for opinions on the recommendations. She suggested the Task Force should have a list of new members to consider at its first meeting in January 2026, and should be able to add new members by the second meeting in January.

Mayor Martinez commented it would depend on how quickly the applications were submitted.

Councilmember Robinson suggested it would be better to consider the applications as a group to understand the group dynamics rather than consider the applications one-by-one.

Councilmember Jimenez understood the deadline for interested applicants to serve on the Task Force would be the last Tuesday of January 2026, but new members would not participate until February 2026.

Mayor Martinez commented if that was the case, nothing needed to be done until the number of members and who they would be was known after which an agenda item could be considered to establish a quorum, which would not need to be done until January. He asked if that made sense to the Task Force.

Councilmember Robinson suggested interested applicants should submit now, with a deadline of early January, so that sometime in January the Task Force would have time to go over any applications and conduct interviews.

It was the consensus of the Task Force to identify a deadline of January 6, 2026 to submit applications to be a member of the MAC Task Force.

Mr. de Leon clarified that meant Task Force members would have a week before the January 13, 2025 Task Force meeting to discuss the applications.

Ms. Beacham advised the invitation to apply could include categories for business owners, property owners, residents and businesses, both for-profit and nonprofits and specific streets could be listed within the first phase of the project area, identified as 19th to 8th Streets and Bissell to Barrett Avenues.

Mr. de Leon advised the flyer to solicit stakeholders for the Task Force would be updated accordingly.

Special invitations were asked to be extended to Assemblymember Wicks and Senator Arreguin's Offices, Kaiser Permanente, BART and AC Transit.

In response to Councilmember Robinson as to how someone from the Arts Corridor would apply to the Task Force, Ms. Beacham reported she spoke to an interested party from the Arts Corridor, but who asked about compensation to participate. That person was invited to make application to the Task Force with clarification there would be no compensation.

Mr. de Leon summarized the direction to staff, which included invitations to go through the normal channels; deadline for stakeholders to apply to the Task Force on January 6, 2026; the Task Force given one week to review applicants and come back to the meeting of January 13, 2026 to discuss and then determine the total membership, which would identify the quorum, and to be an agendized item for the City Council at a meeting on January 27, 2026. The stakeholder application would be open to residents, property owners, businesses both for-profit and nonprofit that were located from sections of 8th to 19th Streets, Bissell to Barrett Avenues, and the application would include a map.

Mr. Tamayo advised the Mayor's Office could send out the special invitations.

Ms. Wally recommended a first come, first served process for the applications and the applicant must be ready and available to serve.

c. Goal Setting for 2026. DISCUSS and CONSIDER Goals for 2026 Including a Draft Timeline

The Task Force considered its goals for 2026, as follows:

- Secure a facilitator; someone who could facilitate the community design process and do the research for development opportunities and possibilities. (Robinson)
- Consider a solid document and consider the timeline and the deliverables of a consultant study by the end of the next year, with a nine-month timeline identified for a consultant to do the scope of work. How to fund the consultant and what that looked like should be brought back as part of the discussion to complete and finalize the RFP. (Wally)
- Agendize the review of the RFP at a future Task Force meeting to allow some additional brainstorming that could be included, interjected and infused into the RFP. Noted the City had an on-call list of facilitators that could be considered. (Seals)
- Before the end of the fiscal year or calendar year, determine what the Task Force wanted to accomplish and what other work the Task Force wanted the facilitator to complete. (Robinson)

- Reported 2026 would have a lot of development activity in the project area including Metrowalk Phase II, project on 12th Street and Macdonald Avenue, Barrett Street improvements, Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) projects, along with deep planning for Marina and Harbour Way, and the goal should be to support those existing development projects. (Wally)
- Creation of a Master Plan should include materials and vision for a broad long-term vision and a short-term vision to transform Macdonald Avenue in the project area zone. This should include community feedback and community meetings, taking into consideration economic drivers and understanding of anchor groups and key business types to ensure inclusion in the vision, help thinking through the use of City property putting out RFPs, talking with business owners and moving towards a different economic state on Macdonald Avenue. (Robinson)
- Suggested a Master Plan to transform Macdonald Avenue should include a consultant who provided answers to key questions including the identification of short-term goals, and outlining timelines and identification of tools to achieve those goals, such as an assessment of all private and public lots (it was noted this work had been done). (Jimenez)
- Creation of a Master Plan and identification of steps to do that acknowledging the need to understand the moving parts and how they affected the vision desired to be created as well as understanding how to activate empty lots that were owned by the City or other people. (Mayor Martinez)
- Establish an interim/preliminary work plan so that when the Task Force met, it would be moving in a concerted direction, and ensuring progress was being made between now and when a facilitator was brought on-board. (Robinson)
- Identify what was needed and checkmark the items in place so that the Task Force saw what was needed and knew who they interacted with to allow a better idea of the progress being made. (Mayor Martinez)
- The existing property ownership list in the City of Richmond, which included 71 surplus and exempt surplus properties, needed to be tuned-up with an assessment to provide a current list. (Wally)
- Identify a property inventory within the project area, of publicly-owned land and the status of whether it was surplus land or not. For privately-owned properties, identify whether any of them were in tax jeopardy or had some other problem. (Robinson)

- Send letters of intent to the property owner after an assessment of land in the project area to advise of the intent of the Task Force and invite collaboration. (Mayor Martinez)
- Develop a relationship with all property owners in the project area and invite them to be part of the process and aware of any plans. (Robinson)
- Follow-up with electeds once they articulated what they were asking for, particularly given upcoming legislation that could affect public and private lands in the project area. (Wally)

Ms. Beacham clarified, when asked by Councilmember Jimenez, she could provide an inventory of surplus property in the project area in the next week. She noted a list had been provided to the City Council in 2020. A list of private properties could also be provided through a request to the rent board.

Ms. Wally stated she had a list of assessed parcels and a good stock of property owner names and she also had information on property conditions.

Councilmember Jimenez asked that the private inventory list include the site and ownership. She understood the City of Alameda was conducting a study of all tax deferred properties in the private sector.

Mr. de Leon reported the software company CoStar had reached out to City staff and it could be a City Council item to consider the use of that software company's services on a limited basis.

Mayor Martinez would also like information on properties that were located adjacent to one another and make them City properties to present larger lots to developers as opposed to defined individual lots.

In response to Councilmember Jimenez, Ms. Wally reported a study had been prepared for the City of Richmond about ten years ago that had focused on 8th Street to Harbour Way and Bissell to Macdonald Avenues. That study had taken a Master Plan approach for the two City blocks.

Councilmember Jimenez understood this information was needed to understand how to plan the transformation of Macdonald Avenue and she asked whether there was a place where all of this information was available.

Councilmember Robinson suggested as part of the communications goal, creation of a webpage was needed for the information being collected so it was available to the public. Once there was a Master Plan, she wanted to see a professional marketing campaign around it, to get the vision out and attract the kind of resources needed to make it happen. She reiterated her desire that short-term improvement goals be considered.

Ms. Wally suggested short-term improvements could be something like the use of pole banners in the plaza and transit village adjacent to BART, and in the 12th Street lot. Adding color would change the view down the Macdonald Avenue Corridor.

Councilmember Robinson suggested rather than talk about specific things, a future agenda item be considered to really brainstorm with all members, including those in the Arts Corridor, to identify possible short-term improvements. She would like to see that be part of the work plan.

Ms. Wally added a few years ago RMSI added banners on the light poles, which were already equipped with brackets so there would be no additional costs for those items.

Councilmember Jimenez would like to discuss short-term goals when there were more members and possibly have the facilitator on-board in February who could help with the long-and short-term goals. She emphasized the need for a facilitator to help map out the goals being expressed.

Mayor Martinez noted a facilitator would have to go through the City Council and staff had a list of facilitators that could be considered.

Mr. Seals confirmed staff had a standing list of facilitators and people who could be activated fairly quickly. The list could be provided to the Task Force.

Councilmember Robinson asked that the facilitator list be agendaized for the next meeting to allow the Task Force to vet the list.

In response to Councilmember Robinson, Mayor Martinez clarified the facilitator being requested would help facilitate and help the Task Force set up for the Master Plan given the prep work needed.

Ms. Wally wanted to know what the next twelve months looked like because things were already happening in terms of improvements and she wanted to be ahead, and not behind, what could be accomplished.

Mayor Martinez commented they also need to hear from the Planning Department to learn of those projects and timelines and get an idea of all of the players and how that fit into the Master Plan to be created.

Councilmember Robinson clarified in response to Councilmember Jimenez that both Public Works and Planning had previously provided information on all projects that were interfaced with Macdonald Avenue.

Mayor Martinez acknowledged that information had been provided but had not listed the groups and timelines nor had the kinds of conversations taken place with those groups to ensure their vision interfaced with that of the Task Force work.

Councilmember Jimenez wanted to ensure they include those discussions.

Councilmember Robinson summarized her understanding of the Task Force tasks including one-to three-year short-term improvements, a five-to-20-year long-term Master Plan, short-term project for property inventory, ongoing communications with various subgoals and weighing-in on intersecting development projects and which could include reviewing RFPs, inviting people to the Task Force meetings to discuss their projects and trying to ensure they were aligned, and administrative task force duties such as getting new members and creating bylaws.

Ms. Beacham advised a consultant was working on the 12th Street and Macdonald Avenue area opportunities and that consultant had important information to be brought to the Task Force. She asked whether the Task Force wanted to meet during the month of December or wait until a meeting in January to receive that information. She clarified the information was from the MTC group, which would like to provide a preliminary update. Potential meeting dates for the Task Force could be December 8, 2025 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. or December 12, 2025 from 11:00 to 1:00 pm. or 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The consensus of the Task Force was to schedule a Task Force meeting on Friday, December 12, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Ms. Beacham wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

- d. Special Meeting – October 2, 2025. DISCUSS and CONSIDER and REVIEW Recent Tour with Elected Official “Downtown Richmond Walking Tour”

This item was discussed earlier on the agenda.

8. Action Item Recap

As noted, the Task Force identified the following tasks: one-to three-year short-term improvements, a five-to-20-year long-term Master Plan, short-term project for property inventory, ongoing communications with various subgoals and weighing-in on intersecting development projects which could include reviewing RFPs, inviting people to the Task Force meetings to discuss their projects and ensuring they were aligned, along with administrative task force duties to include getting new members and creating bylaws for the Task Force.

9. Adjourn: 3:04 p.m.