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City of Newark

2024

State of the City Address – Old Town Streetscape Exhibition

Thornton Avenue | Magnolia to Sycamore Streets

April 27, 2024

11:00 am – 3:00 pm

* + - * Good morning! Now, is that the way to kick-off a State of the City Address or what? Let’s hear it for the Newark Memorial High School Marching Band!
      * We’re excited that they could join us this morning. Under the direction of Band Director Juan Castaneda, the band performs at all home games, in parade competitions, and at Newark Days.
      * Let’s give a grand round of applause to our music students along with Drum Major Eric Cheng, and let’s thank Music Director Mr. Hernandez with Newark Middle School for joining us.

* I am Newark City Manager David Benoun. Welcome everyone and thank you for coming out this morning and joining us for our State of the City Address, right here in Old Town.
* This is a whole new way of presenting our State of the City Address, outdoors and out on the street.
* When the idea was proposed of holding the address outdoors, you can imagine the questionable looks that I got from staff.
* This approach is certainly out of the norm, but in Newark, we’re always thinking outside the box and looking for additional ways of connecting with our community.
* Well, what a more fitting way than for us to come to you. How many of you have ever attended a State of the City Adress?
* If you haven’t, I can tell you that the State of the City Address provides insight into our achievements, challenges, and plans for our future.
* Today’s program is quite unique as we are holding it in conjunction with our Old Town Streetscape Exhibition.
* We thought this format would provide a great opportunity for us to showcase one of many projects that we are working on, and to give guests a first-hand look at our vision for this area and what the possibilities are.
* Before I introduce Mayor Hannon, I’d like to ask you to stand for the singing of the National Anthem, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
* At this time, please join me in welcoming Maya Diaz to the stage. Maya is a life-long Newark resident who, while growing up in Newark, participated in community sports and recreation programs, volunteered, and worked as a lifeguard in our community.
* She attended Newark Unified School District schools; Kindergarten through 12th grade, where she participated in choir for five years and nurtured her love for music.
* Maya is currently a fourth-year music student at San Francisco State University and looks forward to graduation next month with a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance. She is overjoyed to be performing for you in her hometown of Newark.
* Thank you Maya.
* And now I’d like to introduce Shane Tavares who will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Shane is an active member in the Newark community. He is currently:
  + President of the Associated Student Body at Newark Memorial High School
  + President and founder of the Portuguese Student Association
  + Board member of the Puente Program
  + An active member in the:
    - California Scholarship Federation
    - National Honors Society
    - Parent Teacher Student Association
    - School Site Council
* Shane is also recognized for both Mission Valley ROP Student of the Year as well as this year’s Optimist Student of the Year.
* Shane is attending San Diego State University in the Fall and plans to major in Civil Engineering
* Let’s welcome Shane.
* Thank you Shane.
* Let’s thank Maya, Shane and the Newark Memorial High School Marching Band for taking part in our program.
* And now, it’s my pleasure to introduce you to the Honorable Mayor Michael Hannon!
* Before coming to Newark, Mayor Hannon worked for the City of San Jose for almost 27 years.
* He served as a Deputy Director in the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Departments.
* In 2013, Mayor Hannon was appointed to the Newark Planning Commission and was appointed Vice-Chairman in 2014.
* In 2014, Mayor Hannon was also elected to the Newark City Council and in November 2022, he was elected Newark’s Mayor and was officially sworn-in the following month on December 8th.
* Besides serving as mayor, he is also a city volunteer, working to clean graffiti in our city. He’s also active as a Life Elder Care - Meals on Wheels Driver, a Newark Rotarian, and a member of St. Edwards Men’s Club.
* This is Mayor Hannon’s second State of the City Address. Join me in welcoming Mayor Hannon.
* Thank you David!
* Good morning! I’m feeling a sense of nostalgia as I stand before you in the part of town that holds such a rich history of culture, and character.
* I’ve been a Newark resident for over 40 years and just standing here amongst all of you gives me a great sense of pride and honor to be entrusted with the responsibility of guiding our city towards a brighter future.
* Today, I will present to you the State of our City… what we’ve accomplished, what’s on our horizon, and what our plans are for the future, with an emphasis on Old Town.
* Joining us is my wife Kathleen who I want to acknowledge and thank for being here today. She is my greatest supporter.
* Public service runs in the family as Kathleen was a librarian at our Newark branch for many years. She is my greatest supporter.
* And I’m pleased to be joined by my colleagues on the Newark City Council. It has been a pleasure to serve with individuals who share the same enthusiasm as I in representing and serving the members of our community, starting with:
  + Vice Mayor Luis Freitas. Council Member Freitas has been on the City Council over 28 years. Luis, please stand and be recognized.
  + Next, is Council Member Sucy Collazo. Council Member Collazo has served for 12 years on the City Council. Sucy, please stand and be recognized.
  + Next, I’d like to introduce you to City Council Member Mike Bucci, who has served 9 years on the City Council. Mike, if I could ask you to also stand and be recognized.
  + And finally, City Council Member Matthew Jorgens. Matthew has been on the council just slightly over a year and 5 months. Matthew, if you could please stand and be recognized.
* I do want to acknowledge a special guest who joins us today and that’s Mayor Emeritus Alan Nagy. Al served on the city council for 42 years, of which 11 of the last years, he served as Newark’s mayor.
* Anytime I think of Old Town or as Al calls it, “Historic Newark”, I think of Al. He has a real passion for history and all things Newark, many of which stem from Old Town.
* Al’s even taken guests on personal tours of historic Newark pointing out many of the residential and commercial sites that helped create Newark. Let’s give Al a big round of applause.
* And next, I’d like to acknowledge someone you’ve already met and that’s our City Manager David Benoun.
* I do want to recognize and thank David and the City’s Executive Team. They continue to do an exceptional job guiding Council and executing our responses to services and programs that help address our community’s needs.
* Let me turn my attention now to our Planning Commission. The Planning Commission reviews and acts on planning applications and makes recommendations to the City Council on land use issues.
* From our commission we have:
  + Chair Jeff Aguilar
  + Vice Chair Lori Bogisich
  + Commissioner Bill Fitts
  + Commissioner John Becker
  + Commissioner Julie del Catancio
* I would like to ask any members from the Senior Advisory Committee who are here to stand and be recognized, as well as members from the Measure GG Oversight Committee and the Community Development Advisory Committee.
* Allow me to introduce our distinguished dignitaries, starting with Assemblymember Alex Lee.
* Also joining us from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors is Supervisor Elisa Marquez.
* And representing Senator Aisha Wahab’s District Office, we have Astrid Scott.
* And representing Congressman Ro Khanna’s Office, is Simeone Chien – District of Constituent Services.
* And thank you to all the businesses, vendors, students, teachers, performers, Maya, Shane, consultants, and city staff for coming out and taking part in our event.
* This collaboration is what defines us as a community and demonstrates the strength and resiliency in teamwork.
* And to all of you here today, thank you for coming out and joining me at our State of the City Address – Old Town Streetscape Exhibition.

* Hopefully you’ll leave today knowing more about Newark and gaining a better understanding as to the significance Old Town holds in Newark’s history and the reason it’s a prime example of why it’s important to invest in our community and support growth.
* Development is the cornerstone of progress and prosperity in any society. Development drives economic growth by creating investment opportunities, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
* It fosters the creation of jobs, increases productivity, and enhances competitiveness in the global marketplace.
* Development also contributes to the essence of a community, its infrastructure, and improving the quality of life for individuals and families.
* Right now, we are focusing on various Master Plans that will provide a conceptual framework for our city’s growth and development.
* Starting with our Newark Active Transportation Plan which recommends infrastructure improvements, policies, and programs to support walking and biking in Newark.
* The Plan will serve as an update to the 2017 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and explores new ways to make walking and biking safer and more inviting for people of all ages, abilities, and means.
* The Cherry Street Class IV Separated Bikeways Project is ranked as one of the five highest priority bicycle safety improvement projects for the City.
* This project adds key bicycle safety improvements to Newark’s primary north-south corridor in the southern half of the city and upgrades a vital link in Newark’s bicycle network.
* If you’ve driven or passed through Cherry Street between Central Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard or on Newark Blvd. from Civic Terrace to Central Avenue, you can see some of the work that has already been completed.
* We’re also embarking on the City’s first Facilities Master Plan which serves as a usable blueprint for future growth and maintenance of city facilities. These for example, will include the Community Center and the old library.
* The first phase of the plan included hearing from the community about the type of spaces that were of interest, including a second phase where the public provided their input to the plan by answering a survey.
* The overview findings were presented to City Council earlier this year. A top priority identified included the recommendation in the investment of a new Cultural Arts Center. A draft Plan is scheduled next month and a possible adoption this summer.
* Another master plan we are working on is an update to Newark’s Public Art Master Plan. It has been more than twenty years since the original plan was approved.
* The update will provide direction to city staff, local arts organizations, as well as guide the City Council in the planning and processes necessary to further develop, administer, and maintain a vibrant and inspiring public art program in the City of Newark.
* The update to the plan included surveys and feedback from the community to capture their ideas and thoughts, including the creation of a Public Art Committee consisting of public members. A final Public Art Master Plan will be presented to City Council for consideration next month.
* In fact, after the address, you will have the opportunity to participate in some art activities and see some possible art ideas, including an opportunity to provide your feedback on the Public Art Master Plan.
* Our next plan is the Citywide Parks Master Plan update. In 2016, the City completed a Citywide Park Master Plan. The development of the plan included assessments of the city’s park inventory, community engagement, cost analysis, and priority setting.
* The plan is eight years old and is due for an update to keep up with evolving park trends, demographic changes, and development.
* The first phase of community engagement ran from September last year through the end of January this year.
* It included a pop-up event at Newark Days, a community meeting, and an online survey. Conversations and input helped identify the needs of the community and guide the recommendations in the plan.
* The community engagement phase is complete, and the consultant is finalizing their recommendations with an expected draft presented to City Council in the summer.
* We are also working on updating our Climate Action Plan. The Plan represents our city’s commitment to increasing sustainability and addressing climate change.
* We’ve completed the draft greenhouse gas emissions inventory with our next steps including working with residents and businesses to develop a strategy to achieve the needed reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
* We recently approved the installation of solar paneling at City Hall and the Silliman Center. This will save the City approximately $8 million in electricity costs over the next 20 years.
* Another Master Plan that we are working on is the Broadband Master Plan. This Plan will develop strategies and a roadmap that lays out how Newark plans to make high-speed internet more available and affordable for everyone.
* A total of $3 million was invested for the Broadband Master Plan. $1.2 million came from ARPA funds, of which $200,000 is dedicated to developing a plan, and $1 million to improve Broadband infrastructure.
* The remaining $1.8 million came from the efforts of Assemblymember Alex Lee, and those funds are dedicated towards Broadband implementation.
* A community engagement phase was launched that included a Broadband survey and public meetings to seek community input.
* Findings and recommendations gathered brought attention towards ways of saving monies, expanding broadband, creating partnerships and opportunities, and incrementally building broadband infrastructure.
* Adding to our infrastructure, we are nearing completion of our LED streetlight upgrade. The project upgrades all streetlight fixtures to LED lighting.
* In addition to reducing the city’s energy consumption, the project will create more illuminated street conditions. This 15-year net cumulative savings is estimated to be $4.5 million dollars.
* And one of our last plans that we are working on is a plan to help our community be ready for any disaster, such as an earthquake. Being prepared and ready in the event of a disaster is our best protection.
* Currently, we are working in partnership with the cities of Fremont, Union City, Alameda County Water District, and the Union Sanitary District to address hazard mitigation in the Tri-City area.
* The Plan will allow us to identify natural hazards that could impact communities and identify actions and activities that could reduce the loss of life or property damage.
* And while we are on the subject of emergency preparedness, I do want to mention that the City’s Economic Development team in partnership with our Office of Emergency Services division, developed the Planning, Preparing, Responding and Recovering from disasters training program.
* We’ve also provided in partnership with the Alameda County Fire’s Emergency Management team, CPR and abdominal thrust maneuver, fire extinguisher usage, and Personal Emergency Preparedness training, or better known as PEP training.
* These trainings help our business employees develop plans for themselves and their families and teaches employees how to respond to potential local hazards within their workplace or home.
* We have trained over 230 employees in over 81 different businesses in the last year and will continue to expand the program.
* And we will continue to offer CERT, the Community Emergency Response Team program that focuses on training our residents on how to respond to disasters and support their families and communities.
* We encourage you to sign-up for a CERT program and become a CERT member. In fact, our CERT team is here today. Be sure to stop by their booth. They are more than happy to sign you up!
* Speaking of community, let’s continue with development and focus on housing, more specifically… affordable housing.
* We are aware that a pressing issue affecting millions of individuals and families worldwide is affordable housing. It’s no secret that the opportunity to purchase a home in the Bay Area is out of reach for far too many people.
* We need to develop policies that makes home ownership a reality.
* The lack of affordable housing isn’t just a statistic; it’s a harsh reality that impacts communities, stifles economic growth, and perpetuates inequality.
* We are aware of the need to invest in the development of affordable housing units, whether it’s providing subsidies and incentives to developers, streamlining regulations, and leveraging partnerships to maximize resources.
* We are working to achieve this vision through goals, policies, and actions which support the vision of assuring safe, decent, affordable housing for residents.
* Last year, we updated our Housing Element which places particular emphasis on housing affordability to lower income Newark residents and residents with special needs, including seniors and persons with disabilities.
* California’s Housing Element law requires that each city and county develop local housing programs to meet a defined “fair share” of existing and future housing needs.
* Eden Housing will start construction this year on its Timber Street Affordable Housing project which will provide much-needed new housing for Newark’s senior population.
* The Timber Senior Affordable Housing project consists of 79 one-bedroom units centrally located in Newark, fulfilling the city’s vision of transforming the surrounding neighborhood from light industrial and warehouse space to a vibrant, walkable residential neighborhood for our seniors.
* A groundbreaking celebration is taking place on May 10th.
* Another notable project is Satellite Affordable Housing which will be located at 6347 Thornton Avenue, near Arden Street.
* The project will consist of 57 one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments and numerous family-friendly common area amenities with a $12 million dollar investment coming from the City’s Affordable Housing Impact Fee fund.
* The developer, Satellite Affordable Housing Associates submitted their entitlement application, and it is currently under review.
* We completed the conversion of TownPlace Suites, an extended stay hotel off Cedar Boulevard into 124 affordable housing units known as the Cedar Community Apartments.
* $38.2 million dollars in funding from the State of California’s Project Homekey program, a Statewide effort to rapidly expand housing for persons experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless helped support the conversion of the extended-stay hotel into the affordable housing units.
* As many of you know, we face a significant housing shortage in the Bay Area. It is estimated that, over the next eight years, the State of California should be planning for 2.5 million new homes, with at least 1 million of those homes that meet the needs of lower-income households.
* This represents a yearly production of over 300,000 units per year. In reality, about 116,000 units per year are being built. In Newark, not only do we need affordable units, but we also need to develop housing for new businesses and their employees wishing to make Newark home.
* Let’s review our current progress on housing development.
* Bayside Newark is an integrated walkable community located next to a proposed commuter rail station near the corner of Willow Street and Enterprise Drive.
* Bayside Newark consists of several residential communities at various stages of construction, completion, or on the market. The latest development is Lennar’s Bridgeway master plan community with homes actively selling.
* FMC Willow and Grand Park by Lennar and Integral Communities joins Bayside Newark. When complete, it will be home to 279 townhomes, a mixed-use building with 91 affordable units and 3,600 sq. ft. of retail, a community building, a future transit station parcel, and a 5-acre Grand Park. Construction is anticipated this year.
* Mulberry Condos was approved last year. When completed, it will bring eight units within 4, two-story buildings.
* And Waymark Development’s Waymark Townhomes, a 76-unit subdivision, was approved last year September and was recently sold to Taylor Morrison who will be constructing the project consisting of 3-story attached townhomes within 14 buildings.
* Then there’s Robson Homes, LLC who is looking to construct 118 residential units composed of three-story, single-family homes, and two-unit attached townhomes.
* Another housing development, Lepakshi Homes, which will be located right here in Old Town. In fact, the homes are proposed on several lots on Thornton Avenue between Mulberry Street and Olive Street, and at the southwest corner of Thornton Avenue and Olive Street.
* This development will include 88 condo units, of which 13 will be affordable units.
* On the commercial front, an exciting development that opened is Costco. Costco opened its new warehouse at NewPark Mall last November bringing a 152,000 square-foot warehouse.
* Besides its usual bakery, deli, and produce departments, Costco brings a 32-pump gas station, including an optical department, pharmacy, hearing aid center and more.
* Costco also employs over 400 people, which is great for our economy as well as unemployment numbers. We are proud to say that we have a Costco in Newark.
* Turning now to Public Safety, starting with Alameda County Fire Department. I do want to recognize Fire Chief William “Willie” McDonald. I know Chief McDonald is out in the audience. If I could ask you to stand.
* Thank you for joining us this morning!
* Fire services are essential to our community’s health, safety, and well-being. Alameda County Fire Department does more than just fighting fires, they provide emergency medical services, rescue operations, hazardous materials response, community risk reduction, wildfire prevention and management, disaster response and preparedness, and public education and outreach.
* For the 2023 calendar year, ACFD received a total of 4,222 calls of service for Newark; that’s an average of 11.5 calls per day.
* Last year, ACFD established a Fuels Mitigation Crew of eight (8) through a $2 million dollar grant. Fuels Crew Technician’s perform a variety of activities, including hazard mitigation, public education outreach, fire prevention assistance, and identifying and eliminating potentially hazardous conditions in the wildland and urban interface settings and other duties as assigned.
* They hosted the annual Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast at Station 27 where approximately 1,000 residents attended.
* Over at Fire Station 28, 30 students and teachers from Sacred Heart Academy in France had an opportunity to visit a Bay Area fire department to see how they operate.
* The students and teachers were visiting through a weeklong foreign exchange program. This is the third year the fire department provided this experience to students from France.
* And they’re making sure our students and teachers are trained in emergency / disaster training as they assisted Newark Unified School District in Emergency/Disaster Plan evaluation.
* Turning now to our Police Department, first, I want to start off by congratulating Police Chief Gina Anderson on her recent retirement and thank her for her dedication and support to the Newark community.
* Chief Anderson was sworn-in as Newark’s Police Chief on April 6, 2020 and became the City’s first woman appointed to lead the Newark Police Department.
* Chief Anderson did an exceptional job, especially with the pressures of taking on the role of Chief at the height and uncertainties of COVID-19 and during a time of civil unrest.
* She was instrumental in ensuring the public’s safety while navigating the complexities of enforcing health protocols and managing her own officers’ safety. Her leadership and commitment to serving the community was crucial. We wish Gina well in her retirement.
* I would like to acknowledge our new Police Chief Jonathan Arguello.
* Chief Arguello joined the Newark Police Department in 1995 as a Police Cadet working his way through the ranks to Police Officer, Police Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and now Chief.
* His progression demonstrates his skill and commitment through hard work and leadership, and dedication. I can’t tell you what an honor it is to see one of our own advanced through the ranks.
* He knows the department, the city, his community, and knows first-hand, the challenges we’ve faced throughout the years. Congratulations Chief Arguello! We are fortunate to have you as a member of the Newark family.
* Chief Arguello, if I could ask you to stand and be recognized. It is with great pride that we recognize Chief Arguello.
* The success of our police department extends far beyond our enforcement duties. It embodies engagement and trust, crime prevention and reduction, emergency response, professionalism, accountability, and of the utmost importance… the community’s safety.
* Crime is often a symptom of deeper social issues such as poverty, inequality, lack of education, and mental health challenges that require a multifaceted approach in combating crime.
* We must ensure that our officers are adequately equipped, trained, and supported and in doing so, we have increased our focus on the training of new officers and staff development.
* We’re prioritizing professional development and succession planning, including mentorship and opportunities for future leaders and we’re ensuring current practices are consistent with department policy through policy audits.
* We’re also enhancing community engagement through partnerships, youth programs, community events, and volunteers.
* And we hired the city’s first crime analyst. The analyst works with the police department to have intelligence led policing where officers are aware of crime and traffic trends both locally and regionally.
* We applied for grants and received a grant funding of $986,000 for the Newark Vehicle and Accessory Theft Prevention Program which will assist the city in addressing the increase in catalytic converter and motor vehicle theft.
* I do want to acknowledge Newark resident John Matthews who suggested a catalytic converter labeling and serial number etching program after his catalytic converter was stolen.
* Out of his suggestion, we have now started a pilot program and the Catalytic Converter Label Identification Program is now an element of the grant funded.
* If you are interested in getting your catalytic converter labeled, please be sure to stop by Police’s booth today and sign-up there. Police volunteer Lucy Wong is here and is more than happy to sign you up.
* We also secured $148,000 in grant funding through the California Office of Traffic Safety to continue to use collision analysis to determine the primary collision factors for accidents and utilize personnel to focus on education and enforcement of applicable vehicle code violations.
* And talk about technology and persistence. You may have heard of the 52-year-old sexual assault/murder case and the DNA Jane Doe Project.
* After nearly 52 years of persistent investigative work, the Newark Police Department announced that Fred Bernard Farnham is believed to be responsible for the assault and murder of Newark resident, Nellie Hicks and Hayward resident Theresa Pica.
* Newark and Hayward Detectives collaborated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to utilize the latest in genealogical DNA technology to determine Farnham’s identification.
* He has since passed in Oregon in 2007 but this case breakthrough brought some level of closure to both Newark and Hayward families.
* It’s intriguing how advancements in technology and persistence can create results decades later. It goes to show just how powerful technology can be and how determination can affect our future.
* The Newark Police Department remains dedicated to serving the community and continues to receive high approval ratings from the public, including last fall when a scientific survey was conducted by a third-party consultant that reflected a positive assessment.
* Before we step further into the future, we need to reflect and look at where it all started. Let’s turn back time and take us back to our earlier days when this part of town was developing.
* People rode on horses or in horse drawn carriages. We later progressed and motor cars were being developed, of course they had to be cranked by hand to get started, but it was an advancement.
* And here we are today, cars are charged by electricity. I mean, look at the Lucid vehicle behind me. It’s such an impressive vehicle with advanced technology and performance.
* I know you’re questioning, “What does this comparison have to do with the State of the City Address and by the way… why are you holding the State of the City Address out here in the middle of the street in Old Town”?
* Honestly, besides the thought of bringing the State of the City Address into the community, we selected Old Town because of its roots, its history, and to bring awareness to the potential Old Town has to offer as we grow into the future, while still preserving our roots.
* Old Town is the historic heart of Newark. Did you know that Sycamore Street and Thornton Avenue intersection was once the center of an area where farms, shops, and industry were located?
* The completion of the railroad precipitated additional development that included two hotels.
* Some of the first manufacturing industries included a railroad car building firm operated by Thomas and Martin Carter.
* Graham Foundry made cast iron railroad parts including casting iron stoves and stove parts under the trade name of Wedgewood.
* How many of you know that the Carter Brothers built cable cars.
* The quality of their workmanship was impressive and included the manufacturing of cable cars that ran on San Francico’s Powell Street line.
* Old Town was a hustling, bustling neighborhood and became the community’s historic shopping and retail area. Over time, industries of farming and manufacturing have come and gone. A few of the older buildings in the area have survived.
* Old Town holds much of Newark’s history, where it all started, how we’ve endured, and the importance of retaining and shaping the historic development of this area.
* Our vision is to revitalize Old Town as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood, with a strong sense of place, thriving retail and commercial businesses, a range of housing choices for existing and future residents, a streetscape that prioritizes bicycles and pedestrians, and public space that allow community members to gather with their neighbors.
* The Specific Plan area encompasses Thornton Avenue from Elm Street to Cherry Street, and residential parcels north and south of the commercial corridor.
* In addition to study sessions and hearings from decision makers, we invited the community to participate in the planning process through open house events and by completing a survey.
* This interaction and engagement gave individuals an opportunity to tell us what is important to them and what they would like to see in Old Town.
* Our hopes are that the Old Town Streetscape Improvement Project will serve as a catalyst for private investment within the Old Town neighborhood by improving access, safety, and connections for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.
* Thornton Avenue will be narrowed from four lanes to two lanes to promote slower vehicle speeds; dedicated bike lanes will be established; sidewalks will be expanded, and new curb ramps will be installed to improve pedestrian access and allow outdoor seating.
* There will be enhanced lighting, landscaping, public art, and open plazas to create new public spaces. These spaces will encourage people to gather in their community.
* In addition, the city is partnering with the Alameda County Water District to upgrade and replace aging water main pipes.
* As you visit the exhibits later, you will have a chance to see conceptual ideas and even have an opportunity to provide your input. This project is a big undertaking but it’s through collaboration and support that we’re able to proceed.
* Metropolitan Transportation Commission has awarded a $5.14 million dollar grant towards construction costs, including an archway sign, street parking, expanded sidewalks, and bicycle lanes.
* We also secured $2 million dollars from Congressman Ro Khanna’s office for work on the Thornton Avenue Alternate Route Corridor Pavement Rehabilitation project.
* Funding will be used to perform much needed pavement maintenance on Thornton Avenue between Interstate 880 and Olive Street. Simeone Chien, please be sure to thank Congressman Ro Khanna on our behalf for his support to the Newark community.
* For Old Town, Assemblymember Lee secured $1 million dollars towards the Old Town Streetscape Improvement Project.
* He secured an additional $1 million dollars from the State’s budget to help us revitalize the Old Town neighborhood and develop the city’s first resource center. The project renovates an existing facility and converts it into the Newark Resource Center.
* The center will serve as an entry point for social services in the city, referring residents to social service agencies and providing on-site assistance.
* Let’s thank Assemblymember Alex Lee for his continued support to the Newark community.
* Over the past two years, he has secured a total of $5.8 million dollars of state funding for Newark that included implementing Quiet Zones to reduce noise associated with trains traveling through our community and improving the city’s broadband infrastructure.
* It’s support from leaders and members of our community that help us to grow.
* Through engagement and looking ahead, we are making strides in our plans for our future.
* As you can see, we are very busy planning and building our community while trying to preserve its history.
* People tell us all the time that although we are a city on the cutting edge of technology, they still enjoy the hometown feel of our community.
* Look at how far we’ve come. Even in our early beginnings, Newark was home to innovative giants who helped shape our city and put us on the map.
* We’ve grown from a small agricultural town, to manufacturing, industrial, and technology.
* We grew because we worked together, collaborated, planned well, and of course, had innovative entrepreneurs and leaders who looked beyond tomorrow by taking us into the future.
* We are thankful for the many businesses that make up our community and for the jobs and services they provide.
* Change, as they say, is the only constant. It is an undeniable force that shapes our existence, propelling us forward into uncharted territories, challenging our perceptions, and offering boundless opportunities for growth and innovation.
* As we look to the future, I can only see progress. Together, we have achieved so much, but there is still work ahead.
* What a more fitting way than working together because that’s what we do here in Newark. We work together through challenges, but we also celebrate together through our successes.
* I’m proud of our city and the interest our residents and businesses take in building our community. Let’s continue to work together, not only for ourselves, but for future generations to come.
* I thank you for joining me today and being our partner as we continue to build our city. I do want to mention before I leave the stage, please stop by and visit the vehicles behind me or make your way to the other end of the street to get a flavor of Old Town Newark.
* And be sure to visit each booth, starting with the Resource Information Booth where you’ll get a “Taste of Old Town Guide”. The guide contains special discounts to the local restaurants in the area.
* Please enjoy participating in the activities and check back here throughout your stay to catch some of our performers.
* And of course, feel free to reach out to any of us if you should have any questions. Thank you!